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Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity

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Metropolis British Columbia

Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity

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METROPOLIS BR

WORKING PAPER 11-01

"MARKETS AND DIVERSITY": AN OVERVIEW

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

How has the "physical" or "real" marketplace been theorized previously across disciplines, periods, and regions? What are the major themes of the literature examining diversity in the marketplace?

IMPORTANCE:

Marketplaces have long existed as spaces of economic and social/cultural contact and exchange. These spaces take a diversity of forms: market buildings, open-air markets, street markets, purpose-built markets, periodic markets, festival markets, permanent and mobile markets, and so on. These are often sites where difference is encountered (i.e., ethnicity, race, culture, gender, class) in the process of buying and selling. The marketplace allows us to consider the ways in which diversity plays out in different contexts, in both the global north and south, although surprisingly few scholars have considered diversity and markets together. This working paper is driven by the potential of marketplaces to serve as sites of meaningful interaction between diverse groups of people.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Interaction between diverse groups in the marketplace can encourage a sense of shared identity, hybridity, or appreciation of difference. These spaces serve as meeting places and as sites of economic participation for diverse people that may go beyond the one-sided consumption of ethnicity. Contact, however, can also reinforce social difference and exacerbate pre-existing tensions, particularly under circumstances of economic competition. Seven major themes emerge from the literature: 1) The social dynamics of trade in the marketplace; 2) Markets as spaces of contact. 3) Consuming diversity: Orientalism and cosmopolitanism; 4) Markets and the state: Governance and policy; 5) The political economy of the marketplace; 6) Markets and social inclusion; and 7) The spatiality of the marketplace.

IMPLICATIONS:

A key question raised by the literature review concerns the types of market spaces—and conditions—that encourage meaningful interaction. How can these discourses of multiculturalism and tourism be reconciled with the social and economic function of marketplaces? What is the relationship between economic transaction, sociability, and diversity? Can we plan for these spaces? Further research is needed on the conditions supporting positive and meaningful social and economic marketplace exchanges between diverse people.

WORKING PAPER 11-02

MYSTERY SHIPS AND RISKY BOAT PEOPLE: TAMIL REFUGEE MIGRATION IN THE NEWSPRINT MEDIA

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

On October 17, 2009, seventy-six Tamil refugees arrived off the coast of Victoria, British Columbia. This study examines how the Canadian newsprint media portrayed this event and in which policy context this coverage occurred

IMPORTANCE:

The spectacle which surrounded the Tamil boat arrival had created the necessary discursive environment and sense of urgency to push Bill-C11 through parliament relatively quickly. This spectacle fostered a sense of anxiety around a multitude of issues, including crime, terrorism, and national security, in connection to the refugee system that was supposedly failing. As in previous cases, a small group of “boat people” became a symbolic catalyst for political action and legislative reform

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Our results show that there was an overall negative representation of the Tamil refugees as the press emphasized issues of criminality and terrorism, and constructed the refugees as risk. The discussion established security—rather than human rights—as a focal point and portrayed the immigration system as both “failing” and “abused” by “bogus claimants.” The initial reports published by the press tend to be vital in shaping media and political narratives relating to events and the people involved. In this case, inaccurate media statements and poor fact-checking seemed to have lasting repercussions,

and mistakes remained embedded in narratives used by government officials to push for policy changes.

IMPLICATIONS:

Important policy recommendations emerge from our analysis and the most recent events. The media are inseparable from the political process. If media and political debates rely mostly on each other for information and knowledge, they then establish a closed discursive circle that silences dissent and stifles oppositional intervention. This is particularly problematic when discourses are based on information and knowledge that is obviously biased, selectively sequenced, and prioritised, and when important facts are omitted and critical voices are silenced.

WORKING PAPER 11-03

HIGH-SKILL MIGRATION TO CANADA AND SWITZERLAND: RETENTION, ATTRACTION AND COMPETITION WITH THE UNITED STATES THROUGH POLICY

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

Are small countries like Canada and Switzerland able to attract and retain skilled workers (i.e., brains) in the face of the magnet role played by the United States?

IMPORTANCE:

Industrialised economies have had to re-invent their comparative advantage to foster economic growth. To do so, they count on innovation and attracting foreign skilled workers. Between 1990 and 2000, the skill content of Canadian, Swiss and American expatriates in each of the three countries increased drastically; yet, the two smaller economies are worried about losing in the competition against the United States for brains. Immigration policy is one tool that has been used to attract brains under very different models: Canada has a supply-driven permanent settlement policy while Switzerland has a demand-driven immigration policy. Meanwhile, the United States is perceived as a natural magnet in part because of its stimulating work environment. Hence, other skill-oriented policies that foster innovations and likely play a role in influencing a brain's decision to move have also been used to attract foreign skilled workers. Some argue, however, that they have not been strategically developed and thus are inefficient. Both Canada and Switzerland are high-income economies with a large skilled labour force, and both have used skill-related policies along with their targeted immigration policy but not with the same intensity. Also, the two countries are linked together and with the United States by relatively large brain

exchanges (two-way flow for a given occupation category) as well as brain gains/losses (one-way flow for a given occupation category). So the question is, what drives those flows and to what extent do they respond to skill-oriented policies? Alternatively, can Canada and Switzerland improve retention and attraction of foreign brains by using policies other than their immigration policy? And if so, are they doing it?

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The analysis of bilateral flows for twelve occupation categories of managers, professionals and technicians between the three countries shows that highly skilled people are attracted to Canada, Switzerland, and the United States for different reasons. The United States does act as a magnet, but some of the reasons why Canadian and Swiss brains move originate in their home country. Skill-oriented policies such as R&D spending by the two countries offer a win-win situation as they contribute to professional and technical skill retention/attraction. Yet, in the early twenty-first century, Canada seems to have lost ground in the race to attract skills as R&D spending declined. Finally, academics are irremediably attracted to the United States, especially when the quality of the research at home improves.

IMPLICATIONS:

Immigration policy, especially when supply-driven, is not sufficient to attract/retain brains, and skill-oriented policies like R&D spending can play a major role in combatting the attraction of the United States. Unfortunately, compared to Switzerland, Canada has not recently gone in this direction.

WORKING PAPER 11-04

MEXICAN MIGRANT AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND ACCOMMODATIONS IN FARMS IN THE OKANAGAN VALLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA.

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

What are the accommodations for Mexican migrant labourers working on farms in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley?

IMPORTANCE:

Our study examines the growing number of migrant farm workers coming to the Okanagan under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP). It is the first to investigate, discuss, and present the housing conditions of foreign farm workers in the Okanagan, the second most important agricultural region in BC.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Our research showed that the quality of Mexican farm workers' accommodations is inconsistent. The problems are partly the result of a lack of government oversight as well as a lack of transparency in housing inspections. In addition, we found that the SAWP wholly benefits farmers and does little to protect farm workers from abuse and exploitation by unscrupulous employers. On the contrary, its policies reinforce the workers' vulnerability and deny them the right to complain about their treatment. Furthermore, the Canadian and provincial governments have dismantled labour legislation and protections that could have allowed migrant workers to express their grievances without fear of reprisal. Finally, our research found that the Mexican Consulate pays little attention to their compatriots' complaints with regard to their living and working conditions on Okanagan farms.

IMPLICATIONS:

Our paper makes several policy recommendations. First, the Mexican government must take a leadership role in addressing farm workers' concerns. This would include making regular visits to farms to discuss workers' issues. Second, there must be a strong push to allow migrant workers the opportunity to become landed immigrants. Having this process in place would go a long way to minimizing the abuse and sense of entrapment many workers feel by being tied to one employer and one labour market. Third, the provincial government must take steps to ensure uniformity in housing accommodations for farm workers. For instance, they must increase the number of people conducting housing inspections in the Okanagan Valley. They must also ensure that there is an arm's length relationship between the farmer and the inspector and proper transparency and accountability in the inspection process. Finally, the government should ensure that farmers provide workers with some independent means of transportation.

WORKING PAPER 11-05

COLOUR BY NUMBERS: MINORITY EARNINGS IN CANADA 1996-2006

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

We assess the degree to which Canadian-born minorities face earnings differentials as well as the degree to which those differentials have changed over time. Because minority workers are younger and more educated than majority workers, we control for age, education, and many other characteristics of workers. Some estimates control for personal characteristics (age, education, marital status, official language knowledge, and census metropolitan area of residence). Others control for both personal characteristics and work characteristics (occupation, industry sector, weeks of work, and full-time or part-time status).

IMPORTANCE:

About half of the Canadian population report origins other than British, French, or Canadian, and about one in five report non-European origins. People of non-European origin are concentrated in Canada's large cities, some of which will be majority non-white within twenty years. As Canada becomes more ethnically diverse, is it becoming more economically integrated?

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

We find that the earnings gaps faced by Canadian-born visible minorities have not eroded since the 1990s. This is somewhat surprising given that the size of this population has radically increased over the last twenty years. Other patterns observed in the 1990s, such as the relatively poor earnings outcomes of South Asians and Blacks and the relatively poor visible minority outcomes in Montreal and Toronto, are still evident into the 2000s. An exception to the bleak outlook is that persons of both Caribbean and Aboriginal origins have seen substantial convergence in their earnings relative to majority workers.

IMPLICATIONS:

Since visible minority earnings gaps have not gotten smaller as Canadian society has become "less white," we are not confident that the mere passage of time will erase visible minority economic disparity. This suggests that activist anti-discrimination policy may be warranted in the coming decades.

THE GROWING CULTURE OF EXCLUSION: TRENDS IN CANADIAN REFUGEE EXCLUSIONS

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

What effects have heightened security concerns had on Canadian refugee law following 9/11?

IMPORTANCE:

This research seeks to empirically test competing claims that, alternatively, Canadian refugee law is 'soft on terrorists' or that Canadian refugee law tramples individual rights by excluding people inappropriately.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Exclusion numbers have increased sharply since 2001, but remain very low (less than 0.5%) as a proportion of overall claims. Judicial analysis of exclusion law appears strongly influenced by concerns about terrorism.

IMPLICATIONS:

It is clear that some individuals who have not committed any criminal acts will be excluded from refugee protection in Canada as terrorists, and that this is more likely to occur now than it would have prior to 2001.

WORKING PAPER 11-07

IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT TRAJECTORIES AND OUTCOMES IN THE FIRST SETTLEMENT YEARS: A SEQUENCE-ORIENTED APPROACH

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

I address two key questions. First, what do new immigrants' month-by-month trajectories in and through the labor market look like? To what extent do we see quick transitions to stable employment versus patterns indicative of more complicated and/or different modes of incorporation? Second, how do differences in the types of trajectories relate to the wages immigrants earn and their chances of working in their pre-immigration occupation (or one of higher status) four years after arrival?

IMPORTANCE:

Immigration scholars are increasingly attentive to how the host-society context shapes settlement outcomes. This underlines the importance of considering experiences *after* immigration. Yet the existing quantitative literature provides limited insight into the complexity of labor market trajectories after immigration, or the relationship between how employment experiences unfold after settlement and later employment outcomes.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Using optimal matching and cluster analysis, I identify seven types of immigrant labour market trajectories. These trajectories shape employment outcomes four years after arrival in Canada, although more strongly for wages than for occupational attainment. The pathway most indicative of “successful” labor market incorporation entails rapid entry into full-time continuous employment. “Quick integration” is characterized by the greatest employment stability, the lowest risks of non-employment, and the highest likelihood of full-time employment. All else equal, immigrants who follow this path also typically earn the highest wages four years after immigration, and are less likely to experience occupational degradation. Slightly less than half (47%) of immigrant men and 27% of women follow this type of pathway.

IMPLICATIONS:

For the majority of immigrants, labor market integration does not occur via a single transition to employment. Because multiple moves in and out of different types of employment and non-employment activity are common, focusing on single transitions or outcomes at one point in time can be misleading. In particular, although quick integration into full-time work results in the best outcomes for immigrants who persist in this type of employment, promoting early labor force attachment is not always the best strategy. For a substantial proportion of immigrants, rapid entry into full-time employment does not work out, leading instead to a prolonged period churning through other types of employment and non-employment activities. Such immigrants ultimately earn lower wages than those who delay entry into full-time work (often to pursue schooling), even though the latter tend to spend less time working full-time overall. For immigrants who are not immediately employable in good jobs, providing support for longer job-search and/or educational upgrading would thus appear to result in better outcomes in the long-run than a focus on immediate employment.

WORKING PAPER 11-08

FISCAL TRANSFERS TO IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

The Fraser Institute recently released a new study (Grady and Grubel 2011) that estimates the fiscal burden created by immigrants arriving in Canada between 1987 and 2004. The central finding of this study is that "in the fiscal year 2005/2006 the immigrants on average received an excess of \$6,051 in benefits over taxes paid". There are a number of errors and inconsistencies in their analysis. This report identifies some of the issues related to internal and external validity and presents a corrected estimate of the fiscal transfer that Grady and Grubel sought to estimate.

IMPORTANCE:

One of the common issues contested by analysts and policymakers is whether immigrants fully pay---in terms of taxes---for the public services they use.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

We find a fiscal transfer from Canadian-born residents to immigrants of \$450 per immigrant. This is much smaller than the figure of \$6,051 per immigrant reported by Grady and Grubel.

IMPLICATIONS:

There is a fiscal transfer from Canadian-born residents to immigrants. This takes the form of a shortfall in taxes paid by immigrants relative to the services used, after adjusting for the funding of public goods. We find a fiscal transfer in 2005 of \$450 per immigrant from the population of Canadian-born residents to the population of immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1970 and 2004. With more than 4 million immigrants in this group, this represents a fiscal transfer of nearly \$2 billion per year.

Fiscal transfers reflect just one aspect of the contribution of immigrants to the Canadian economy. There are many others, typically much harder to quantify, but that are nonetheless important to our economic life. These include, for example, the effects of immigrants on international trade, the labour market performance of Canadian residents, the variety of goods and services available, and the housing market. Nonetheless, a credible estimate of the fiscal transfer to immigrants is useful to focus policy debate.

WORKING PAPER 11-09

TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF WORKING WITH OLDER IMMIGRANT YOUTH: LESSONS LEARNED FROM
A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

What are the service needs and challenges of refugee youth and young adults? What service model would best facilitate their successful settlement in Canadian society?

IMPORTANCE:

Although only about 10 percent of newcomers coming to Canada are refugees, they face more barriers than other newcomers in the settlement process for a variety of reasons. This is particularly true of refugee youth and young adults. Their capacity to make decisions and manage the pressures of transition are impacted not only by their refugee status and experience but also by their lack of social support, their difficulties in cultural adjustment, and the practical demands of survival. Unfortunately, however, these needs are not being effectively met in regular youth programming and settlement services thus far. In view of the predicaments of this group of youth, the British Columbia government has funded some demonstration projects to explore a better way to service them. This paper reports the findings of a university-community collaborative study of one of these projects.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Findings reported in this paper were based on a study of a demonstration project, FreeRunning (FR), a program customized for refugee youth and young adults. The findings indicate that refugee youth and young adults have many needs, including language acquisition, cultural adaptation, stable income and housing, social support, and employment. However, compared to other youth, refugee youth have relatively more unsettled, dynamic, and fluid life conditions that tend to interfere with their participation in social programs. Upon their exit and during the three-month follow-up interview, most of the participants reported a positive outcome. In general, participants were satisfied with the program, though many desired more occupational training and employment opportunities. The positive results indicate the FR team's effort to adjust the program to meet the complex needs and dynamic and fluid life conditions of the participants. Learning from the experience of these participants and the challenges of operating the program during its first year, we propose a

service model for refugee youth that emphasizes a flexible design, as programs based on a highly structured, routine model may not fit well with their unsettled conditions.

IMPLICATIONS:

Although this study was only limited to a small group of participants in one demonstration project, the findings may shed light on the unique needs and challenges of many refugee youth. Satisfying their settlement needs may require integrative and flexible programming. Based on the success of this project (as reflected by the responses of the participants), the evidence-informed model proposed in this paper may inform future policy and program design for this unique group of youth.

WORKING PAPER 11-10

IMMIGRANT CATEGORY, SOCIAL NETWORKS AND ETHNIC WORKPLACES OVER TIME: A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF IMMIGRANTS' ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN CANADA

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

This paper examines how the choice of ethnic or non-ethnic workplace influences the ethnic composition of social networks, how these factors impact immigrants' economic success, and how these patterns differ across immigrant categories.

IMPORTANCE:

Immigrants who arrive under economic, family, and refugee immigration categories differ in terms of their resources, their forms of capital, and their perceived suitability for contributing to a particular economy. Immigration policies largely sort them into distinct pathways of incorporation and, as such, it is critical to understand the impact on immigrant integration.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Our study shows that immigrant categories, or the different types of immigrants selected by contemporary immigration policies, need to be factored into considerations of the economic benefits of the ethnic economy. It is not simply a matter of whether "immigrants" can achieve mobility through their ethnic communities to avoid the structural barriers in the primary labor market, or if the open economy provides them with greater advantages in the long term. Rather, certain immigrants face penalties in parts of the economy that other immigrants do not. Real structural barriers exist, preventing family immigrants who

work in the non-ethnic economy from receiving the same returns to their human capital as economic immigrants.

IMPLICATIONS:

Immigrant policies, by sorting immigrants into different visa categories based on their resources and economic suitability, help to create these segmented trajectories of incorporation.

WORKING PAPER 11-11

FROM 'ONE NATION, ONE PEOPLE' TO 'OPERATION SWAAGATEM': BHUTANESE REFUGEES IN COQUITLAM, BC

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

What elements are needed to prepare a city for a new refugee population from protracted situations? What can we learn from arrivals in year one that can be incorporated into subsequent year groups, in particular the piloting of a refugee youth pre-departure orientation program? How well are refugees from protracted situations like those in Nepal integrating into Canadian society?

IMPORTANCE:

Since IRPA, CIC has implemented several new directions in the selection of resettled refugees from abroad (Presse and Thompson 2007). The increased use of group processing, the resettlement of refugees from protracted refugee camp situations, an increase in special need cases and the selection of refugees with no pre-existing presence in Canada (e.g. Achenese, Rohigayas) are all current trends (Yu et al. 2007). As such, the research and toolkit documenting the planning process and initial settlement experiences will be helpful by other RAP service providers across Canada and by Canadian policymakers. Researching initial settlement experiences will greatly help in future program/policy design for subsequent year arrivals in Canada. Lastly, the impact on local refugee destining practices has significant implications for local neighbourhoods, schools, and health care providers. In addition, the project will help define factors and elements essential to building a welcoming and inclusive host community.



RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Early consideration of the settlement outcomes of Bhutanese GARs in Coquitlam offer both positive indicators and cause for concern. Although dependence on government transfers (e.g., RAP, social assistance) remains widespread, and families are experiencing housing stress, the relatively small household sizes mean crowding is less severe than other refugee groups in Metro Vancouver. Although unemployment is high, early attachments to the labour market through paid or volunteer work are promising. While there is a long way to go before success can be claimed, the lower affordability challenges and higher employment being experienced are in stark contrast to earlier groups. Another positive development is the extent to which Bhutanese newcomers are utilizing formal services and programs. The planning process and partnerships established in the months preceding the GARs' arrival have facilitated increased flexibility in responding to the new problems and challenges that arise for the Bhutanese.

IMPLICATIONS:

We outline twenty specific policy recommendations to facilitate better pre-arrival planning and settlement outcomes. Key among these is the need for sufficient notice to enable RAP contracted agencies to engage in a pre-arrival planning process; enhanced early intervention support services; and a specialized pre-departure Canadian Orientation Abroad program for refugee youth and young adults.

WORKING PAPER 11-12**COUNTERING RADICALIZATION OF DIASPORA COMMUNITIES IN CANADA**

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

1) What factors may promote radicalization and terrorism from diaspora communities in Canada? and 2) What strategies can security, policing, and justice organizations employ to detect or reduce radicalization and prevent terrorism within these communities?

IMPORTANCE:

In recent years, North America has seen an increase in the number of cases of home-grown extremism and radicalization amongst diaspora communities involving recent immigrants as well as second and third generation residents and citizens. Diaspora communities have a long history of producing violence in Canada and can import conflict rapidly to Canada's shores.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The authors conducted a thorough literature review and examined over 60 cases of radicalization amongst diaspora communities in North America, which included individuals with first- or second-generation roots in more than 30 different countries. Radicalization in Canada is multi-faceted, and several diaspora communities still suffer from small, unabashed radical elements within them, including the Tamil, Sikh, Arab, and Muslim diasporas. Radical groups and individuals appear to have failed to integrate into a tolerant democracy, or they have turned away and embraced a radicalized subculture that has taken root through a perversion of the freedoms afforded by multiculturalism. There is no single path to radicalization, and there is no guaranteed deradicalization method. There are viable models for dealing with radicalization in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East that could be modified for use here. There is no evidence to suggest that Canada's radicalization problem will diminish on its own.

IMPLICATIONS:

Canada should develop a national counterradicalization strategy that is complemented with targeted policies and programs that deter and prevent future radicalization as well as a formal deradicalization program. These efforts should be supported by culturally-sensitive community policing and voluntary self-policing within diaspora communities. The variety of violent groups tied to North American diaspora communities suggest the need for policies and programs that address both secular and religious organizations.

WORKING PAPER 11-13**WHY DO SOME EMPLOYERS PREFER TO INTERVIEW MATTHEW BUT NOT SAMIR? NEW EVIDENCE FROM TORONTO, MONTREAL, AND VANCOUVER**

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

Why do some Canadian employers prefer to interview Matthew but not Samir?

IMPORTANCE:

In earlier work sponsored by Metropolis British Columbia (Oreopoulos 2009), thousands of resumes were sent in response to online job postings across Toronto to investigate why Canadian immigrants struggle in the labour market. The findings suggested significant discrimination by name ethnicity and city of experience. This follow-up study focuses more on better understanding exactly why this type of discrimination occurs, that is, whether this discrimination can be attributed to underlying concerns about worker productivity or simply prejudice and whether the behaviour is likely conscious or not. We examine callback rates from resumes sent to online job postings across multiple occupations in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver, and we interview recruiters to explain why they believe name discrimination occurs.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Employers across Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver significantly discriminate against applicants with common Indian and Chinese names relative to English names. The callback rate differences are larger in Montreal, while smaller in Vancouver. Name-based discrimination remains largely unaffected by including other indicators of language or social skills, comparing occupations that require less of these skills, and by using European names, more likely second-generation applicants, than Chinese or Indian names. Our quantitative evidence thus suggests productivity concerns cannot explain name bias. On the other hand, recruiters responded that employers often treat a name as a signal that an applicant may lack language or social skills. Together, these contrasting findings suggest a model of 'subconscious' or 'implicit' discrimination, where employers justify name and immigrant discrimination based on language skill concerns, but incorrectly overemphasize these concerns without taking into account offsetting characteristics listed on the resume. Pressure to avoid bad hires exacerbates these effects, as does the need to review resumes quickly.

IMPLICATIONS:

Masking names when deciding who to interview, and training recruiters to be more aware of possible bias, while considering better ways to discern foreign language ability may help improve immigrants' chances for labour market success.

WORKING PAPER 11-14

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE COMMUNITY SERVICES PLAY IN THE ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE SOUTH OKANAGAN

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

The research pursued three goals. First, it sought to identify gaps in the delivery of services to immigrant populations living in the South Okanagan. Second, it sought to develop recommendations that would remedy identified service gaps. In turn, this research agenda unfolded against the background of a broader query: what role do community services play in the successful attraction and retention of permanent immigrants to areas such as the South Okanagan?

IMPORTANCE:

The research responds to a gap in the geography of social provision as immigration continues to reshape the social geography of Canada. As the literature notes, Canadian immigration has a distinct urban dimension, as new arrivals prefer to settle in major metropolitan areas for a variety of reasons, for example, the availability of jobs and the presence of co-ethnic networks. At the same time, rural, rapidly aging regions like the South Okanagan face the prospect of economic and demographic decline. This prospect has, as a result, generated interest in the regionalization of immigration, and this research offers a qualitative assessment of the role community services may play in the attraction and retention of immigrants to such regions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The report concludes that immigrants in the South Okanagan face two major obstacles in the use of community services. The first concerns their physical access to such services. As the report notes, the near absence of an effective public transportation system compounds the physical distances that often separate immigrants in different parts of the region from relevant services, particularly settlement services. The second obstacle concerns the financial instability facing immigrants. Many of the surveyed immigrants rely on low paying 'survival jobs' in the region's cyclical tourism and service industry. This, in turn, limits their ability to reliably use settlement services. Overall, the report found that the region's high living costs and low supply of economic opportunities discourages im-

migrants, even as they report general satisfaction with the level of available services. The report also highlights future lines of research.

IMPLICATIONS:

The findings of the report have fed a number of recommendations that highlight the importance of improving the broader social and economic conditions of the region. Practically, they call on local stakeholders to improve planning and coordination on matters that impact immigrants, focus efforts on economic development, and build additional community capacities in a number of social policy areas such as transportation and housing. The report, however, also reminds stakeholders of potential alternatives and limits to the regionalization of immigration as a response to the economic and demographic problems confronting the region. Potential alternatives include increasing the region's growing reliance on imported labour from Mexico and elsewhere. Limits include the region's history of racism and its stressed ecological capacity.

WORKING PAPER 11-15

THE PRECARIOUS MIGRANT STATUS AND PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT: THE PARADOX OF INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

Do international human rights instruments specifically designed to protect migrant workers' rights have the potential to challenge the role of immigration law in producing precarious employment?

IMPORTANCE:

This paper provides a taxonomy that maps the link between migrant status and precarious employment, which it uses to explore the nexus between precarious migrant status and precarious employment in the three "low-skill" streams – the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, the Live-in-Caregiver Program, and the Pilot Project for Occupations Requiring Lower Levels of Formal Training (NOC C and D) – in the Canadian Temporary Foreign Worker Program. After demonstrating the relationship between precarious migrant workers and precarious employment, the paper evaluates the capacity of international human rights instruments specifically designed for migrant workers to address the problem of precarious employment.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The main problem with relying on the international migrant workers' rights instruments is that they defer to the principle of state sovereignty over immigration policy and accept the right of states to impose restrictions on non-national's employment rights in exchange for the privilege to enter host state territory. Although these instruments limit the duration for which a migrant worker's work authorization is tied to a specific employer to two years, this state-sanctioned subordination of migrant workers to employers creates a situation ripe for abuse.

IMPLICATIONS:

To break the link between precarious migrant status and precarious employment it is crucial for nation states to develop forms of restrictions on migrant workers' mobility, such as sectoral and occupational work authorizations, that are less likely to be as exploitative as authorizations that tie migrant workers to specific employers.

WORKING PAPER 11-16

'YOU HAVE TO STAND UP FOR YOURSELF': AFRICAN IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE TEENS NEGOTIATE SETTLEMENT IN VANCOUVER

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

This research examines how adolescent immigrants and refugees from countries in sub-Saharan Africa negotiate settlement in Metro Vancouver. The key questions addressed are: 1) What are the main challenges facing African youth who arrive in Canada during their teen years? 2) What strategies do they develop to navigate new social relationships, cultural expectations, and institutional structures in high school? 3) What policy recommendations will support and strengthen African youth's own strategies for successful integration?

IMPORTANCE:

Adolescence is a particularly difficult time to migrate to another country. Youth must acquire new social and cultural capital to successfully navigate adult roles in the context of a significant 'clash' between expectations in African cultures and in Canada. Generational tensions between parents and teens, discouragement in school, low academic achievement and high drop-out rates, can lead to limited career prospects and impaired social cohesion in the long term.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Adolescent immigrants and refugees from sub-Saharan Africa face significant challenges that can be clustered into two main categories: challenges related to a 'culture clash' between African and Canadian norms and values, and structural conditions affecting integration, including the organization of the school system. To navigate these challenges, African teens in this research learned to 'fit in' with their peers while 'standing up' for themselves in relation to peers and teachers and drawing on parental supports and African cultural values to develop gendered strategies to overcome difficulties. The experiences of these teens provides a vantage point from which to recommend programs that could help to shore up rather than erode the youthful resilience migrant teens bring with them to Canada.

IMPLICATIONS:

This study supports earlier research that argues we are failing to provide adequate supports to prevent more immigrant and refugee teens from sub-Saharan Africa from falling through the cracks in the current patchwork system of programs and services in Metro Vancouver.

Five key policy recommendations emerge: 1) The importance of early intervention, such as high school orientation programs to orient migrant youth and parents to the Canadian school system and youth culture; 2) More resources put into the school system to ensure the individualized responses African adolescents require to be challenged and supported to work up to their full potential; 3) Building on the resilience of African adolescents requires programming and services that foster dense networks of relationships such as mentorship programs and increased opportunities for African youth to come together; 4) Programs and activities should draw more on African cultural traditions, including the performing arts, to build self-confidence, self-esteem and empowerment that helps adolescents navigate the pitfalls of North American youth culture; 5) Developing programs that are responsive to community needs requires spaces for the co-creation of knowledge linked to non-hierarchical African traditions of knowledge generation and translation.

WORKING PAPER 11-17

LONE PARENT STATUS AMONG ETHNIC GROUPS IN CANADA: CENSUS DATA EXPLORATIONS ON ITS PREVALENCE, COMPOSITION AND GENERATIONAL PERSISTENCE ASPECTS

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

The 2006 Canadian census data allowed the exploration of important research questions. For instance, which ethnic groups in Canada have the highest lone-parenthood rates? Which groups have the lowest? Do common-law status family choices usually accompany lone-parenthood choices? What demographic differences may be noticeable by the birthplace, visible minority status or ethnicity of family members? Are there, perhaps, observable signs of cycles of lone parenthood whereby lone parent status in one generation is reproduced in the next one?

IMPORTANCE:

Research in the area of lone parenthood and ethnicity in Canada has both social inclusion and significant human rights relevance.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Using custom tabulations from the 2006 Census, the analysis focused on the prevalence, composition, and generational persistence of the lone parenthood phenomenon among selected ethnic groups in Canada. The census data suggests that, among the 16.3 million adult census family members living in census families, visible minority rates of reporting were higher both among its foreign-born and Canadian-born members compared to the non-visible minority population. There were noticeable over-representations of individuals reporting lone-parent family status among Aboriginal groups and visible minorities, particularly those of Black and/or Latin American backgrounds. In terms of ethnic origins, lone parenthood was prevalent among Individuals reporting Somali (38%), Jamaican (29%), Haitian (27%), Trinidadian-Tobagonian (20%), and North American Indian (16%) ethnic ancestries. Lone parenthood was most rare among Chinese and South Asian (below 5%) as well as most European groups, excluding the Spanish group (12%). In terms of generational persistence of lone parenthood, the data suggests that both common-law unions and lone-parenthood family arrangements increased with a longer immigration history in Canada for most birthplace, visible minority, and ethnic origin groups examined. High lone-parenthood prevalence in combination with lower socioeconomic status weakens family resources and increases economic and social vulnerability of many ethnic minority

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families, affecting the life chances of parents (mostly women) and their children in successive generations.

IMPLICATIONS:

The social policy focus on single parents as a monolithic group should be changed and replaced with a more dynamic analysis across the life cycle of ethnic families, particularly those of Aboriginal and visible minority backgrounds. This entails developing more integrated strategies that could better assist vulnerable populations. Generic forms of assistance that take forms of income support could be complemented with more ethno-specific programs of assistance to immigrant serving agencies and community organizations attempting to reach disadvantaged lone parents of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Lone mothers cope with unique challenges and make family decisions in different sociocultural milieus (e.g. with respect to decisions regarding teenage pregnancies, cohabitation, birth outside marriage, re-partnering and step parenthood). The demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds of these women also have to be taken into account, as many tend to be younger and less university educated. Regardless of the ethnic background of parents, however, good policy interventions should have to occur in a climate of respect for the cultural backgrounds of lone parents, the right they have to control their lives and remain fully independent.

WORKING PAPER 11-18

SHAKY FOUNDATIONS: PRECARIOUS HOUSING AND HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS AMONG REFUGEES, ASYLUM SEEKERS, AND IMMIGRANTS IN METRO VANCOUVER

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

What are the housing circumstances of newcomers, specifically refugees, to Metro Vancouver, including the barriers they face to securing adequate, suitable, and affordable housing?

IMPORTANCE:

The report is based on findings from the Metro Vancouver portion of a large comparative national study that, for the first time, applied a single systematic methodology to the study of three groups of newcomers (economic immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers) in Canada's three major immigrant and refugee receiving centers, Montréal, Toronto, and Vancouver. The study also updates research undertaken prior to the current

economic downturn when acquiring good jobs and, therefore, housing may have been easier.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Adolescent immigrants and refugees from sub-Saharan Africa face significant challenges. Drawing on results from 185 surveys and five focus groups, the report finds that immigration category and housing outcome are closely linked in that people who enter Canada through humanitarian streams are more likely than economic immigrants to lack the resources needed to find and maintain adequate and affordable housing. Overarching themes dominating the lives of both refugee claimants and sponsored refugees include poverty, substandard housing that is also unaffordable and often overcrowded, and homelessness, both hidden and absolute. At the same time, by focusing on people using settlement services, the report reveals a subset of economic immigrants who struggle alongside refugees to obtain adequate housing.

IMPLICATIONS:

The report identifies several critical issues for policy, including: the availability of affordable rental housing; access to subsidized housing, including transitional housing for refugee claimants; the need for a centralized, reliable Housing Resource Centre; the mandate of immigrant serving agencies; monthly RAP amounts and the requirement for GARs to repay the transportation loan; and orientation services for GARs.

WORKING PAPER 11-19

**SETTLEMENT EXPERIENCES OF FAMILY CLASS IMMIGRANTS IN A SMALL CITY: KAMLOOPS,
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

What is the settlement experience of family class immigrants in Kamloops, British Columbia? Related research questions include: What is the role of health, education, employment, language, housing and social services in the settlement experiences of immigrants coming through family reunion intake class? How do family class immigrants in Kamloops identify their settlement needs within a small city? What components of



cultural continuity are identified as key by newcomers? What supports do family class immigrants require in facilitating their settlement experiences? How do we enhance existing settlement programs, particularly to meet labour market and language needs? What are “best practices” in settlement and integration in a small city?

IMPORTANCE:

The importance of undertaking this study lies in the settlement challenges faced by immigrants in smaller communities outside of the major metropolitan areas of Canada. British Columbia (BC) is a large province and settlement experiences can be very different from one community to another. During the past few years initiatives to attract immigrants to smaller cities and communities have been undertaken collaboratively between both federal and provincial governments. It is imperative to better understand the settlement experience of family class immigrants in a smaller city.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Employment, business and education opportunities, family and friends, established ethnic and religious communities, the provision of settlement and integration services, access to health care and affordable housing, and a welcoming population were identified as important factors to successful settlement. Retention issues identified were affordability of basic life needs, accessibility to services for themselves and their children (health care, education), safety, community openness and acceptance, and proximity to services, employment and activities. The research findings revealed six themes under the following headings, 1) the advantages of settling in a small city, 2) the role of employment in the settlement experience, 3) the role of health, education, language, housing and social services in the settlement experience, 4) the identified settlement needs in Kamloops, 5) key components of cultural continuity beneficial to newcomers, and 6) supports required to facilitate positive settlement experiences.

IMPLICATIONS:

Smaller cities must realize that to become more attractive immigration destinations, they must implement new strategies that promote fairness and justice to attract and retain newcomers and to provide adequate support systems, particularly in the context of the local economy. This is imperative in health, education, and social services. The results of the study will generate discussion and policy recommendations for government, practitioners, policy-makers and other stakeholders around issues such as the needs and

settlement experiences of immigrants, credential recognition, employment and other labour market issues, and welcoming and inclusive community capacity issues for delivering key services in a smaller community

WORKING PAPER 11-20

IMMIGRANTS AND LOW-PAID WORK: PERSISTENT PROBLEMS, ENDURING CONSEQUENCES

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

This paper investigates the costs and consequences of low-paid work for immigrants. Using data gathered during four community-led focus groups, we examine why immigrants tend to become trapped in low-income jobs and identify potential strategies and solutions for overcoming social and economic disadvantage.

IMPORTANCE:

Since the mid-1980s, immigrants face higher levels of unemployment and poverty, tend to become “stuck” in low-wage and insecure jobs, and have more difficulty meeting the rising cost of living standards than domestically-born Canadians. While many issues in this report are well known, we bring attention to the everyday experiences of social and economic disadvantage, the chronic nature of these issues and the inadequacy of existing legislation and immigrant services.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

The majority of immigrants who participated in the study described a clear gap between their expectations of economic opportunities in Canada and their actual labour market experiences. Despite relatively high educational levels and professional work experience, many immigrants found themselves in “survival employment” – that is, jobs that support basic livelihood needs rather than jobs that utilize one’s education, skills, and work experience. Limited English skills, non-recognition of international credentials, and lack of “Canadian experience” were the most commonly cited reasons. More significant, however, was the disconnect between Canada’s immigration policy, which actively recruits skilled and educated immigrants, and restrictive employment policies and practices that confine many immigrants to low-paid, insecure work.

IMPLICATIONS:

Proposed solutions for change include: (1) increased dialogue between immigrant communities and the government; (2) addressing the needs of long-term immigrants in immigrant settlement services and programs; (3) affordable childcare to both immigrants and BC residents; and (4) more community spaces for immigrants to discuss shared problems and develop collective solutions.

