

Introduction to the Immigrant Futures Toolkit for City Leaders

A new lens for local
economic development

**Ryerson
University**

**Canada Excellence
Research Chair in
Migration & Integration**



Cities of Migration



**Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada**

**Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada**

The Immigrant Futures Project

This project explores new perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of immigration in Canada's small cities, towns and regions. Immigrant Futures was developed in partnership with Hamilton Economic Development, the City of Moncton, the Halifax Partnership, the Leeds Grenville Local Immigration Partnership and Hire Immigrants-Magnet; with support from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

Immigrant Futures is a project of the Cities of Migration program that is now housed at the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration program at Ryerson University. The [CERC in Migration and Integration program](#) produces innovative and usable knowledge to improve our understanding of contemporary issues in migration and integration in Canada and across the world.

Cities of Migration brings an urban lens to its view of good integration practice and seeks to promote city-to-city learning exchange and create links between the many actors who are involved in the practical day-to-day work of making integration a key component of urban success, internationally. Visit our [website](#) to view a collection of promising practices in integration and a set of integrated tools to help city-level practitioners, community and funder networks in urban migration and integration to develop stronger ties and increase the effectiveness of local integration practices.

Acknowledgements

This material was produced by Jenna Blower, under the leadership of Kim Turner, formerly Program Manager, Cities of Migration, and was completed under the guidance of Anna Triandafyllidou, Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration.

Inquiries

cerc.migration@ryerson.ca | [CERC Migration](#), Ryerson University



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Hire Immigrants



HALIFAX
PARTNERSHIP
CONNECT. COLLABORATE. PROSPER.



MONCTON



ST. LAWRENCE REGIONAL
IMMIGRATION
PARTNERSHIP



HAMILTON
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

Background

Over the last year, the Immigrant Futures Project has conducted research, organized community consultations in Ontario and Atlantic Canada, collected promising practices, and used webinar forums to gain perspective from the ground and unpack some of the challenges of immigrant attraction and retention in Canada's small cities.

The Immigrant Futures Project is a *multi-stakeholder community planning framework*, developed with associated tools to help small and medium-sized cities develop strategies for more effective immigrant attraction and retention.

We adopt a whole of community approach to the design of an inclusive economy. A whole of community approach requires strong leadership and multi-stakeholder engagement across a wide field of action. It takes the community at large to engage in a planning process that is open, inclusive and speaks to the long-term health and wellbeing of every resident.

The Immigrant Futures Project identifies immigration as a critical economic development strategy for the declining health and wellbeing of small-city Canada.

The economic case for immigration is rock solid.

Canada's strategy to attract immigrants for economic purposes responds to well-established data that show immigration is a positive contributor to economic growth. Canada faces a dilemma, however, in ensuring the even dispersal of immigrants across the nation. In the various regional communities across Canada that encompass several small and mid-sized cities, the immigrant population continues to be relatively low. In these smaller cities, the immigrant population often comprises less than ten percent of the resident population. Regional communities in Canada are experiencing low birth rates, or stagnant population growth, rapidly changing industries and high rates of out-migration. It is evident that there are not enough young people moving through the local education system to meet labour market needs, let alone future economic growth. One solution to the economic urgency of regional communities in Canada is to increase the number of immigrants settling outside of Canada's major cities. Increasing the share of immigrants who settle outside major cities can address population decline and boost regional development; achieve more equitable distribution of social and economic capital; and reduce pressure on Canada's largest cities where most immigrants settle.

Although regionalization strategies have been in effect for well over two decades with an array of immigration supports available at the federal and provincial levels, most programs and services are located in cities with an established history of immigrant settlement and are heavily focused on immigrant integration. Today, in Canada's small and medium sized cities, communities have seen relatively homogenous natural population growth for several generations. In the context of today's critical need to spur population growth, these cities without a recent history of welcoming and integrating immigrants find themselves under pressure to design the community blueprint to their immigrant future.

Our experience through the Cities of Migration initiative has taught us that it is "in the capacity of every city to be welcoming and contribute to immigrant success by creating the conditions for investment, attachment and belonging" (Cities of Migration 2012, 45).

So, the question is **how can we make it work for Canada's smaller cities? What contributes to successful settlement and integration? Or a failure to attract and retain?**

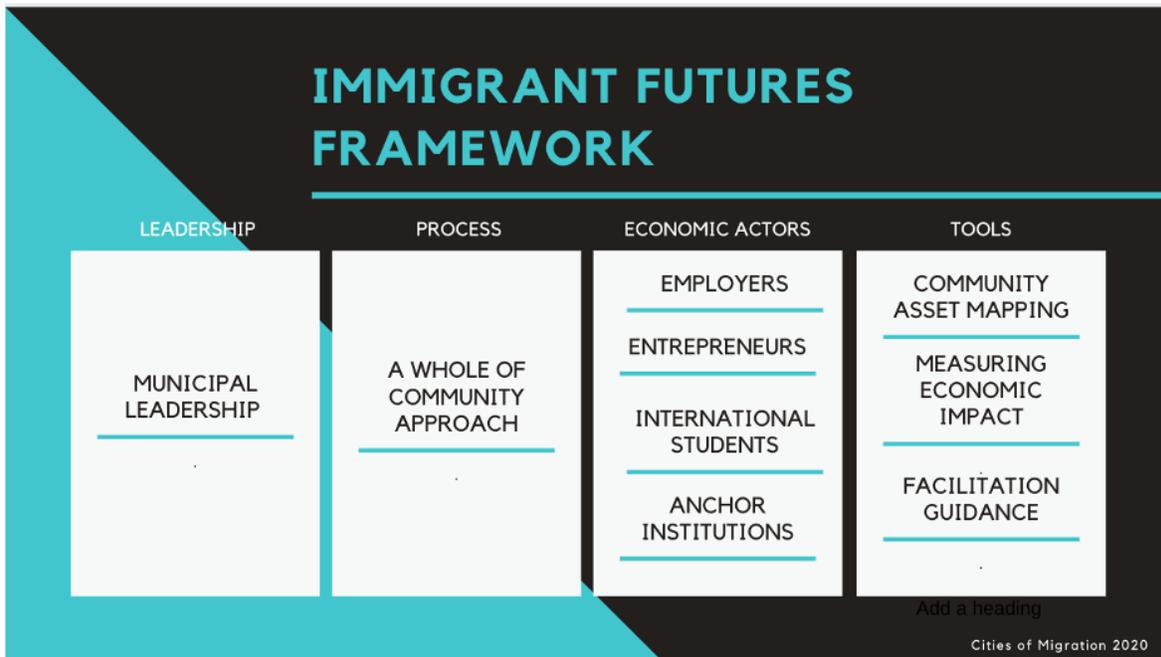
Immigrant Futures Framework

The Immigrant Futures Project examined different community models from Canada, the U.S. and Germany, that set out to integrate economic development and immigration strategies with a view to identifying the ingredients of a practical and successful approach.

Our study has led to a four step model:

- 1) Harness municipal leadership
- 2) Raise awareness and participation across the community
- 3) Mobilize diverse stakeholders
- 4) Develop practical tools that help design a specific city strategy

The outcome of this approach is tailor-made to the needs and assets of each city.



We identified that community models that seek to align economic development and immigration agendas are most effective when they have high-level buy-in from a senior public official and engage multiple stakeholders by employing a whole of community approach. This approach engages not only economic actors, such as employers, or entrepreneurs, but also post-secondary education institutions, libraries, health providers, sports associations, and international students themselves, particularly when a specialised immigrant support organization is absent. The whole of community approach fosters an infrastructure of support for newcomers. This means that the city's municipal office, hospital, library and major employers, for instance, are equipped to serve a growing community with diverse needs. The [Immigrant Futures Toolkit](#) provides interested local authorities with tools that help them to identify their community's assets, raise awareness, make a strong case for an immigrant future, and form a civic partnership for immigration. Below we discuss in some more detail the different elements of the proposed whole of community approach to immigration planning.

Harnessing Municipal Leadership

Our framework recognizes the increasing role of cities to build the policy capacity to attract and retain immigrants. They can also be the leaders in onboarding the receiving community to collectively respond and collaborate to welcome and support newcomers.

The Immigrant Futures Project is designed for city and community leaders to initiate a community planning process that aligns economic and immigration policy agendas and recognizes the role of a broad spectrum of municipal and community stakeholders as critical city-building actors. The project assists leaders in the articulation of their community's unique immigration imperative and will help leaders promote the social and economic benefits of immigration.

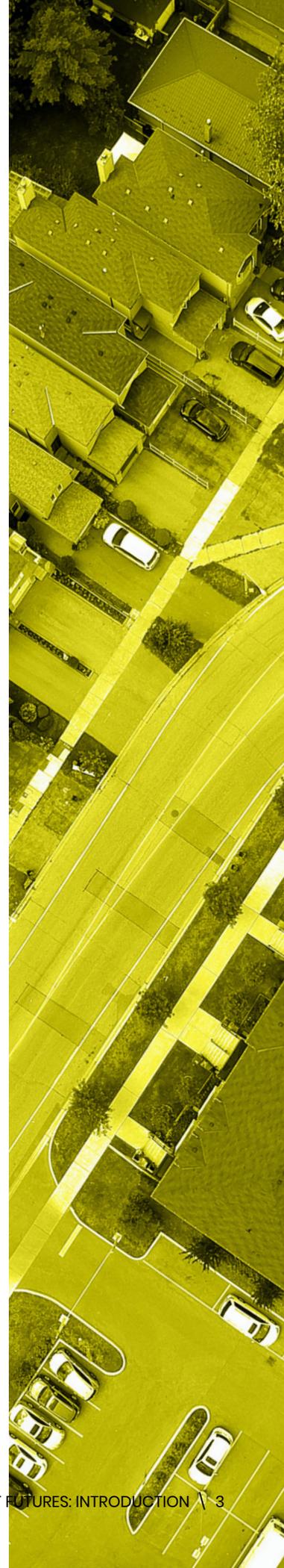
City leadership is essential in helping the wider community to support the idea that a vibrant economic, social, and cultural base can generate the quality of life that immigrant populations seek, and all residents enjoy. Whatever their size or history, successful cities are led by innovative, forward-looking local governments that know how to use the authority and instruments of public office to serve the best interests of all, including new immigrants. Successful innovation at the municipal level has the potential to redirect the public discourse about the benefits of migration and facilitate the development of more successful mobility systems.

GOOD IDEA #1

The Greater Moncton Immigration Strategy **Moncton, NB**

Leadership is emerging at the city-level to tackle attraction and retention head on. In Moncton for example, immigration is understood to be a pillar of their economic development strategy. The Great Moncton Immigration Strategy (2014-2018) states “[P]opulation growth is not an end in and of itself. Neither is economic growth...urban centres continue to drive economic and population growth not for some abstract bragging rights but because this is needed to shore up the fiscal capacity of government to provide public services and infrastructure”.

Does your city have an immigration strategy?



GOOD IDEA #2

Procurement Power

Toronto, ON

Municipalities leading the way are using purchasing power and supplier diversity to drive inclusive growth and urban prosperity. Every year, the city of Toronto spends about CAD 1.8 billion (USD 1.35 billion) on goods and services, from large construction projects to one-off catering contracts. Starting in 2017, the city is harnessing procurement power to help lift minorities, aboriginal people, recent immigrants and people with disabilities out of poverty. The Toronto Social Procurement Policy aims to help businesses owned by members of disadvantaged groups participate in the bidding process for public contracts. Vendors working on city contracts are encouraged to participate in workforce development programs with vulnerable groups, such as youth.

Would your city consider adopting such a Social Procurement Policy to boost the employment of newcomers?

Adopting a Whole of Community Approach to Planning

The immigrant futures framework extends beyond good policymaking and data crunching and suggests strategies that come in the form of positive social relations that manifest in our everyday institutions. Pertinent to this context is the fact that emerging gateway cities of migration do not have existing settlement support. Immigrants need an infrastructure of support. In Canada that generally means settlement services. The good news is that in new immigrant gateways, or in the absence of a well-developed settlement sector, there are other community assets that can fill the gap, such as place-based or anchor institutions. For example, schools can provide language classes, or libraries can centralize information on housing, and community services can provide business advice needed by start-ups. Services that with a little tweaking can provide wrap-around support for all community members.

A whole of community approach means leveraging existing community assets to support an increasingly diverse population. This can spur new localism, a form of civic leadership that harnesses the talents of regional change-makers and encourages sustainable community work. Engaging in a multi-stakeholder community planning process – creating an eco-system of support – can also facilitate the set-up of support infrastructure. Local leaders can thus proactively assess and find solutions to the changing needs of their growing community.

Additionally, this whole of community approach highlights the ability for non-traditional actors such as employers, entrepreneurs and international students to engage with immigration matters, while also emphasizing the importance of immigrants to be present both in planning processes and community activities. The inclusion of the receiving community in developing immigrant integration strategies leads to a more robust, resilient planning process.

A whole of community approach requires flexibility so leaders can create room in a plan that is adaptable to the community's changing immediate needs and can respond to shifts in the economy. Long-term thinking is required to envision innovative approaches to community planning and economic prosperity in your region.

GOOD IDEA #3

New Conversations **Fredericton, NB**

Historically, NB had low rates of immigration. Nationally, 1 in 5 people have been born abroad, while only 1 in 20 residents of New Brunswick were born outside the country. Yet, when surveyed, most New Brunswick residents believed that the province was just as diverse as the rest of Canada. This misconception revealed a major gap in understanding about the link between population, economic growth and the 'immigration imperative.' The New Conversations tour was launched to respond to these challenges.

The multi-city, province-wide New Conversations tour is the first of its kind public forum on matters pertaining to economic growth, community livelihood, and immigration. In 2018, the IRCC-funded project travelled to 15 municipalities to conduct public conversations with a range of stakeholders including employers, municipal leaders, community agencies and the general public. An important outcome of these forums was a significant increase in local and provincial media that showcased stories framing immigration as a positive labour market solution. Additionally, Moncton and two other regions are now developing immigration-based growth strategies.

Does your city have a public awareness strategy for discussing its demographic and economic future?

GOOD IDEA #4

The Rural Employment Initiative **Peel Region, ON**

Rural Ontario communities need newcomers and new immigration programs are emerging to support these cities. But what about newcomers already in Canada? Secondary migration can be an active strategy employed by rural communities to attract people to their community. Many talented internationally trained professionals already live in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). They and their families are assets for smaller and rural Ontario communities if they are open to moving.

Recognizing this reality, in 2016, the Newcomer Centre of Peel (NCP) partnered with the Ontario Association for Community Futures Development Corporation (OACFDC) to create the Rural Employment Initiative (REI).

REI works with newcomers to find local jobs and housing in rural communities. Through strategic partnership and collaboration, the project takes a whole of community approach to create welcoming conditions for newcomers.

Have you considered strategies to attract newcomers to your community through secondary migration?

Who to Engage in the Planning Process? **A Focus on Key Economic Actors**

Our proposed framework is premised on the idea that economic outcomes and labour market integration is integral and a priority to the Canadian immigration experience but will be met with limited success unless community support is extended and feelings of belonging are fostered. To foster inclusion in your community, the Immigrant Futures Framework aims to leverage the civic participation of all residents.

Our approach leverages the support of stakeholders like employers, entrepreneurs, and more largely, public institutions such as libraries, hospitals, and schools to foster feelings of inclusion by virtue of progressive policies, initiatives, and strategies. The aim is to create an infrastructure of support that simultaneously addresses the needs of newcomers pre- and post-arrival and contributes to a city building process that is premised on principles of inclusion designed to inhibit experiences of exclusion, discrimination, and racism for all community members.

Why are jobs not enough?

Immigrants Choose. *More people are moving today than ever before. In the past migration was led by destination countries who exercised their choices about the best and the brightest. Today, by contrast, immigrants choose. Migrants are increasingly in charge, choosing from a wider variety of destination countries and voting for these choices with their feet. In other words, a buyers' market has turned into a sellers' market as migrants are courted for their money, their skills, and their talent. The imperative to deliver integration and inclusion to them, quicker, faster, and better is very clear. Indeed, the best integration strategies focus on making cities attractive to potential migrants and creating the conditions for investment, attachment, and belonging.*

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYERS

We believe that the business sector is accelerating as partners in community planning and immigrant attraction and retention. No one knows the challenge of talent attraction and incubation better than employers. They understand the business case for diversity, how it drives innovation and traction in a competitive global marketplace. In this model, employers have a central role to play in articulating immigration as a critical local economic development strategy. That's every employer: no matter how large or small the business or the size of the local talent pool.

There is a role for public and private employers to engage in the attraction and retention of immigrants. Employers have been engaged through various federal and provincial immigration programs to address labour shortages and it is clear that employers understand that attraction and retention requires more than a good job, their efforts need to be framed within a wider support eco-system that involves other stakeholders and relevant partnerships. In the face of a fast-changing and competitive labour market, employers are stepping up as intentional and strategic actors in the realm of immigration and settlement. This is especially true for small- and medium-sized cities across Canada who are uniquely addressing these challenges.

“There are ‘trail-blazing’ employers in the region whose integration successes can be emulated—such efforts need to be celebrated by community leaders so that other employers see the value even if they aren’t necessarily early adopters of diversity programming.”

Rural Ontario Institute 2018



GOOD IDEA #5

Industry Leaders Connect to Recruit Newcomers, a spotlight on Maple Leaf Foods **Brandon, MB**

Maple Leaf Foods opened its Brandon facility in 1999 as a world-class processing plant. Despite its impressive size and modernity, the facility struggled to retain workers for jobs that were hard, repetitive and undesirable for many. Maple Leaf turned to overseas recruitment to satisfy its workforce needs and to reduce turnover. Today Maple Leaf's Brandon facility employs around 2,000 hourly, unionized workers, the majority of whom are either temporary foreign workers or new residents who have passed through the foreign worker program.

The company provides extensive pre and post-arrival supports to their workers. Before migrants arrive in Canada, they have received up to 160 hours of English language training. They also received an orientation package about Canadian culture, community and settlement information.

After the workers arrive, support continues, including additional language training support. In Maple Leaf Foods' Brandon, Manitoba plant, English classes are run after hours and on weekends in an on-site training facility. Funded by the union and by Maple Leaf Foods, classes are free for workers.

How can your city help employers put in place pre- and post-arrival support programmes?

MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship has always been a route for immigrants to support themselves. However, initial start-up challenges such as access to capital and space necessary to start a business have commonly been insurmountable for many. Immigrants face many of the same challenges in starting a new business as entrepreneurs anywhere. Whatever the service, product or market, the checklist is likely to include tricky technical matters of licensing and zoning, local labour laws, tax compliance, audit, and financial systems, to name just a few. Additional roadblocks are limited knowledge of local markets or poor access to vital business networks. Excellent business services are available to help new start-ups, but cultural differences or language barriers can make it difficult for aspiring entrepreneurs to take that important first step.

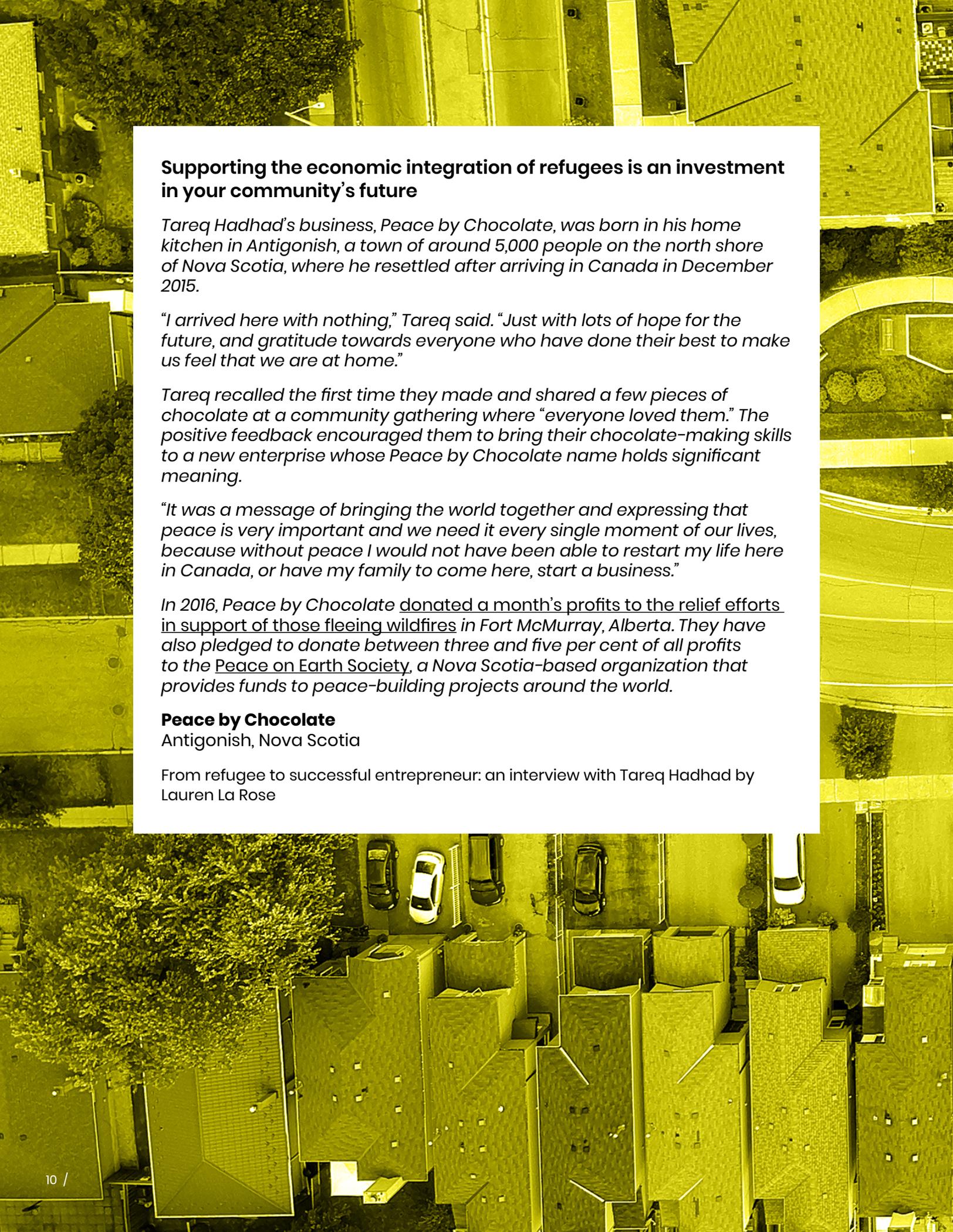
Increasingly, smaller and rural municipalities are seeing the economic, demographic and social potential immigration brings to them. Providing a welcoming and supportive business environment is key to attracting those newcomers. Newcomers realize that large urban centers are not the only places for them to find success.

GOOD IDEA #6

Investing in Success **Fredericton, NB**

The City of Fredericton, New Brunswick embraces immigration as a critical strategy to address population decline. A focus on entrepreneurship is a critical component of Fredericton's population and economic growth strategy. This is demonstrated by Fredericton's award-winning Business Immigrant Mentorship Program (BIMP), a mentorship program launched in 2009 to support newcomers with business registration, accounting, taxes, knowledge of the local economy, and more. The program's success is measured by many variables, including job creation, retention of newcomers, the growing business network of immigrants and its replicability. Many programs have launched from the BIMP's success. For example, the Hive Incubator program, is a co-location facility in the city's prime real estate district that has been providing entrepreneurial newcomers 24/7 access to space, a business address, business mailbox, chamber of commerce membership and more since 2014.

Does your city have mentorship and start-up incubation programs that can support both residents and newcomers?



Supporting the economic integration of refugees is an investment in your community's future

Tareq Hadhad's business, Peace by Chocolate, was born in his home kitchen in Antigonish, a town of around 5,000 people on the north shore of Nova Scotia, where he resettled after arriving in Canada in December 2015.

"I arrived here with nothing," Tareq said. "Just with lots of hope for the future, and gratitude towards everyone who have done their best to make us feel that we are at home."

Tareq recalled the first time they made and shared a few pieces of chocolate at a community gathering where "everyone loved them." The positive feedback encouraged them to bring their chocolate-making skills to a new enterprise whose Peace by Chocolate name holds significant meaning.

"It was a message of bringing the world together and expressing that peace is very important and we need it every single moment of our lives, because without peace I would not have been able to restart my life here in Canada, or have my family to come here, start a business."

In 2016, Peace by Chocolate donated a month's profits to the relief efforts in support of those fleeing wildfires in Fort McMurray, Alberta. They have also pledged to donate between three and five per cent of all profits to the Peace on Earth Society, a Nova Scotia-based organization that provides funds to peace-building projects around the world.

Peace by Chocolate

Antigonish, Nova Scotia

From refugee to successful entrepreneur: an interview with Tareq Hadhad by Lauren La Rose

THE ROLE OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

International students are widely recognized by economists as important sources of social and economic capital. In this context, universities play a unique role in the realm of immigration. The international students they attract and select make for ideal immigrants and future citizens.

As conveyed through Canada's International Education Strategy, the government of Canada (2014) identified international students as an ideal category of migrants because they have typically "obtained Canadian credentials, are proficient in at least one official language and often have relevant Canadian work experience" (p.12). The International Education Strategy, first tabled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, also pledged an ambitious goal to double the number of international students by 2022. A primary objective of this strategy is to ensure that the increase of international students will contribute to the "economic growth and prosperity in every region of the country" (The Government of Canada, 2014, p.11). However, recent research shows that there is an uneven dispersal of international students across provinces and territories in Canada. The uneven dispersal of international students is problematic because it contributes to an uneven distribution of social and economic capital.

Enriching the intellectual environment of the university and exposing local students to the world.

International students are increasingly seen as an important part of the urban prosperity agenda. They are potential immigrants and employees in aging societies, international students offer future access to global markets and intercultural competencies, and can help open up a community to becoming a welcoming and diverse society.





GOOD IDEA #7

Learning by Doing, Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge Toronto, ON

A university-led refugee sponsorship program creates experiential learning opportunities for students, volunteers and new institutional partnerships across the city.

The Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge (RULSC) was launched in July 2015 with the goal of helping students become driving forces in private refugee resettlement. The RULSC was Canada's first ever university-led, sponsorship organization, and had to work quickly to build an infrastructure that incorporated the needs of students, private sponsors, and newcomer Syrian refugees within the existing private sponsorship framework.

The idea was this: draw on students' expertise, skills, and energy to create a team-based refugee sponsorship model that could scale to other universities and institutions across Canada. Ryerson alumni and community members joined to make teams of five or more persons who would collectively undertake the established financial and settlement-based responsibilities of private refugee sponsorship. Students would support sponsor teams and newcomer families without taking on formal sponsorship liability.

By leveraging students' skills, drive, and fresh perspective on what it means to make Toronto a welcoming community, the success of RULSC led to its growth across three additional Toronto university campuses: the University of Toronto, York University, and OCADU.

How does your local college or university engage in immigration matters?

GOOD IDEA #8

Giving Young Refugees a Shot at Success, SchlaU-Schule **Munich, Germany**

SchlaU-Schule is not just an ordinary school. Loosely translated as 'smart school', it was founded in 2000 by Michael Stenger to address a gap in Germany's asylum system which prevented young refugees over the age of 16 from attending local schools, denying them the right to education and effectively excluding them from an essential step in the settlement process.

The SchlaU curriculum offers a comprehensive approach to refugee youth and unaccompanied young asylum seekers between 16 and 25, structuring courses equivalent to those offered in state schools and offering programmes that address their most urgent needs. Special language training, teaching of regular school curricula, legal assistance and social, pedagogic and psychological support helps prepare students to succeed at the basic state school exam, enabling them to qualify for post-secondary studies or vocational training and a professional career.

What supports are available to international students at your local college or university?

GOOD IDEA #9

Strangers Become Friends **Erfurt, Germany**

Erfurt is a mid-sized city southwest of Leipzig in former East Germany. Thirty years ago, after reunification, it re-established its university and quickly began to attract large numbers of students from around the world as a relatively affordable, desirable destination. City leaders soon realized they needed to embrace its international student population as an engine of growth. The city council, the University of Erfurt, plus the local polytechnic and community college embarked on a project to promote openness and a culture of welcome with the aim of establishing the city's reputation as a friendly and tolerant regional capitol.

The result was Fremde werden Freunde (Strangers Become Friends). The program connects international students with local residents to make them more at home and to open everyone's cultural horizons. The integration of international students into the city's economy was quickly embraced by local business leaders. In 2006, the program was expanded to include the participation of local businesses willing to provide mentors and internships. And with the involvement of the local Chamber of Commerce, expanded to include site visits, job fairs and business events. Enterprises are tapping into a pool of talented young people with technical, linguistic and intercultural skills as well as potential access to international markets.

Social inclusion is a win-win.

ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

An infrastructure of support relies on the support and transformation of existing public institutions and/or local industries like your local hospital, schools, libraries to take part in creating the conditions for inclusivity. Transformations within these sectors may come in the form of inclusive human resource policies, cost-free barriers for participation, resources in multiple languages, or initiatives like language learning on the job. The whole of community approach we adopt, emphasizes the involvement of a diverse set of community stakeholders to create informal conditions for investment.

GOOD IDEA #10

Welcomed in Halifax **Halifax, NS**

A free transit pass for newcomers helps refugees access city services, get to work or school, and explore the city along with their new neighbours

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion, which also houses the Local Immigration Partnership, came up with a number of recommendations to provide support for the refugees in Halifax. Halifax Regional Council recognized that “the attraction and retention of refugees is also likely to contribute to the strength of Halifax’s economy and community and align with previous Council direction.”

Perhaps the most tangible public initiative was the creation of the Welcomed in Halifax (WIH) pass. The pass gives arriving refugees one year of free access to public transportation and municipal recreation facilities and programs (such as swimming lessons, summer camps and many more programs for all family members). Local museums and the Canada Games Centre also provided free admission and access to programs for WIH pass holders.

The program was up and running in time for the Syrian refugee arrivals in December of 2015, and by early 2016 the program was running smoothly. According to Roberto Montiel, Corrdinator of the Local Immigraiton Partnership (LIP) for the Halifax regional municipality, the intention was to make the WIH card available to all refugees, not only the newly arriving Syrians. In 2017 WIH pass eligibility was expanded to refugee-claimants. The city works with Immigration Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) and the Halifax Refugee Clinic to distribute WIH cards to new refugee arrivals.

How accessible are the public services in your city?

GOOD IDEA #11

Navigating Newcomer Health, Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre Ottawa, ON

Health is a settlement issue.

The Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre reflects that reality. A partnership between a local multi-service immigrant and refugee-serving agency (CCI Ottawa) and Somerset West Community Health Centre, the Centre provides culturally competent integration and healthcare services. Co-located in the same building, the Centre has created seamless service transitions between very different service systems.

A full-service medical clinic provides short-term medical services to newcomers until they find a permanent doctor or health-care team.

A Health Navigator program is made up of specially trained, multilingual staff/guides provide short-term advice and guidance to newcomers to navigate the local health system. The Centre was replicated and built on a Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op from Edmonton, Alberta. The Ottawa model is open to any clients who need any kind of health navigation support. This open eligibility has been important. The Centre has found that even citizens who return after a long period of time sometimes need help to re-navigate the healthcare system.

A key goal of the Centre's workers is to educate newcomers about the health care system and employ them to navigate it on their own. Their goal is not to create long-term clients for their medical clinic, but to move clients to more permanent healthcare providers. Clients are allowed to access services for two years. It's working — on average, clients access services for 14 months. They gain enough understanding of the system to act on their own and access services.

How does your local healthcare institution support newcomers?



Conclusion

Cities Matter. Municipal governments are responsible for many of the things that affect our everyday lives – streets, libraries, school boards, police, swimming pools, and soccer fields... As policy makers, service providers, employers and buyers and sellers of services, as wealth creators, and as engines of the national economy, cities are leading the way.

Immigrants Choose. More people are moving today than ever before. But where migration was once led by destination countries and they exercised their choices about the best and the brightest, today immigrants choose.

The best integration strategies focus on making cities attractive to potential migrants, and creating the conditions for investment, attachment and belonging.

Diversity is a fact. Inclusion is a choice. An immigrant-competent city doesn't wait for migrants to reach out to the city, but rather reaches out to them first, by ensuring that the city speaks their language and can deliver when members of the public seek service or want to participate in public processes.

And the city is, of course, a representative body. It's all of us. So, a shift from integration to inclusion means active participation and engagement from all of us. The engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders across a range of sectors creates more than an immigrant-friendly city, but an immigrant-competent city.

