



Immigrant Integration in Canada: A whole-of-society approach to help newcomers succeed

Pathways to Prosperity Conference December 1 – 2, 2016

Presented by Corinne Prince-St-Amand

Director General, Integration-FCRO, IRCC



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

Canada 

❖ “Uniquely fortunate in many ways – but Canada still holds lessons for other countries” *The Economist*, 2015



Source: IRCC, 2016: #WelcomeRefugees



Source: *The Economist*, 2016: Reuters



Source: *The Economist*, 2015: David Parkin

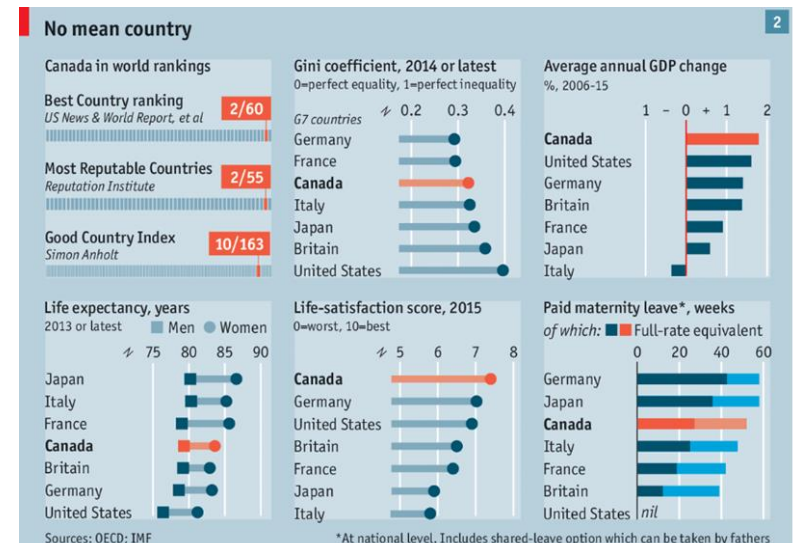
Presentation Outline

- What works?
 - Canada is a global leader in immigration management and integration
 - A managed migration system that attracts global talent, reunites families and helps those in need of protection
 - Canada's unique two-way model of integration
 - A world-class Settlement Program
- What are the challenges?
 - A mix of positive newcomer outcomes and increasingly complex settlement needs
 - Maximizing the impact of immigration on economic and labour force growth
 - Absorptive capacity: building community capacity to receive immigrants
- How are we addressing the challenges?
 - Commitment to sustaining immigration levels that support economic growth
 - Adapting Settlement Program to deliver better economic outcomes
 - Whole-of-society approach to immigrant integration

❖ What works?

Canada is a global leader in immigrant integration

- **Canada leads the way globally in per capita immigrant numbers**
 - In 2016, Canada's population grew to a record number of 36.3M largely due to the number of immigrants received: 320,932 -- the largest number of newcomers in a single year since 1910.
 - At close to 1% of its population, Canada receives per capita more immigrants than the U.S. (0.32%) and U.K. (0.48%), and in range with Australia (0.98%) and New Zealand (1.1%) (OECD 2015).
- **Canada is one of the most welcoming societies among immigrant-receiving countries**
 - Canada was ranked first among 38 countries for its policies on anti-discrimination, and scored high in the policy areas of Family Reunification (4th), Education (4th), Labour Market Mobility (5th) and Access to Nationality (8th) (MIPEX 2015).
 - On most indicators of immigrant integration, Canada's performance is at par with other top immigration destinations such as Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (OECD 2015). It excels as the most tolerant country in community acceptance of minority groups and migrants (84% vs. 61% OECD average, 2011).
- **Other countries want to learn from Canada's approach to immigration**
 - Thirteen countries, including the U.K., Australia, Spain and Japan, expressed interest in learning from Canada's experience with private refugee sponsorship program at the UN Refugee Summit (Obama Summit, September 2016).
 - Germany expressed interest in learning from the Canadian economic selection points system.
 - International delegations continue to inquire about the success of the Canada's integration model. I-FCRO responded to over 70 international requests on immigrant integration in the past 9 months. An unprecedented number.



❖ What works?

A managed migration system that attracts global talent, reunites families and helps those in need of protection

Economic Immigrants

- Those selected based on their human capital and skills have greater potential to succeed in the labour market and contribute to Canada's economy:
 - **Federal Skilled Workers/Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSW/FST)** are subject to the points system that rewards higher education, official language skills and job prospects.
 - **Provincial nominees** help fill regional and local labour market needs and demographic priorities.
 - **Canadian Experience Class, Entrepreneur, Investor, and Self-employed** all contribute to Canadian economic growth.

Family Class Immigrants

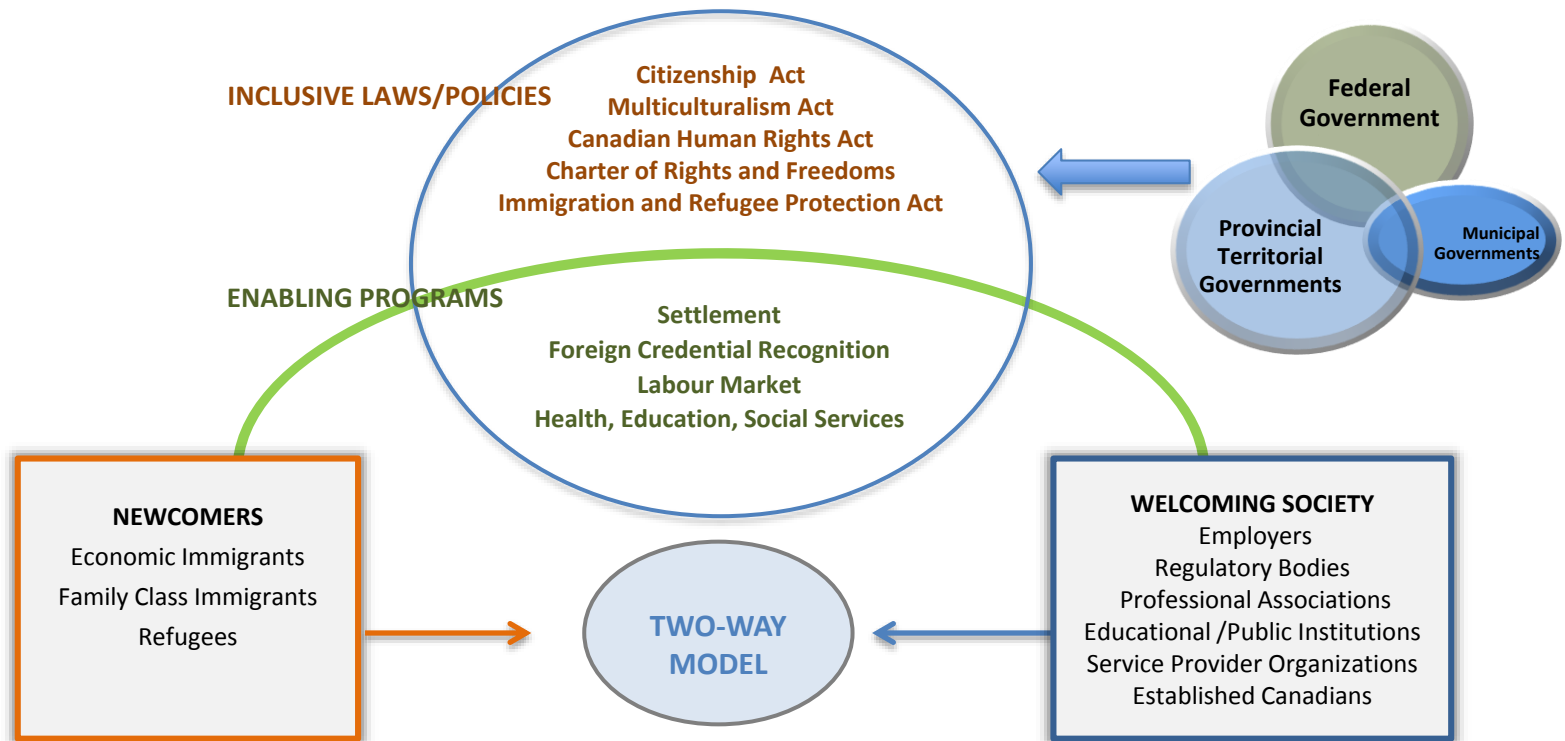
- Family re-unification has been an important pillar of Canada's immigration policy. Citizens and permanent residents are able to sponsor immediate family members (i.e., **spouses/partners, sons/daughters, parents/grandparents**). The majority of sponsored family class immigrants are spouses/partners.

Refugees

- Canada has a strong commitment to its humanitarian goals by resettling refugees referred to Canada by UNHCR as **government-assisted refugees** (GARs) or matching refugees with private sponsors through **privately sponsored refugees** (PSRs) or **blended visa office-referred** (BVORs) programs. Many asylum seekers have also been successful **refugee claimants** in Canada.

Temporary foreign workers and international students also contribute to Canada's economy by filling regional labour market shortages, stimulating innovation and participating in the knowledge economy. They are increasingly becoming permanent residents.

❖ What works? Canadian unique model of integration



Canada's immigrant integration model is premised on mutual adaptation by newcomers and Canadian society. Inclusive laws and policies, as well as enabling programs, are in place to support this model.

Federal, provincial/territorial and municipal governments play a central role to facilitate immigrant integration, in partnership with many societal actors in diverse communities across Canada.

❖ What works?

A world-class Settlement Program responsive to the needs of newcomers

Pre-arrival

- Pre-departure orientation and preparation for life in Canada is offered to immigrants selected for permanent residence abroad through tailored in-person services.

Language

- In-person and online language training to improve official language proficiency, which is a strong indicator of success in finding jobs and acquiring Canadian citizenship.

Information and orientation

- Information and in-person orientations are crucial for navigating services, finding employment, and fully participating as citizens. Services include orientations overseas.

Foreign credential referrals

- Assessment and referrals facilitate recognition of foreign credentials for those in regulated occupations, which account for 19.5% of landed immigrants.

Labour market access/employment supports

- Essential skills training, networking, internships, mentorships, work placements and preparation for the credential assessment process, facilitate newcomer access to the labour market.

Community connections

- Local Immigration Partnerships, Settlement Workers in Schools, Library Settlement Partnerships and Réseaux en immigration francophone engage community partners, public institutions and employers to achieve better outcomes.

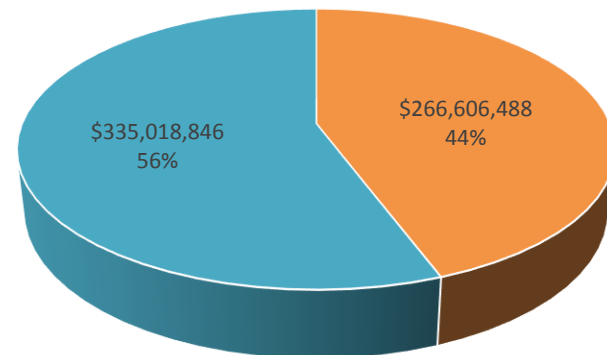
Refugee resettlement

- Income support and essential transitional services provided to resettled refugees are critical for self-sufficiency and eventually accessing the labour market.

Support services

- Child care, interpretation, transportation assistance and supports for persons with disabilities improve uptake of services.

Settlement program expenditure amounted to around 600 million* in 2015/16



■ Language Training ■ Community and Labour Market Integration Services

*Excluding the Grant to Quebec.

❖ What are the challenges?

A mix of positive newcomer outcomes and complex needs



Overall, we have a positive integration story...

- **Those selected for the labour market show stronger economic outcomes:** Skilled worker and provincial nominee principal applicants have the highest employment rates and average earnings compared to other immigrants (IMDB core report 2010).
- **One of the highest naturalization rates in the world:** In 2011, 85.6% of immigrants who landed in Canada before 2008 acquired Canadian citizenship (2011 NHS).
- **Comparable voting rates to Canadian-born:** Established immigrants who arrived before 2001 have a voting rate at 66% compared to 67% for the Canadian born (LFS 2011).
- **Immigrants are active volunteers:** Newcomers are slightly less likely to volunteer compared to Canadian-born, but the gap has narrowed (5.4% down from 13%, GSS 2008 vs. 2013). Newcomers volunteer more hours and give larger donations (CSGVP 2010).
- **Second generation immigrant children outperform their peers:** Children of immigrants in Canada outperform the native-born in higher education and are more likely to have tertiary degrees compared to Canadian-born.



But more newcomers arrive with complex needs..

- **More immigrants arriving from non-traditional regions:** Asia and Pacific (51%) and Africa/Middle East (30%) compared to past source regions with similar language and education systems (Europe and US).
- **Significant number of permanent residents report no knowledge of English or French:** 54% of refugees, 43% of family class, and 27% of economic spouses and dependants (Facts and Figures 2014).
- **Only 25-30% of permanent residents (economic principal applicants) are selected for labour market.** The majority of newcomers are not subject to the points system and thus face additional integration challenges.
- **Foreign-born university graduates more likely to have lower literacy levels (45%)** compared to Canadian-born (16%) which places them at a lower threshold for labour market success (PIAAC, 2012).
- **More pressure on the settlement system to respond to complex newcomers needs:** Low literacy and official language skills, lack of essential skills, complex health needs are common among vulnerable groups (e.g. refugees).

❖ What are the challenges?

Maximizing economic and labour force growth

- According to population projections, future labour force replacement in Canada will come mainly from immigration:
 - Canada's population is aging: The number of working-age Canadians for every senior is expected to drop from 4.2 in 2015 to 2.7 in 2030. As the working age population is shrinking, the share of seniors is expected to rise from 16% in 2015 to 23% in 2030.
 - Future employment growth will be limited due to the aging workforce. Annual GDP growth is expected to drop to 1.5% over the next 50 years, more than half of historical levels (currently at 3.1%).
 - At some point in the 2020s, the number of exits from the labour force (mainly retirement) is expected to equal or surpass new labour supply from within Canada – this means **immigrants will account for the net increase in Canada's labour force.**
- These trends led the *Advisory Council on Economic Growth* to recommend that Canada increase annual permanent immigration levels from 300,000 to 450,000 over five years, facilitate entry of top talent and international students, and improve national accreditation standards.
- As Canada continues to receive more immigrants, we can expect these trends to drive up considerable demand for future settlement interventions and supports.

❖ What are the challenges?

Absorptive capacity: Pressure on communities to welcome immigrants

- *Absorptive capacity* refers to societal and institutional capacity to accept and welcome immigrants of diverse origins and support their settlement and integration in cities and communities across Canada.
 - Municipalities, local communities and institutions provide basic services such as housing, transportation, health care, education, as well as broader social connections, employer engagement and foster positive public attitudes towards immigration.
- Recent lessons learned from the Syrian refugee initiative revealed some key challenges in the capacity of communities to receive newcomers

Housing: Availability of affordable and suitable housing especially for large family sizes.

Education: Specialized guidance is needed in classrooms services for children and youth in the school system.

Income Assistance: A significant number of GARs are expected to transition from RAP to provincial social assistance.

Health and Mental Health: Refugees have complex health and mental health needs.

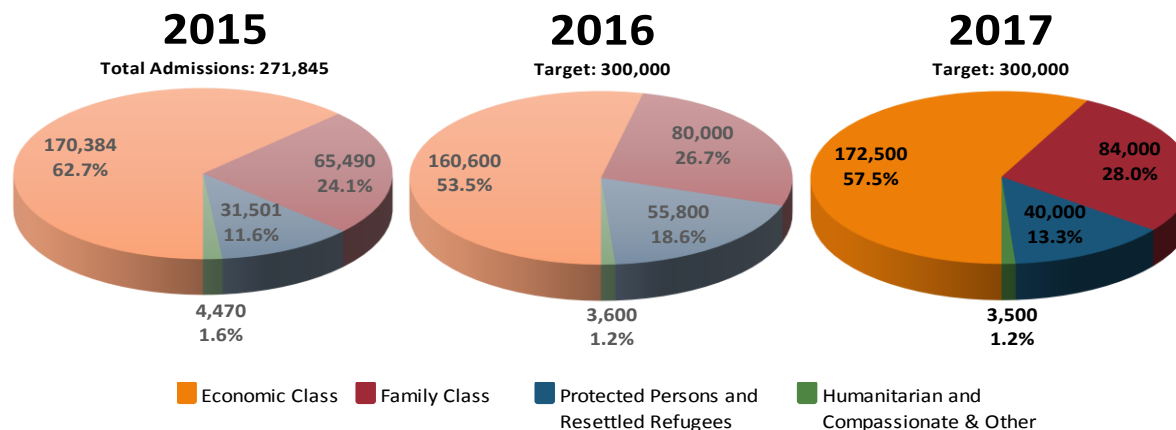
Employment: Increased access to training and labour market integration supports.

Core Settlement Services: Increased levels of language training, child care supports and opportunities for social inclusion. Availability of settlement services in French.

❖ How do we address the challenges?

Immigration levels for long-term economic growth and a more prosperous Canada

- The **2017 Immigration Levels Plan** balances economic needs with commitments to reunite families and protect refugees:
 - Maintains overall target of 300,000 – balances need for immigrants with fiscal responsibilities.
 - Increases **Economic Class** immigration by 7% over 2016.
 - Increases **Family Class** immigration by 5% over 2016 – reunite more families, reduce processing times.
 - Maintains strong commitment to **protecting those in need** with a 2017 target of 40,000 refugees. While less than in 2016, this is double compared to historical levels in the last decade (average of 20,000 – 25,000 – 10% of total admissions)



❖ How do we address the challenges?

Adapting the Settlement Program to deliver better economic outcomes

- Rising up to the economic growth challenge requires engaging employers and non-traditional partners in 'thinking outside the box'. We have embarked on a number of new initiatives:
 - **Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program:** A three-year pilot developed in coordination with the four Atlantic provinces (NS, NB, NL and PEI), expected to launch in early 2017. The pilot is intended to help meet regional labour market needs and will include a strong settlement component to support the regional retention of newcomers. The project could facilitate the entry of up to 2,000 principal applicants plus their family members into Atlantic Canada in 2017.
 - **New tools for skills recognition:** Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a systematic process of identifying, assessing and recognizing individual's skills and competencies, rather than credentials. As immigration continues to support Canada's economic growth, RPL tools will be critical to support the credential and skills recognition process, and help newcomers fully utilize their skills in the labour market and contribute to the economy.
- We continue to foster initiatives with the leading partners in the sector and business community:
 - A more systematic engagement of employers through **Immigrant employment councils** to help find work opportunities for internationally trained immigrants. As well, employers are engaged in coordination at the regional and local level through **Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)** and **Réseaux en immigration francophone (RIF)**.
 - **Employer Liaison Network (ELN)** with six offices across Canada (Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto and Halifax) provide employers with the up-to-date information on the available foreign skilled labour force and coordinate immigration promotion and recruitment activities overseas.
 - Support for vibrant **Francophone minority communities** through a **Mobilité francophone** stream by achieving francophone newcomers' target of 4% of economic immigrants settling in communities outside Quebec by 2018 (4.4% by 2023).

❖ How are we addressing the challenges?

A whole-of-society approach to immigrant integration

- Integration is a social project that hinges upon the absorptive capacity of communities to receive and integrate newcomers.
- Canada's shared governance in immigrant integration reflects a whole-of-society approach where PTs as constitutional partners and other community stakeholders play a key role:
 - **Provinces and territories** fund complementary settlement services, in addition to education, health and social services. This presents both opportunities and challenges as we try to disentangle roles in language training (e.g. **Pan-Canadian Language Strategy**), access to employment and social connections (e.g. **FPT SWG Helping Immigrants Succeed**), as well as support the recognition of foreign credentials (e.g. **Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Credentials**).
 - **Municipalities** are increasingly engaged in settlement and they provide additional community support services (e.g., housing and public transport). Consider the overwhelming response and mobilization of municipalities during the Syrian refugee initiative, in particular on the **housing issue (e.g. Welcome Fund)**.
 - **Service providers** deliver settlement services in communities across the country. In response to the Syrian refugee crisis, a growing number of SPOs have built capacity for offering resettlement services to vulnerable refugees. We now have an extended network of 36 RAP SPOs in communities large and small across the country.
 - Within the federal family, IRCC is working with other federal government departments to expand horizontally and align integration efforts in key priority areas such as housing, employment, and innovation.
 - **National Settlement Council** is a key forum for engagement of settlement and integration stakeholders, which includes umbrella organizations representing service providers, language sector representatives, P/T governments, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), UNHCR and la Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada.

❖ Conclusion

- **The Settlement Program is evolving, learning from past experiences and adopting new ways of doing business to ensure program integrity and achieve positive outcomes**
 - An **Evaluation of the Settlement Program** is currently underway.
 - Covers a 5 year period and focuses on settlement and integration client outcomes. Once completed, I-FCRO will review the recommendations and develop a Management Response and Action Plan to address recommendations.
 - The **2015 Call for Proposal** agreements will be effective on April 1, 2017.
 - All results were reviewed and re-validated in Spring 2016 in light of the lessons learned from the Syrian Refugee Initiative.
 - I-FCRO will engage with service provider organizations and partners to set national and regional priorities in preparation for the **2020 Call for Proposals**.
 - Will build on experience from previous CFP and continue to broaden engagement with non-traditional stakeholders.
 - In December 2016, I-FCRO will **award contracts for social innovation prototypes and studies** that will inform how innovative practices can improve integration outcomes for Syrian refugees.
 - Contracts will completed by March 2017; I-FCRO will analyse lessons learned and results from these and previous prototypes to help inform Settlement program policy.
 - IRCC is moving towards a **a results and delivery approach** which focuses on tracking outcomes, aligning resources and delivering on priorities.
 - “Results and outcomes” are the new norm.