

Understanding Welcoming Communities and Multiculturalism

Implications of Intercultural Relations in a Prairie Canadian Community

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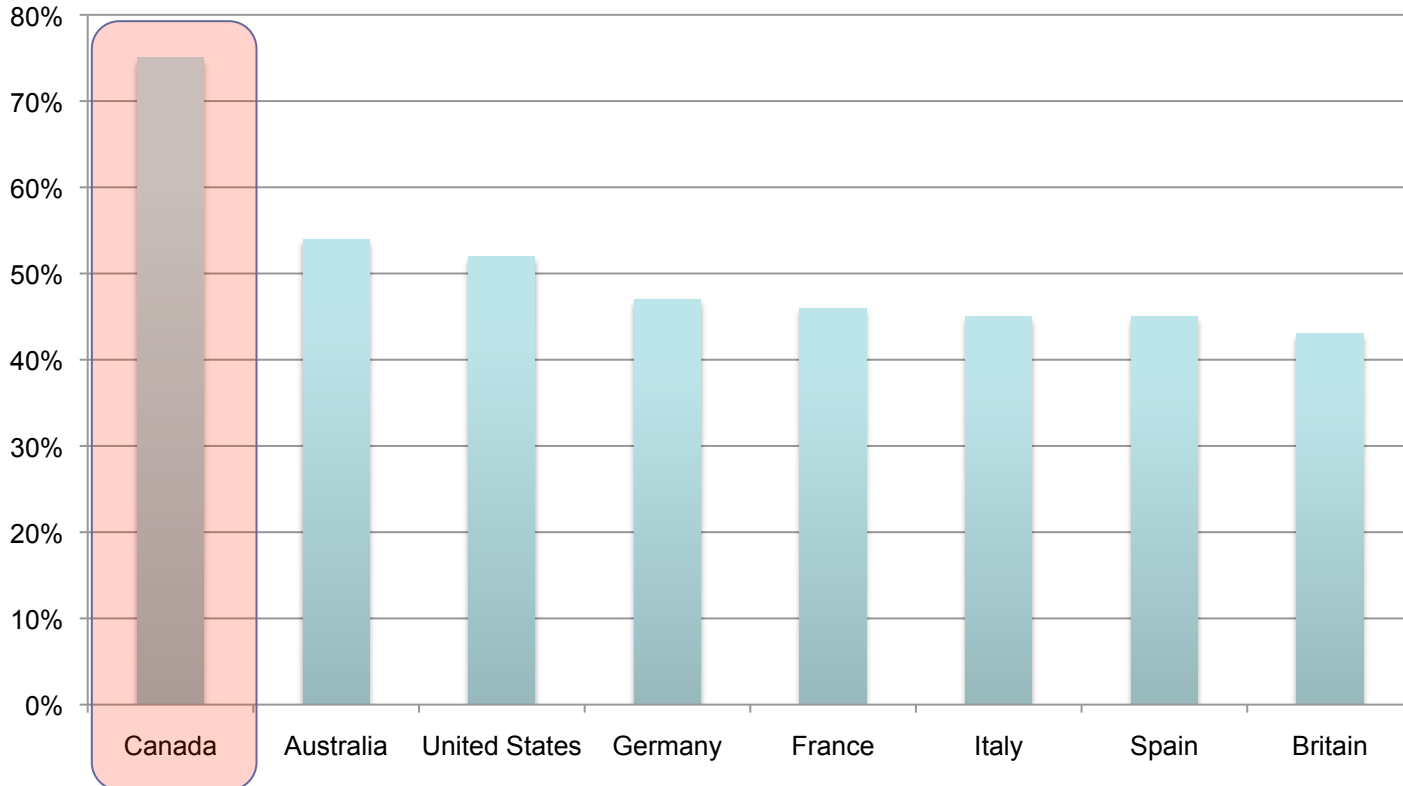


Overview

- Immigration to Canada
- Welcoming Community Initiatives
- Exploration of Multiculturalism in a Small Canadian City
- Implications for Policy, Community Development, Research

International Attitudes Towards Immigration

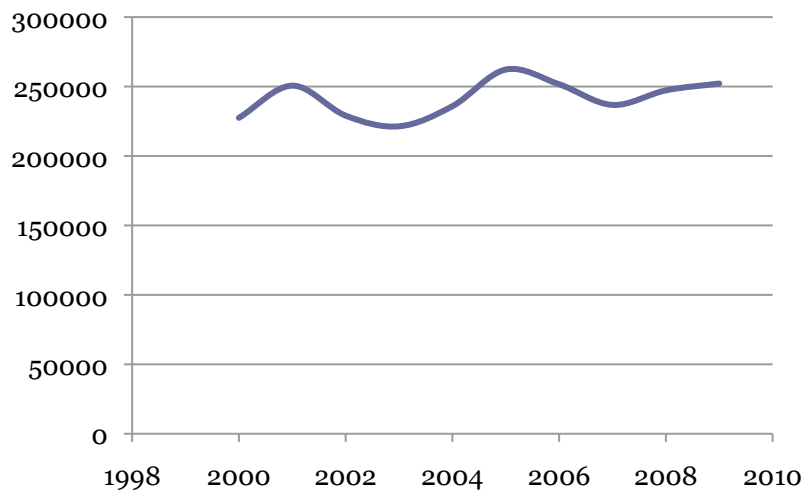
Immigrants are having a good influence on the way things are going in your country



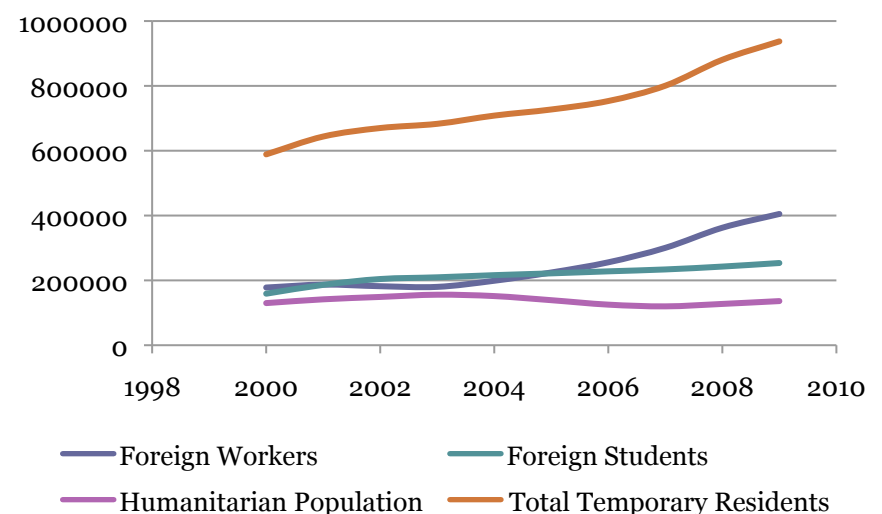
Source: Angus Reid, 2006

An Overview of Immigration to Canada

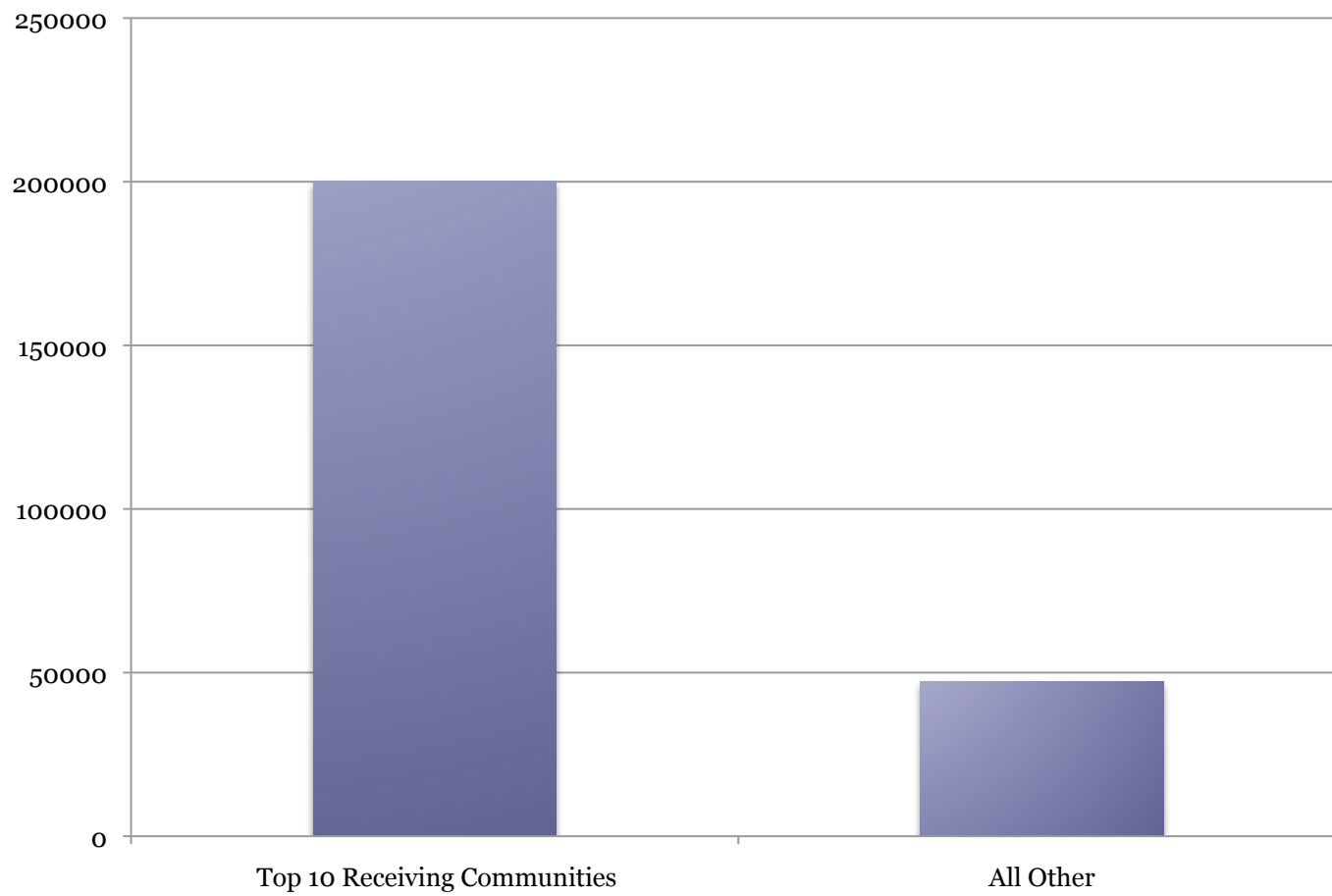
- Canada accepted approximately 250,000 new permanent residents in 2009
 - Economic class
 - Family class
 - Refugee class



- Canada accepted approximately 930,000 temporary residents in 2009
 - Foreign workers
 - Foreign students
 - Humanitarian population

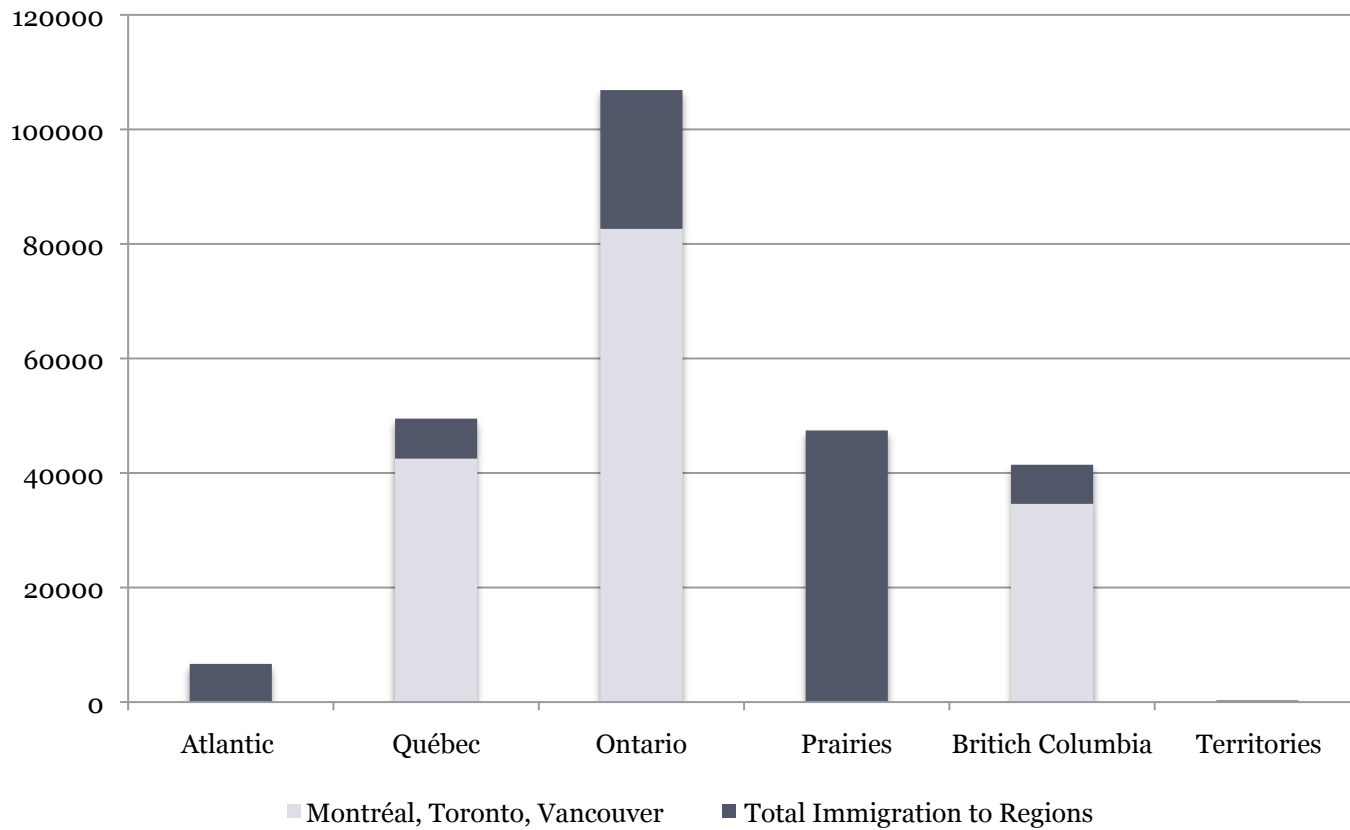


Concentration of Immigrants



Statistics Canada, 2007

Regional Distribution of Immigrants in Canada, 2009



Total: 252,179



Immigration as a Component of Rural Development Strategies

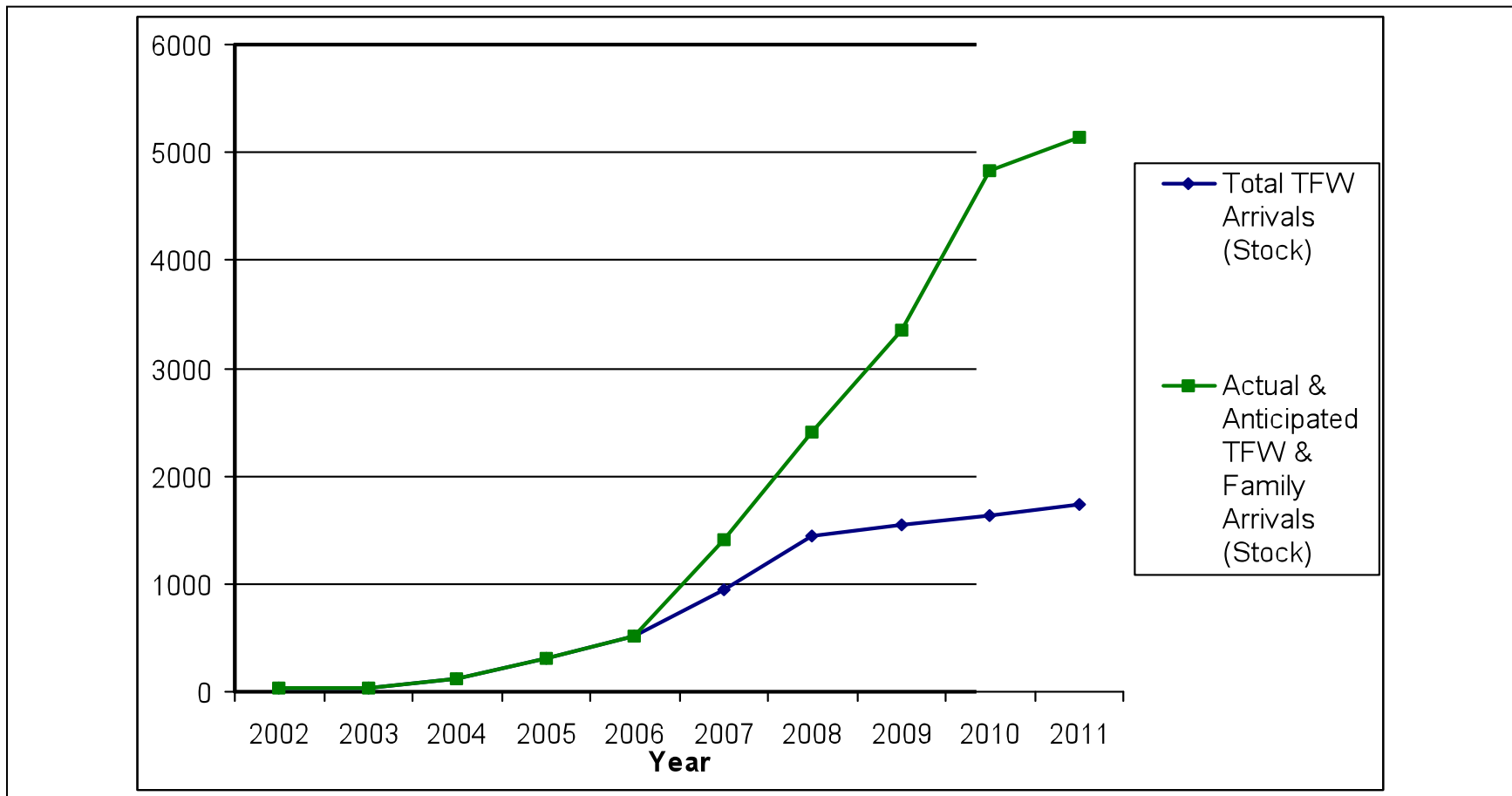
- A community economic development strategy
- To address declining populations
- To revitalize and diversify rural communities
- To attract higher skilled workers
- Rural lifestyle can be attractive to newcomers, but attraction, settlement and retention efforts are required

Brandon, Manitoba, Canada

- Population = 41,511
- 1999: Maple Leaf Foods (MLF) pork processing plant opened
- 2001: MLF began foreign recruitment in Mexico; later in China.
- 2007: Highest rate of immigration growth in Manitoba
- 2009: Approximately 1,500 international recruits employed at MLF
 - 70% of employees are international recruits
 - From Mexico, El Salvador, Colombia, China, Mauritius and Ukraine.



Significant New Immigration to Brandon





Hallmarks of a Welcoming Community

- Respects diversity
- Has accessible public services
- Has a range of educational opportunities
- Promotes health and wellness for all
- Is safe and talks about it
- Invites newcomers to share leisure time activities
- Acknowledges faith and spirituality



Is Brandon Welcoming?

Brandon is...

- **A welcoming community:**
 - Over 80% of Canadian long-term residents agree
 - Over 90% of Chinese and Latin American new residents agree
- **A good place to live:**
 - 99% of Canadian long-term residents agree
 - 100% all Latin American new residents agree
 - 71% of Chinese new residents agree
- **A good place to raise a family:**
 - 97% of Canadian long-term and Latin American residents agree
 - 43% of Chinese new residents agree



Mutual Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies

- Collaborative project investigating whether feelings of cultural security, ethnocentrism, hierarchy, and reciprocity are found in multiple societies.
- International consortium, research being undertaken in Australia, Canada, China, Estonia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Spain.
- Brandon is one case study in Canada in the MIRIPS initiative
 - Dominant culture: Canadian long-term residents
 - Subdominant cultures: Chinese new residents and Latin American new residents

Sample Description


Variable	Canadian Long Term Residents	Latin American New Residents	Chinese New Residents
N	138	93	96
% Male	30	76	60
% Female	70	24	40
Mean Age	49.4	33.5	32.5
Average length of residency in Brandon	27.9 years	1.8 years	2.3 years

MIRIPS Hypotheses

- **Multiculturalism Hypothesis :**
 - When people feel secure in their cultural identities and in their economic and personal situations, they will accept others. That is, Acceptance of Others (high MCI, and TOL and low PCI) will be associated with Security.
- **Integration Hypothesis:**
 - People will have a high degree of Wellbeing when they prefer Integration rather than Assimilation or Separation. That is, Wellbeing (high SE, LS and SC, and low PP) will be associated with a preference for Integration

Main Variables in the MIRIPS Project

- **Multicultural Ideology (MCI)**: the degree to which people value cultural diversity.
- **Tolerance (TOL)**: the degree of acceptance of 'others'
- **Perceived Consequences of Immigration (PCI)**: the perceived negative consequences of immigration (Negative)
- **Security (SEC)**: the degree to which individuals feel secure in their cultural identity, and in their economic and personal situations.
- **Self Esteem (SE)**: the degree that individuals value themselves
- **Life satisfaction (LS)**: the degree to which individuals are satisfied with their lives
- **Psychological Problems (PP)**: the extent to which individuals experience problems such as anxiety, sadness. (Negative)
- **Sociocultural Competence (SC)**: the degree to which individuals are able to master situations in their daily lives
- **Integration (INT)**: the degree to which individuals believe that people should be allowed to maintain their cultures and to participate in the larger society
- **Assimilation (ASM)**: the degree to which individuals believe that people should give up their cultures and become incorporated into the larger society.
- **Separation (SEP)**: the degree to which individuals believe that people should maintain their cultures, and do so with little involvement with the larger society.
- **Perceived Discrimination (PD)**: the degree to which individuals experience discrimination against themselves or groups.



Variations in Acculturation Expectations and Attitudes

- There are no significant variations across the three samples in the variables that indicate acculturation expectations (for the Canadian LTR) and attitudes (for the Latin American and Chinese samples).
- The usual finding with immigrants is replicated: the mean preferences (both expectations and attitudes) for Integration are higher than for Assimilation or Separation.
- There is a tendency for the Chinese sample to prefer Separation, compared to the other two samples.
- There is a tendency for Perceived Discrimination to be higher in the two immigrant samples.



Multiculturalism Hypothesis: Correlations

- An important issue is whether the main Acceptance variables cohere in all three samples.
- Our main interest is whether the multiculturalism hypothesis is supported in all samples.
 - In all three samples, the three variables of MCI, TOL, and PCI come together to form a factor, called Acceptance of Others.
 - This factor is related to Security.
 - This supports the Multiculturalism Hypothesis.
 - That is, feeling secure is related to the Acceptance of Others.



Integration Hypothesis: Correlations

- In all three samples, Integration is associated with the Wellbeing variables in the direction predicted by the hypothesis.
 - This association is particularly evident for Self Esteem and Life Satisfaction.
- In all three samples, Perceived Discrimination is correlated with Psychological Problems and Sociocultural Competence.
- The Wellbeing factor is associated positively with Integration, and negatively with Separation (and in the Canadian LTR samples also with Assimilation).



Some Conclusions

- These two migrant samples represent a departure from the usual work with immigrants who have come to settle permanently in a new society.
- Despite this novelty, the usual pattern of mean differences, and correlations among the core variables are largely replicated.
- Continuing analyses are being carried out in an attempt to better understand the dynamics of intercultural relations in this unique setting.



Implications of Findings

- **Community Development and Practice**
 - Need for local strategies for settlement, integration, an retention
 - Need for sharing lessons learned
- **Policy**
 - Increased awareness and fit between multiple levels of government
 - Increased attention to immigration policies to rural and northern populations
- **Research**
 - Need to understand individual community needs/ capacities
 - Need to understand intercultural relations



Challenges in Moving Forward

- Resources for rural immigration planning are difficult to locate
 - Immigration is not the single responsibility of either the federal or provincial government
- Bringing the ‘right’ voices to the table for discussions
 - Need to create an environment for open discussions among all stakeholders
- Sharing lessons learned from rural and northern communities
 - Need for forums and avenues to share information



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www2.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/mirips.asp

