A Systems Perspective on Canadian Immigration

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Submitted to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Design in Strategic Foresight and Innovation in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. August 2014.

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ABSTRACT

Canada relies on immigration for its future prosperity. Its population is not growing fast enough to replenish the large number of workers set to retire and this means that the country cannot maintain its economic status nor can it develop and advance. Immigration is a solution to this problem.

Yet, despite years of policy changes designed to improve the immigration system, certain problems continue to exist. Immigrants continue to experience economic and cultural hardships in the settlement phase. Using systems thinking methodology, system mapping and semi-structured interviews with several key stakeholders in the immigration system, this study explores how stakeholders interact with each other to produce outcomes that negatively impact immigrant settlement. Using a systems map of stakeholders of varying power and influence, the exploration seeks out points of intervention to improve the immigration system's efficiency and effectiveness in settling immigrants in Canada. The paper offers overall recommendations for the immigration system and for addressing settlement related problems such as access to settlement services, immigrant employment, culture shock and immigrant stereotypes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

For Richard, Aruna and Ameer - with all my love. Thank you for all that you do.

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FOREWORD

Twenty years ago, I came to Canada as an immigrant. Even though I came from Trinidad, I was granted an immigration interview with the Canadian consulate in Seattle. There were no direct flights from Trinidad to Seattle, so I had to fly to New York and then take a Greyhound bus across America. I was able to see twenty-one American states. From the very get-go, the experience of coming to Canada was an exciting one.

When I arrived in Canada the following year, I was filled with hope. There were so many possibilities. I found Canadians to be so polite and friendly. I loved the wide-open spaces. I even found the bitter, cold winter to be refreshing.

However, after a few months, I began to realize that surviving in Canada was not as easy as it looked. I couldn't find a job because I had no Canadian experience and I couldn't get Canadian experience because I had no job. Even though the immigration officer interviewing me said that my field would be in demand in Canada, I couldn't find a job that was even remotely in my field. Eventually, a friend of the family recommended me to his boss and I started working in a factory. I had finally started to get some Canadian experience but it still wasn't enough to start working in my

field. I ended up holding a variety of jobs, going back to university and here I am today.

I still remember the early days in Canada. I had to learn the little things like standing on the stairs of the bus for the doors to open and let you out. People made fun of the way I called the garbage "rubbish", how I pronounced roof like "ruff" and how I enunciated every syllable in the word Toronto rather than having it roll of the tongue like I now do. My accent and the tendency to wear too many layers to stay warm made me stick out like a sore thumb.

I missed my old home and I constantly compared my situation with how things were in Trinidad. Yet, I persisted in learning all I could about this land, my new home. I have achieved so much here in Canada. I have my own family and many close friends. I am now happy and proud to be a Canadian citizen. I work, pay taxes, vote, volunteer in my community and I have a strong desire to give back.

Having experienced what it was like to be an immigrant then and hearing stories of immigrant experiences today, so much has changed and yet nothing has really changed. It is still a challenging process. Many immigrants stick it out but many give up on the opportunity for a great life

in Canada. I chose to do my research project on Canadian immigration in an attempt to discover for myself what really is the problem. I mean that literally. Countless studies have been done on Canadian immigration and so many recommendations have been put forward and implemented, yet immigrants still face many of the same barriers I encountered twenty years ago. In order to design a better functioning immigration system, we first need to understand the problems. I chose to do this through a systems-thinking lens and with a human-centred mindset – an uncommon approach in studying immigration today. There is so much I discovered and so much more that I have yet to learn. This is my humble attempt to share my findings.

INTRODUCTION

In Canada, there is a common saying that besides Aboriginal peoples, everyone else living in Canada is an immigrant. This is because Aboriginal peoples are the only ones that are truly of this land. Canada is a land of immigrants. Immigrants have always played a key role in Canada's prosperity and nation building. Between 1986 and 2010, the total number of immigrants arriving in Canada was more than 5.5 million (Mansur, 2012) and the official planned admission range is between 240,000 and 265,000 new permanent residents a year (Gignac, 2013). According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Canada's annual immigration flow is now proportionately one of the highest among its members, at 0.7 per cent of its population (Gignac, 2013). Immigration has been described as key to Canada's prosperity and it will continue to be a topic of national interest for years to come.

FIGURE 1 - Canada is a land of immigrants

Immigration has traditionally received substantial support from Canada's population and its political parties and therefore, it is not a political football as it has turned out to be in other countries. The Migration Policy Institute reports that about two-thirds of Canadians feel that immigration is a key positive feature of their country and that Canadian public opinion has been supportive of immigration for a long time (Bloemraad, 2012). Most understand the importance of immigration. Canada's natural population growth rate has declined steadily since the 1950's. According to Statistics Canada, with baby boomers heading for retirement, eventually there will be only two workers for every senior citizen. This increases the burden on workers for seniors' pensions and other social programs, slows economic growth and makes labour shortages even more dire ("Rethinking immigration: The case for the 400,000 solution," 2012). Immigration is a

solution to Canada's dwindling population growth and the subsequent labour shortages and skill gaps as a result of the high proportion of workers on the verge of retirement. Without immigration to provide a labour source in the face of retiring baby boomers, Canada cannot fully leverage its natural resources nor can it sustain its productivity and inject innovation into its industry for competitive products and services. Without immigration, Canada's economy is at risk.

Although there is substantial support for Canadian immigration, it is unclear how successful the immigration system really is. General perceptions suggest that Canadian immigration is successful because it has been happening for so long and each year, the number of immigrants entering Canada either increases or is sustained. This gives an illusion that the system is working well and more immigrants can be accommodated. Yet immigrant unemployment is consistently higher than the unemployment rate of Canadians year after year, regardless of education (Paperny, 2014) and recently, the wage gap between immigrants and Canadians has increased even further ("Immigrant wage," 2011). These are just two examples that suggest immigration may not be as successful where immigrants are concerned.

Benefits and Costs of Immigration to Canada

There have been several studies to quantify the costs and benefits of Canadian immigration. University of Toronto economist Peter Dungan claims that immigration has a positive impact for Canada and according to his forecasting model, an increase of 100,000 immigrants to Canada (chosen under the current selection model) would result in a 2.3-per-cent increase in real GDP over 10 years.

Immigration and immigrants contribute to innovation. A Conference Board of Canada study found that immigrants make up 35 per cent of university research chairs in Canada, much higher than their 20 per cent share of the population. Immigration also has a positive impact on Canadian trade links. The same study proposed that a 1-per-cent increase in immigration from a specific country would lead to a 0.1-per-cent increase in the value of Canadian exports, largely as a result of the international networks that immigrants bring with them. Immigration also enhances the diversity of a country making it more attractive to creative, talented people and leading to greater innovation and productivity. (Friesen, 2012)

Despite the evidence supporting the economic benefits to Canada due to immigration, there are estimates that there is tremendous lost productivity

by not effectively leveraging immigrant skills. Studies have shown that Canada suffers from lost productivity when immigrants cannot find work in their fields, when they settle for menial work or when they cannot find a job at all. In 2004, the Conference Board of Canada reported that underutilizing the skills of internationally-trained individuals is estimated to cost Canada between $3.4 – 5B per year in lost productivity (Bhaskar, 2014).

FIGURE 2 - A popular saying "Immigrant doctors driving taxis"

Another cost to Canada are the health-related costs, i.e. when the health of immigrants declines in the process of settling after their arrival into Canada. There is a health toll on immigrants when certain pre-determinants of health are compromised, for example, when they are unable to find proper work, housing or make meaningful social connections. Immigrants experience stresses associated with immigration

and resettlement that may place them at increased risk of developing mental health problems. Most immigrants arrive in better health, including mental health, than Canadian-born residents. However, they lose their health advantage and their health declines over time (Khandor & Koch, 2011). This toll on their health puts a burden on Canada's already increasing health care costs.

Immigration makes sound economic sense for Canada. While many people may feel that immigration is achieving its goals, there are many opportunities for improvement. If immigration is a necessary part of Canada's future and if Canada's economy is dependent on the source of labour that immigration provides, it would be in Canada's best interest to create the conditions for immigrants to succeed in order to fully realize the benefits of immigration. Failure to do so would create negative immigrant experiences of varying degrees (such as the ones described in the section on the next page titled "Immigrant Experiences") and sub-optimal scenarios for immigrants and all the other stakeholders in Canada that play a part in the immigration system.

Immigrant Experiences

"I had taken to Canada like a duck to water. I had obtained a job that might have been difficult to land even for people born in Canada; I had the respect of my work colleagues; and, more importantly, I had formed friendships that promised to last a lifetime. I had even made my peace with the Canadian climate and the ubiquitous taxes. Ostensibly, I had integrated, yet a sense of belonging was missing. I still felt like a foreigner"… Manpreet

"My entire lifetime savings that I expatriated to Canada have virtually been depleted. And, after seven months and three weeks, I have drawn a blank … nothing but a blank. My dreams and expectations are now haunting me. It's reality — nothing but harsh reality that has made my heart heavy. I wonder how long this feeling will last?"...Bala

"I too left Canada as being a qualified accountant, I do not want to work delivering pizzas and being security guard. I do not say such jobs are inferior, but a qualified accountant doing such jobs is a waste of talent and effort"…Sunil

"I wanted to add my two cents on the comments made here. I have a honours degree from the UK, with a wealth of experience in my field. Coming to Canada was the worst mistake of my life. The hoarding of opportunities, rampant nepotism, intellectual racism and a lack of empathy for the immigrant experience is what sums up Canada for me"….Tanya

Quotes from participants on Canadian Immigrant Website Forum

Immigration Stages

To determine areas of concern in the immigration system, it is necessary to look at what happens in the various stages of immigration.

The path that immigrants take can be broadly described in three phases: selection, settlement and integration. **Selection** takes place in the immigrant's home country and refers to the time before an immigrant

actually arrives in Canada. **Settlement** refers to the time after arrival when an immigrant needs to find housing, schooling for children and employment. Immigrants move from the settlement phase into the **integration** phase when they have met all immediate needs and begin to plan and put in place their long-term strategy in Canada, e.g. deciding where to live long-term and which professional path to pursue. Integration also describes when immigrants have begun to achieve their goals with regard to social status, employment and a feeling of being at home where they live ("Understanding the Phases," n.d.).

Based on the above description of the stages, the settlement stage is crucial for the immigrant and their continued success in Canada.

Importance of the Settlement Stage

A generally accepted definition of settlement used by the settlement sector is a "long-term, dynamic, two-way process through which, ideally, immigrants would achieve full equality and freedom of participation in society, and society would gain access to the full human resource potential in its immigrant communities." ("National Settlement Service and Standards Framework," 2003)

Settlement activities consist of meeting the basic needs of newcomers including: finding housing, food, employment, registering children in school, signing up for language training, accessing general mainstream services with the assistance of community organizations serving immigrants (NFPs), and understanding their basic rights and responsibilities.

For the purpose of the present study, some aspects of adaptation are included in the settlement phase. These aspects are the start of the process to access mainstream services independently, understanding Canadian social and cultural norms, improving language skills, developing contacts and building friendships in the community. The rationale for this more comprehensive list of settlement activities is that these activities need to happen *before* an immigrant can be integrated into Canadian society.

So why is the settlement phase so critical? In the settlement phase, immigrants begin to put down roots and start to establish their independence. They form strong perceptions about Canada and start to develop relationships in their communities. They start forming opinions on whether they will stay in Canada or leave. They consider not only if the main breadwinner in the immigrant family will be able to thrive in Canada

but also whether his/her family can succeed.   In the settlement phase, immigrants assess whether they have achieved a certain level of satisfaction with their life choice of moving to Canada. They also question whether Canada was the right choice. This phase is an uncomfortable one and the discomfort subsides only when in the mind of the immigrant, they experience a "settled feeling". The settled feeling describes when they have achieved a certain level of satisfaction with what they have accomplished in the settlement phase and when it closely aligns with their expectations about life in Canada (Manz, 2003). These expectations may either be their original ones or those adjusted based on the reality of living in Canada. This is a critical period in their immigration journey.

An unsuccessful settlement experience or one where the immigrant has not achieved that "settled feeling" makes integration (the stage where the ultimate goal of immigration is achieved) impossible. Integration describes the phase where immigrants are able to find/maintain employment appropriate to their skills and background; they participate in mainstream organizations; they feel comfortable with Canadian values, and are motivated to participate in voting/running for office, etc. Unsuccessful settlement delays/prevents immigrants from becoming fully functioning members of Canadian society and therefore are unable to fully contribute to Canada's success.

A recent Statistics Canada study discovered about one-third of male immigrants leave Canada within 20 years but of those, *six in 10 leave within a year of arriving* – in the settlement phase (*Immigrants who leave Canada, 1980 to 2000*, 2006). Immigrants who have been successful in the selection process and who choose to leave, contribute to a waste of Canada's human capital and a loss in time and money invested in the immigration process. This negatively impacts the return on immigration and the realization of the mandate of federal government's ministry responsible for immigration, (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)) - the activity of building a stronger Canada ("Our mandate," 2002).   Therefore, efforts to improve the immigration system must address immigrant settlement – hence the focus on the settlement stage in this paper.

FIGURE 3 – Immigrant male leaving Canada

Of the male immigrants that leave Canada,
6 in 10 leave within the first year

Research Opportunities

There is an abundance of research on Canadian immigration in the public space and several studies have been conducted to try to reduce the problems that immigrants face in settling. However, the focus of the research has mostly been on specific aspects of immigration, for example, housing, immigrant health, the settlement sector or immigration policy, to name a few. There is a limited overall or strategic view of immigration and its stakeholders. While studies acknowledge immigration as important for Canada's future, there is limited discussion on who makes up the Canadian landscape and how they would benefit from a successful immigration system. There is also limited information on how each stakeholder's actions *together* contribute to immigration being a success in a systemic way. There is no holistic view of immigration encompassing all stakeholders and showing immigration for a particular purpose. Also, there is no systems view of immigration where the immigrant takes centre-stage – a human-centred approach. While immigration is often referred to as an immigration system, there is no system mapping to demonstrate how the system functions.

A Systems Approach

Why is it that some problems continue to exist despite the federal government's (CIC) best efforts at developing immigration policy, the hard work that community organizations are doing to help immigrants settle and the general support that Canadians have for immigration as a whole? Well, "it's the system, stupid!" - a very common saying in systems thinking which implies that stakeholders are trying to solve immigration related problems based on information within certain parts of the system alone without taking a holistic systems view. Policies are developed in an insular way.

Insular policy development is based on the analysis of a problem space and the reduction of complex problems into smaller more manageable ones. Most stakeholders develop policy in this way. The following CIC example illustrates this insular policy development: After viewing the complex problem of labour shortages in Canada, CIC decided to address this problem by adapting a program that would allow businesses to bring in temporary foreign workers for lower skilled jobs to fill that shortage. Some believed that this move went against the goal of the immigration system of attracting immigrants to stay in Canada for the long term.

Problems also arose when employers were using this program to fill jobs

that could have been filled by Canadians and by existing immigrants –

thereby contributing to the unemployment problem and giving a free pass

to businesses so that they neglected their duties of outreach to

Canadians. When there was loud Canadian outcry, CIC backtracked and

began overhauling the Temporary Foreign Worker program. To satisfy the

Canadian public, the Canadian government's ministry, Employment Skills

and Development Canada (ESDC) started imposing stricter criteria for

employer users of the program and harsher penalties for abuse

("Reforming the Temporary Foreign Worker Program," 2014) – prompting

dissatisfaction from employers (Brownell, 2014). It is unclear whether

these policy interventions will now succeed in the long term without any

negative repercussions and what differentiates these proposed changes

from the others previously tried.

This insular model in policy development cannot be sustainable in serving

governments because of several simultaneous changes taking place in the

local and global environment. Increased access to technology and

information on immigration policy are causing more individuals to have a

view on immigration and how it affects Canada (good and bad) and this

may affect whether a government gets re-elected ("CBCNews.ca reader

reaction," 2014). Including NFPs, there are several other stakeholders

exerting influence on CIC and each other when it comes to immigration. In addition, with globalized communication networks, events in Canada are increasingly influenced by international factors and vice versa. This complexity makes it more difficult to determine areas for policy intervention especially since there are many interconnected pieces.

Systems methodology involves looking at the key actors in a system, how they interact with each other, the environment in which they exist, the patterns of behaviour/events that transpire and the causes and effects of those patterns of behaviour/events. By examining problem events/behaviours (e.g. the previously mentioned labour shortage and the introduction of the Temporary Foreign Worker program) within a view of a stakeholder network, one might unearth ways to deal with the problem events/behaviours without exacerbating them. By having a systems view of stakeholders in the immigration system and examining how they influence each other when it comes to the development of immigration policy and how their actions impact each other during the implementation of immigration policy, one might identify areas for improvement.

Systems Lens on Immigrant Settlement

This paper attempts to examine immigration from a systems perspective. It will attempt to gain a better understanding of what constitutes immigrant

settlement in Canada and it will identify problems immigrants face during their settlement journey. By developing a preliminary systems map, showing the levels of power of stakeholders in the immigration system and the varying degrees of influence they exert over each other in immigration policy development and implementation, it will examine how the problems of immigrants during settlement arise due to stakeholder actions. The paper will also look at leverage points or ways to improve/mitigate risks so that immigrant settlement could be positively impacted.

For this project, Ontario will be used as the provincial stakeholder example as it has much experience in settling immigrants. Ontario has consistently attracted the majority of immigrants coming into Canada ("Percentage distribution," 2013) and Ontario's experience in immigration provides great insight into how stakeholders interact within the immigration system.

The paper seeks to answer the following research question:

What are areas/leverage points for possible innovative interventions to improve the immigration system's efficiency and effectiveness in settling immigrants in Canada?

IMMIGRATION – A BRIEF PRIMER

Immigration in Canada happens as a result of policy development and policy implementation. The federal Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is responsible for the development of immigration policy and it relies on several parties for policy implementation (i.e. performing essential actions and functions set out in CIC policy).

Key Stakeholders in Immigration

There are many stakeholders in the immigration system – players who are key to its success in bringing in immigrants, settling them and integrating them into Canadian society so that they are willing to contribute to nation-building. In this paper, five key stakeholders are considered. The following section provides information on how these key stakeholders play a part in the immigration system – specifically how they are involved in typical immigrant interactions in their journey to settlement.

CIC - Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada

This is the Canadian government ministry that is the gatekeeper for entry into Canada and is governed by the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) ("Immigration and Refugee Protection Act," 2014), legislation that has been in effect since 2002. CIC develops policies and programs when implemented effectively:

- Screens and approves for admission, immigrants, foreign students, visitors and temporary workers who help Canada's social and economic growth

- Resettles, protects and provides a safe haven for refugees

- Helps newcomers adapt to Canadian society and become Canadian citizens

- Manages access to Canada to protect the security and health of Canadians and the integrity of Canadian laws and

- Helps Canadians and newcomers to participate fully in the economic, political, social and cultural life of the country. ("What we do," 2009)

Jurisdiction over Canadian immigration is a joint responsibility between the Government of Canada and the provinces and territories. Provincial and territorial governments are primary partners of CIC and they share a goal

to make immigration programs responsive to the needs of each territory and province. There are frameworks in place with the federal government and the provinces and territories that specify how they will work together on immigration. One example is the right for provinces and territories to nominate individuals under the Provincial Nominee Program as permanent residents who will help meet the province's labour market and economic development needs ("Provincial nominees," 2007). CIC has also negotiated a special agreement with Quebec to give them full responsibility for selection of immigrants in certain categories and the sole responsibility of delivering integration services ("Federal-Provincial/Territorial Agreements," 1991).

Effective May 1, 2014, CIC has specified programs through which potential immigrants and temporary visitors/workers can apply online or through application centres in various countries ("New caps," 2014). Potential immigrants will funnel their applications through program categories:

- Federal-Selected Economic Programs
  - o Federal Skilled Workers (FSW) - selected based on a selection grid of six factors that assesses the candidate's overall capacity (including language, education, work experience, etc.) to adapt

to Canada's labour market. This stream has been capped at 25,000 across 50 eligible occupations.

- o Federal Skilled Trades Program – designed to meet demands for skilled trades people in many industries across the country and accepts applications from up to 5,000 people in 90 specific trades.

- o Canadian Experience Class – For temporary foreign workers or foreign students with skilled work experience in Canada to move from temporary to permanent residence. Capped at 8000 applications with very specific occupations.

- o Live-In Caregivers – For employers who wish to sponsor individuals who are qualified to provide care for children, elderly persons or persons with disabilities in private homes without supervision.

- o Start-up Visas - links immigrant entrepreneurs with experienced private sector organizations who are experts in working with start-ups to get their ideas funded and off the ground.

- o Self-Employed Persons – bringing individuals who will become self-employed in Canada.

- Provincial and Territorial Nominees – For persons who have the skills, education and work experience needed to make an immediate economic contribution to the province or territory that nominates them.

- Quebec-selected Skilled Workers - Under the *Canada-Quebec Accord,* Quebec establishes its own immigration requirements and selects immigrants who will adapt to living in Quebec.

- Family Class – For Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada who want to sponsor their spouse, conjugal or common-law partner, dependent child or other eligible relative to become a permanent resident.

- Refugees – For individuals/refugees in need of protection within or outside Canada who fear persecution and going back to their home country, Canada offers its protection.

As a requirement of IRPA, CIC must provide an annual report to Canadian parliament to report on its programs for the previous year and specify its objectives for immigration for the upcoming year. This is done in consultation with the provinces and territories, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and the Canadian public.

Once CIC screens potential immigrants based on the criteria of the various programs and approves their application, they are allowed to enter Canada. CIC also invests in settlement and integration programs that are administered by local community organizations.

A key distinction that should be noted is that CIC determines who can become a Canadian immigrant and the number of immigrants entering Canada per year whereas the provinces/territories support the successful settlement and integration of newcomers with the exception of Quebec who does both sets of activities.

Citizens

These are individuals born in Canada or those who have come to Canada as immigrants and who have fulfilled the set requirements to become Canadian citizens, e.g. maintained a continuing residence in Canada for three of the past four years. Citizens 18 years and older have the right to vote and this makes them an important stakeholder in the immigration system. Their opinions on immigration can factor into immigration policy and can also influence which government is elected in federal and provincial elections to further set immigration policy. Citizens and immigrants have a variety of interactions in the workplace or social settings.

Immigrants

These are the individuals who are looking to leave their home country for a new life in Canada. Immigrants sometimes look to escape poverty, persecution and difficult circumstances by moving to Canada whose brand promises a safe, equitable, multicultural society where one can become prosperous.

NFPs - Community Organizations Serving Immigrants

They provide services to immigrants in getting them settled by helping them find housing, employment, social networks and/or multicultural programs for integration into Canadian society. Language training for immigrants is also included in settlement services. To administer these programs, NFPs usually have to apply to CIC for funding at certain times of the year. These organizations sometimes supplement funds received from the federal government with that from the provinces, private corporations, foundations and other fund-raising entities.

Employers

Companies in the private sector provide jobs to the Canadians and immigrants. They are constantly seeking sources of labour and immigrants can apply for those jobs. Companies have different tolerances for hiring immigrants – some citing lack of Canadian experience, language barriers and heavy accents as reasons for limited immigrant hiring.

METHODOLOGY

Immigration is a complex topic and individuals have very strong feelings about it. Almost every Canadian has been impacted in some way by immigration. Immigration in Canada has been shaped by many historical factors and is currently undergoing changes once again due to a rapidly changing Canadian context and recent substantial policy changes. This paper seeks to understand immigration from a systems perspective.

To fully understand the scope of immigration and especially how it is viewed under a systems lens, the following research methods were used to inform this project.

- Literature review of
    - Systems thinking
    - Immigration and immigrant settlement topics
- Primary Research
    - Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the immigration system
    - Sensemaking methods

These methods were also helpful in refining the research question from taking a broad look at immigration to focusing on the settlement phase and immigrant success.

Literature Review

Systems Thinking

First, a literature review was done to understand systems thinking methodology which involves looking at the key actors in a system, how they interact with each other, the environment in which they exist, the patterns of behavior/events that transpire and the causes and effects of those patterns of behavior/events.

Donella Meadows' book "Thinking in Systems" provides information on the concept of systems thinking and how to look at parts of a system and identify interconnections by observing how one actor influences the other. The book also identifies characteristics of a system that works well – resilience, self-organization and hierarchy. Resilience is the ability for the system to adjust to change; Self-organization is the ability to orient itself after new demands and circumstances are introduced; Hierarchy is the capacity for the system to break up into smaller organizations and function autonomously. Meadows describes patterns of behavior that constitute system traps – behaviours that hasten the system to failure or prevent the optimum functioning of the system. She also offers an approach to solving systems problems by first putting a systems lens on a problem and then

looking for leverage points which can alter the degree of influence one

actor exerts on another. (Meadows, 2008)

In Peter Senge's book "The Fifth Discipline – The Art and Practice of a

Learning Organization", he talks about systems thinking as a discipline

that integrates four other disciplines (personal mastery, mental models,

building a shared vision and team learning) to create a learning

organization. He argues that a learning organization is important to

weather highly complex issues, quickly and effectively adapt to changes

required and in the end, excel in bringing about desired outcomes. There

is considerable focus on interactions within an organization and between

organizations as a whole rather than looking at individuals' actions on their

own. Systems thinking is therefore essential in creating models of

understanding for complex processes and building a learning organization.

(Senge, 2006)

Jamshid Gharajedaghi's book "Systems Thinking: Managing Chaos and

Complexity" provides great insight into holistic thinking for a system by

inquiring into its structure, function and processes as they exist within a

certain context. He believes that these four inquiries form a

complementary set and they provide an understanding of the whole

possible. To arrive at this whole understanding, one needs to conduct

iterative inquiries on function, structure, process, and context. This approach allows for the examination of assumptions and properties of each system element in its own right and then in relationship with other elements in the system. A whole understanding is necessary to judge how the behavior of each system element impacts the entire system. (Gharajedaghi, 2011)

The review showed that systems thinking can be used to treat public services as complex adaptive systems and can offer an alternative route to developing solutions and increasing system performance. Systems thinking is holistic and deals with complexity by increasing the level of abstraction, rather than seeking to divide the problem into manageable, but separate, elements.

The Canadian immigration system is sometimes referred to as highly complex and systems thinking has been proven to be an excellent method that could be applied to making sense of highly complex processes and developing learning for improving system performance. This knowledge on systems thinking would help in interpreting data gathered in this project. It can shed light on how the actions of key stakeholders in the immigration system impact successful immigrant settlement and can suggest ways to improve their settlement experience.

Immigration and Immigrant Settlement

A literature review was then conducted on the topics of immigration and immigrant settlement. One of the aims of the literature review was to find out who were the main stakeholders in Canadian immigration and their goals in supporting immigration, hence the extensive review on literature related to immigration and its sub-topics – the process, the various programs under the immigration umbrella and how they are meant to help Canada, the problems immigrants face on arrival into Canada, problems during the settlement phase, the various levels of support to serve them, how they fare after arrival and comparisons of their welfare with Canadian natives to name a few.

Migration organization websites ("Migration Policy Centre," 2013), ("Migration Policy Institute," 2013) were reviewed to determine how Canada compared to other countries regarding immigration policies. In general, Canada has been described as having a virtuous cycle regarding immigration where quantity, quality and diversity of immigration occur and reinforce each other. This is in contrast to immigration that takes place in Europe where there is weak, unskilled and poorly diversified immigration and does not bode well for the future of immigration policy there. There, the pattern of behavior has been described as a vicious cycle (Rapoport, 2013).

According to the latest Migrant Integration Policy Index (an organization that assesses how well the destination country integrates immigrants), Canada has achieved a high score and is ranked third amongst countries with immigration policies. While this study targets integration (the stage of immigration that comes after settlement and what this research is focused on), there is some overlap on what their definition of integration and the definition of settlement as it pertains to this research. The Migration Integration Policy Index views the following aspects of Canadian immigration in a favourable light:

- Canadian and US governments have the strongest commitment to anti-discrimination and equality
- Canada has one of the best policies to attract permanent migrant workers and their families
- Canada now committed to a Pan-Canadian framework to improve the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials
- Canadian schools are second best at targeting the needs of migrant pupils
- Multiculturalism policy improves political participation of immigrants and diversity education for all Canadians
  ("MIPEX - Migrant Integration Policy Index," n.d.)

This review provides insight on how Canadian immigration is viewed elsewhere and which Canadian immigration policies are worthy of being emulated. This information can be used to compare with the data gained in the semi-structured interviews that represents the views of Canadian stakeholders.

Key to this research was a basic understanding of how **public policy** is developed and implemented. Lydia Miljan's book "Public Policy in Canada: An Introduction" provided a good overview on how policy is shaped based on issues affecting Canada. Political, economic, and social factors drive public policy-making in Canada and issues related to macroeconomics, social programs, health, family, Aboriginal peoples, and the environmental landscape all play a part in influencing public policy and specifically immigration policy. (Miljan, 2012)

One very interesting point that was highlighted during the literature review on policy development was the role of hubris. There is no doubt that governments have played a tremendous role in helping achieve economic and employment success but these successes were not solely due to their policies. Historically, it turned out that when economic conditions allowed for successes in those areas, governments quickly took credit. This

created a perceptions in the minds of citizens that governments had the power to create economic success through policy setting. These perceptions also put pressure on governments to try and bring about the policy-driven economic successes when economic conditions changed. However, in some instances, this created havoc. The system didn't behave as expected. Governments overestimated their role in bringing about certain outcomes through policy development and implementation. This opened up questions for this study about the role of government and other stakeholders in the immigration system. (Miljan, 2012)

Reviewed literature included papers from **immigration policy think tanks** that analyzed recent changes to immigration policy in Canada and predicted the possible implications of these changes for Canada's future. There were varying degrees of support for continued immigration to Canada. The Centre for Immigration Policy Reform advises on slowing the rate of immigration to Canada because of high immigrant unemployment and a broadening of ethnic enclaves in certain cities (Collacott, 2013). While the Institute for Research on Public Policy believed that despite recent anti-immigration sentiment, many see the value of immigration's economic benefits to Canada and they are proud of Canada's multiculturalism further enhanced by immigration. This led them to believe that sustained levels of immigration would be supported by Canadians.

(Reitz, 2011a). Some think tanks, for example Maytree, supported the

Canadian government's direction of increasing the levels of economic

immigrants, they expressed concern that there appeared to be a reduction

in the number of immigrants coming from the refugee stream and that this

compromised Canada's reputation as a welcoming country, sensitive to

the plight of others. They also believe that recent policy changes have

been made with very limited public consultation and have weakened the

democratic process (Alboim & Cohl, 2012).

To get a preliminary understanding of the immigrant experience, online

documentation of **immigrant** stories about coming to and settling in

Canada were reviewed. These also provided information on the

processes that immigrants encountered on arrival into Canada and what

were their experiences – allowing for the identification of common themes

about immigrant settlement success and dissatisfaction and for further

investigation in the semi-structured interview stage. While most

immigrants were grateful for the opportunity to be in Canada, through

online forums on websites, they related difficulties finding employment,

getting their credentials recognized, working in survival jobs, experiencing

racism and discrimination and questioning their decision to live in Canada.

(The Globe and Mail, National Post, Toronto Star, Canadian Immigrant,

2013, 2014)

Annual reports of **community organizations serving immigrants (NFPs)** provided insight into the breadth of services that they offered to immigrants and the impact of those services. They also highlighted the gaps in service delivery and possible causes for those gaps.

Looking at newspaper articles and online videos on immigration from local and national media provided an indication of the messages the **media** deemed to be important enough to report to the Canadian public. In general, the media have been trying to keep up with the various policy changes that CIC have been enacting to shape the immigration landscape. These include the increased focus on economic immigration, credential recognition and language assessment requirements for immigrants as a screening mechanism prior to coming to Canada and more recently, the stricter requirements for obtaining and keeping Canadian citizenship in Bill C24 (*Bill C-24*, 2014). In the media's effort to cover these policy changes, there has been a heightened sensitivity to anti-immigration sentiment in the general public as evidenced by comments on the media's online forums.

Primary Research

Semi-Structured Interviews

Having completed a literature review to gain background knowledge in the areas of systems thinking and immigration, the focus shifted to the stakeholder perspectives on immigrant settlement to begin to assemble a view of

- The interactions amongst the stakeholders

- Their interdependence in the system

- What constitutes successful settlement and

- What impacts successful settlement

The semi-structured interview was chosen as the research method to gather this data because of its guided but still open nature for communication. It allowed respondents to ask clarifying questions and to not only provide answers to questions but reasons for their answers – a rich source of information. It was also less intrusive and an ideal way to interview stakeholders on sensitive topics that may not have been addressed in a more structured interview.

For this project, a total of 30 individuals were interviewed from the key stakeholder groups. While a sample size of 30 across five stakeholder

groups is not statistically representative, this qualitative research aimed at developing a deeper understanding of interdependencies, intricacies and challenges among the various components of the system.

Participants were recruited from connections of the author's LinkedIn contacts, through cold-emailing individuals in CIC and NFPs, and through subsequent referrals. All candidates were screened against specific criteria and were accepted/rejected for interviewing. In all groupings, the aim was for requisite variety - requiring the engagement of participants whose variety of knowledge was equal or greater than the elements in the system to be regulated. Participants diverse in gender, age, work experience, hierarchy and viewpoints were recruited and selected to increase the chances of obtaining a more comprehensive picture of the immigration system.

Interviews were conducted with:

CIC - Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

The interviews were conducted with 6 *policy development professionals,* aged 25 and above working at CIC in diverse hierarchical positions. See Appendix A for the CIC questionnaire. The interview with this group was designed to get a better understanding of:

- The factors and stakeholders that play a role in developing immigration policy

- The methods of stakeholder engagement

- The process for implementing immigration policy

- The time delay between policy implementation and desired results

- The feedback mechanisms in place for policy adjustments

- Policy performance metrics

- Similarities/differences in viewpoints with other stakeholders

Citizens

The interviews were conducted with 6 *citizens,* aged 25 and above who were born in Canada and may or may not have immigrant parents. See Appendix B for Citizens questionnaire. The interview with this group was designed to get a better understanding of:

- Their view on the purpose of immigration

- The perceived value of immigration to Canada

- The impact of immigration on their lives – positive/negative

- Their view on a settled immigrant

- Immigration successes/failures

- Possible improvements to immigration

- Similarities/differences in viewpoints with other stakeholders

Immigrants

The interviews were conducted with 6 *immigrants,* aged 25 and above,

who are landed residents in Canada for 2 years or more and who have not

yet become Canadian citizens. See Appendix C for Immigrants

questionnaire. The interview with this group was designed to get a better

understanding of:

- Their immigration experience upon arrival into Canada

- Their reasons for coming to Canada

- Their biggest obstacle/support when settling

- Their expectations prior to arrival and differences compared to the

  reality they faced

- Their moment of feeling settled

- Factors contributing to the feeling of being settled

- Similarities/differences in viewpoints with other stakeholders

NFPs – Community Organizations Serving Immigrants

The interviews were conducted with 4 *NFP professionals,* aged 25 and

above, who have been working in community organizations serving

immigrants for 5 years or more. See Appendix D for NFPs questionnaire.

The interview with this group was designed to get a better understanding

of:

- Their role in the immigration system and the gaps they are meant to fill

- What immigration is meant to do/what purpose it serves

- Their view on a settled immigrant

- Immigration successes/failures

- Winners and losers in immigration

- CIC immigration policy and its effect (good/bad) on the system

- Their view of the ideal immigration system

- Similarities/differences in viewpoints with other stakeholders

Employers

The interviews were conducted with 4 *employer professionals,* aged 25

and above, who have been working in a role hiring and managing

immigrants for 5 or more years. See Appendix E for Employers

questionnaire. The interview with this group was designed to get a better

understanding of:

- Their view on immigrants filling the demand for talent/labour

- The readiness of immigrants to fill roles

- The efforts of organizations in getting immigrants ready for roles

- Their organizations' dependence on NFPs for work-ready immigrants
  to fill roles

- Possible reasons for non-parity between immigrant wages and those of
  workers born in Canada

- Systemic flaws impacting immigrant success in settlement

- Similarities/differences in viewpoints with other stakeholders

Sensemaking Methods

Information from the literature review provided a general view of the stakeholder activities that occur prior to settlement. Using systems thinking methodology, this information was analyzed to observe the actions of individual stakeholders and the effects of those actions on other stakeholders and the system as a whole. Systems thinking also guided the examination of the stakeholders and how they contributed to the overall functioning of the immigration system.

System mapping was used to create a rich picture of immigration related activities on the immigrant's journey to settlement. System mapping is a method used to represent complex issues, challenges, problems or situations in a diagrammatic form. In this case, it allowed for the visualization of the activities immigrants engage in on their way to settlement and the stakeholders with whom they interact.

Mining information from the literature review and the semi-structured interviews also yielded a comprehensive list of stakeholders and their relationships. Stakeholders were classified based on the power they

possessed and a measure was placed on the levels of influence that

stakeholders exerted over each other. System mapping was again used

to create a preliminary systems map to show relationships between

stakeholders and the levels of influence in the Canadian immigration

system.

Using data from the semi-structured interviews, participants' comments

were reviewed to identify:

- Factors that constitute successful immigrant settlement

- Factors negatively impacting successful immigrant settlement

- Similarities and differences of stakeholder perspectives on
  immigration related activities

Factors that constitute successful immigrant settlement were grouped into

success themes. Factors negatively impacting successful immigrant

settlement were grouped into problem themes. Stakeholders who play a

role in contributing to those problem themes were highlighted in the

preliminary systems map. Their relationships were analyzed within the

context of the whole system, its stakeholders, their power and levels of

influence exerted. The goal was to search for possible areas and leverage

points for innovative interventions to improve the immigration system's

efficiency and effectiveness in settling immigrants in Canada.

RESULTS

Immigration Activities Towards Settlement

As previously mentioned, the path that immigrants take can be broadly

described in three phases: selection, settlement and integration. Figure 4

illustrates how some stakeholders play a role in immigration and in the

immigrant activities towards settlement.

FIGURE 4 - IMMIGRATION ACTIVITIES TOWARDS SETTLEMENT
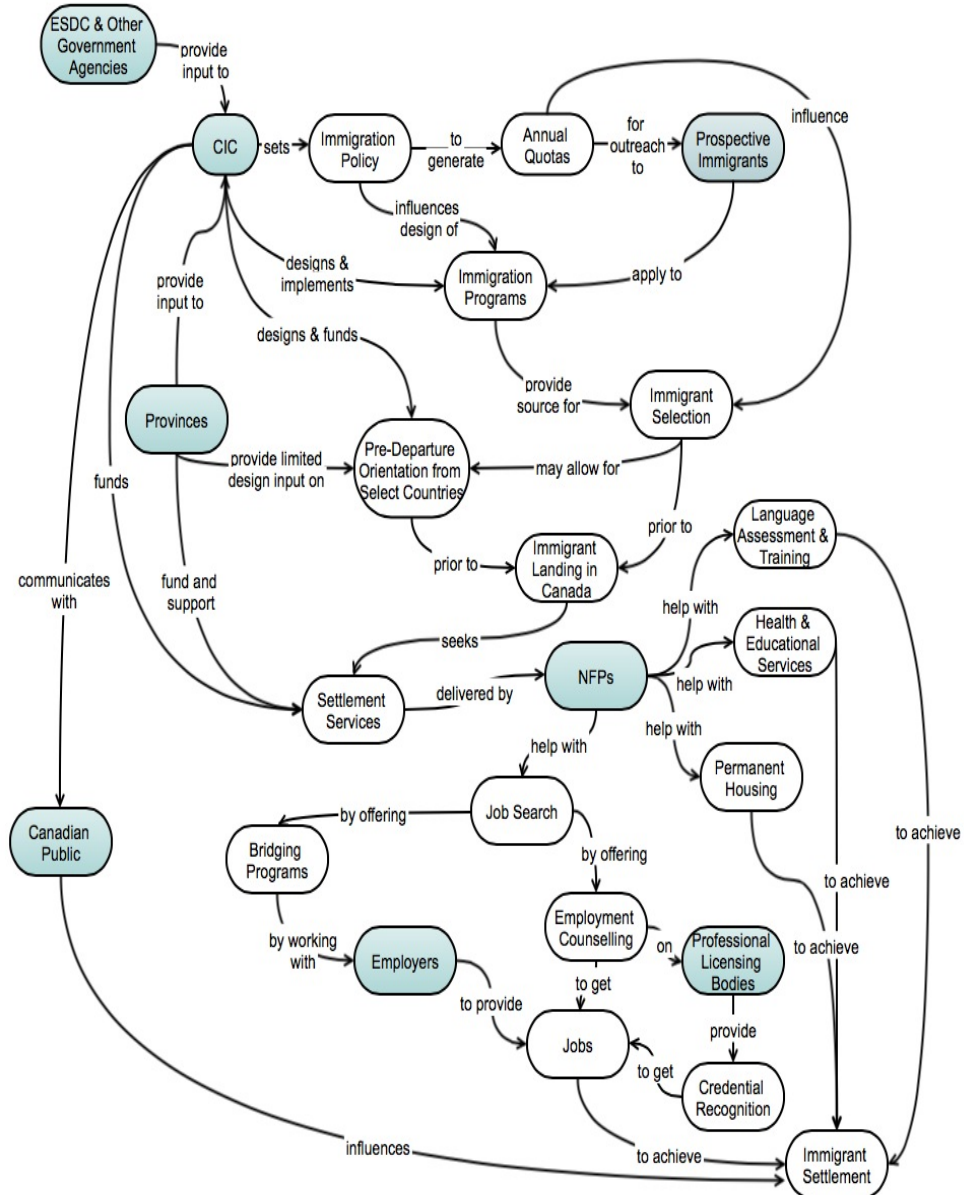
Figure 4 was produced using the information gained from the literature review portion of the research. The darker diagram shapes highlight some of the key stakeholders in the immigration system as they perform immigration related activities – represented by the shapes in white. It depicts CIC setting immigration policy with input from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) – the government ministry responsible for developing, managing and delivering social programs and services. CIC also receives input from the provinces and other governmental agencies for immigration policy development. Immigration policy determines the annual quota of immigrants for each of the immigration programs designed by CIC. Some examples are the Family Sponsorship, Canadian Experience or Federal Skilled Workers.

Immigrants apply to these programs and are selected based on the program criteria and the annual quotas. Depending on the immigrant's country of origin, they may be able to attend a pre-departure orientation designed and funded by CIC. This orientation enhances their knowledge about Canada prior to arrival and facilitates their integration into Canadian society by informing participants of their rights and freedoms, responsibilities and obligations and making them aware of difficulties they

may encounter during their first few months in Canada. It is estimated however that only about 20% of Canada's annual immigrants attend a pre-departure orientation because it is not offered for successful immigrants in all countries from which they originate.

Upon landing in Canada, immigrants seek settlement services that are provided by community organizations serving immigrants (NFPs). These NFPs provide assistance with obtaining health care, education, housing or finding a job. They educate immigrants on the credential recognition process and some NFPs also work with employers to deliver bridging programs that allow the immigrant to gain Canadian experience before landing a job in their field of expertise. Helping immigrants to acquire health care, schools for their children, permanent housing and a stable form of employment enhances their settlement success and sets them up for a better integration into Canadian society – the next and final stage of immigration.

An Immigration System Mapping

After the semi-structured interviews with the five designated stakeholder groups and the literature review, the complexity of the immigration system became apparent. There were a significant number of stakeholders who are involved in the immigration system. They either play an active or a passive role; their actions have consequences for the system. The research also underlined the varying levels of power of stakeholders who use that to exert varying levels of influence in their relationships with other stakeholders. These aspects of power and influence can explain certain actions of stakeholders in the immigration system.

Stakeholders in the Mapping

Earlier in this paper, five key stakeholder groups were mentioned for the purpose of centering the research. However, a broader list of stakeholders was uncovered during the course of this research. They are listed below with a brief description of each stakeholder's immigration related activities. A list of acronyms and their expansions are included in Appendix F for further reference.

- **Auditor General** – holds Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) accountable for its use of public funds in carrying out immigration programming

- **(CIC)** Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada - responsible for the development of immigration and citizenship policy

- **Citizens** – individuals born in Canada or permanent residents who have met CIC's criteria for citizenship

- **Community Organizations** – organizations to promote community living e.g. churches, health, educational, social welfare groups etc.

- **Elected MPs** – Member of parliament individuals who are associated with political parties and who have been successful in federal elections

- **Employers** – private sector companies who employ citizens, permanent residents and immigrants

- **Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)** – Federal ministry responsible for developing, managing and delivering social programs and services including those related to employment

- **House of Commons** – Also know as parliament, consists of elected MPs from various political parties; they debate proposed legislation including those proposed by CIC for immigration policy

- **Immigrants** - individuals who are looking to leave their home country for a new life in Canada

- **Individual Immigrant Groups** – mostly consisting of community groups of immigrants (from individual ethnicities or countries of origin), and may include immigrant ethnic enclaves.

- **Local Immigration partnerships (LIPs)** - the mechanism through which CIC supports the development of community-based partnerships and planning around the needs of new immigrants. LIPs work with NFPs, community organizations and other local parties to coordinate services to immigrants.

- **Media** – used in this context as mass media or organizations who communicate to the masses on immigration related issues

- **Municipalities** – Includes cities (like Toronto) with increasing involvement in contributing to immigration policy development

- **NFPs** – not-for-profit community organizations that provide services to immigrants in getting them settled by helping them find housing, employment and social networks and/or multicultural programs for integrating newcomers into Canadian society

- **Ontario Fairness Commissioner (OFC)** - oversees the Ontario professional regulatory bodies to make sure their assessment and licensing of foreign trained professionals is transparent, objective, impartial and fair

- **Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (ON MCI)** – supports the successful economic and social integration of immigrants

- **Other Government Agencies** – Includes Border Services, Department of Foreign Affairs and Department of Health who work together with CIC in setting and implementing immigration policy

- **Other Interest Groups** – Includes trade unions, industry sector associations and labour unions who communicate their viewpoints of immigration and its policies

- **Other ON Ministries** – Include Ministries of Health, Labour, Education who provide services to new immigrants

- **Parliamentary Committee on Immigration** – Federal committee who analyses and gathers feedback on immigration policy motions introduced to the House of Commons

- **PCO (Privy Council Office)** - provides advice to the Prime Minister and determines what agenda items are tabled at Cabinet meetings

- **Political Parties** – Grouping of individuals sharing the same political ideology and who may or may not contest federal or provincial elections

- **Professional Regulatory Bodies** – Conduct the assessment and licensing of foreign trained professionals (including immigrants)

- **Research Communities** – Academic, think tank and other institutions who conduct research on aspects of immigration

- **Senate** – federal government body responsible for reviewing and approving legislation once it is passed in the House of Commons

- **Universities** – Education institutions admitting foreign students who may end up living in Canada

Stakeholder Power in the Mapping

In developing the systems map, it was necessary to put some measure on stakeholder power and how that plays a part in their ability to influence other stakeholders in their various interactions.

To classify stakeholder power, two points were awarded for each of the following:

- Jurisdictional authority (J) over the immigration program i.e. if they could make immigration policy decisions

- Legislative authority (L) over the immigration program i.e. if they possessed additional power to make changes to immigration policy decisions (e.g. Ability to issue Ministerial Instructions)

- Value for Exchange (V) - having something of value to significantly influence other stakeholders on immigration (e.g. money, information)

- Influential Relationships (R) - they could significantly influence more than 1 stakeholder in the immigration system

- Funding (F) - Having a relatively guaranteed source of funding to carry out immigration related activities or promote their views on immigration

- Strength in Size (S) – Having a united group to represent their views on immigration

The points were added for each stakeholder and then ranked to determine their level of power in the system. When mapping the stakeholders in the immigration map, larger circles were drawn for stakeholders with greater power. The ranking of stakeholder power is summarized in the following Table 1.

Table 1 - STAKEHOLDER POWER

Stakeholder	Jurisdic-tional Authority (J)	Legislative Authority (L)	Value for Exchange (V)	Influential Relationships (R)	Funding (F)	Strength in Size (S)	Total
CIC	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
ON MCI	2	0	2	2	2	2	10
Employers	0	0	2	2	2	2	8
ESDC	0	0	2	2	2	2	8
Media	0	0	2	2	2	2	8
Other Gov't Agencies	0	0	2	2	2	2	8
Other ON Ministries	0	0	2	2	2	2	8
Universities	0	0	2	2	2	2	8
Auditor General	0	0	2	2	2	0	6
House of Commons	0	2	2	2	0	0	6
Parliamentary Committee on Immigration	0	0	2	2	2	0	6
Privy Council Office (PCO)	0	0	2	2	0	2	6
Political Parties	0	0	0	2	2	2	6
Professional Regulatory Bodies	0	0	2	2	2	0	6
Research Communities	0	0	2	2	2	0	6
Municipalities	0	0	2	2	2	0	6
Citizens	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
Community Organizations	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
Elected MPs	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
Individual Immigrant Groups	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
LIPs	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
NFPs	0	0	2	0	0	2	4
OFC	0	0	2	0	2	0	4
Senate	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Immigrants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Interest Groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Stakeholder Influence in Relationships

This section discusses key relationships in the immigration system and the degrees of influence stakeholders exert over each other.

Stakeholders may exert influence on each other in several ways. By sharing information or through collaboration, stakeholders have the potential to influence other stakeholders' immigration-related actions. The following are examples of influence between stakeholders.

- Two stakeholders may have a strong collaborative relationship with each other where they work together for a mutual benefit e.g. two government agencies working together for effective government operations. They both have a strong vested interest in a certain outcome. In the system mapping, the relationship or the level of influence between them will be depicted as a strong two-way arrow. (A ⟷ B)

- Two stakeholders may only share information to influence each other or they may collaborate in limited ways. A strong collaborative relationship may be ideal but there may be strained relations between them or there is not enough of a strong vested interest in working towards a certain outcome. Their relationship or the level of influence

between them will be depicted as a two-way arrow of regular strength.

(A ⟷ B)

- One stakeholder may exert a strong influence on another if the former

  controls the rules of interaction or if the latter's existence depends on

  funding from the former. There may be some elements of information

  sharing or collaboration between them but the power in the relationship

  trumps any other influence through information sharing or

  collaboration. This relationship or level of influence will be depicted as

  a strong one-way arrow. (A ⟶ B)

- One stakeholder may only share information with another and this may

  have a mild influence on that stakeholder. This relationship or level of

  influence will be depicted as a one-way arrow of regular strength.

  (A ⟶ B)

CIC Relationships

Immigration in Canada is achieved by CIC developing immigration policy

and it relies on several stakeholders to implement immigration policy. The

result is a complex network of stakeholders that make up the immigration

system.

In the immigration system, **CIC** is the stakeholder with the most power.   It

has ownership of the immigration program and special legislative powers

that allow the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to make certain changes without parliamentary approval. CIC is highly networked and many stakeholders try to influence them in policy design. CIC also receives a substantial budget each year to fund immigration related activities and on which many stakeholders depend for their much-needed services to immigrants.

Building upon the programs that CIC already has in place that allow immigrants to apply, be screened and selected for entry into Canada, CIC continually works on fine-tuning these programs. Every year, CIC goes through a planning exercise where it determines what levels of immigration should happen in each of the following immigration classes – economic immigrants, family class, refugee class.

CIC has a strong collaborative relationship with **ESDC** in their annual planning for immigration levels. It consults with ESDC to determine the skills and occupations that are in demand so that this demand is reflected in the selection criteria for prospective immigrants looking to come to Canada. Not only does CIC collaborate with ESDC on labour demand but the two ministries work together to bring in skilled workers that have been identified by businesses as filling a shortage of labour in Canada. ESDC assesses whether the particular skill is in fact in demand and confirms

(based on their data) whether the skill can be sourced in Canada. If not, ESDC gives the go ahead to CIC to allow the skilled immigrant into Canada as a permanent resident. With the recent Temporary Foreign Worker Program, CIC and ESDC collaborate on allowing temporary foreign workers into Canada as temporary residents to fill perceived labour shortages as expressed by businesses. In this mapping, the degree of influence between CIC and ESDC is depicted as a strong collaborative relationship.

CIC also works with **other governmental agencies** to ensure that their activities mutually support each other's ministries. For example, CIC works collaboratively with:

- Border Services, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service to ensure that Canadian public safety is addressed by selecting immigrants who pose minimal threats to Canada

- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade who are the landlords of the visa offices overseas and who manage trade relationships with countries from which immigrants arrive

- Department of Health who works with CIC on processes in the immigration application that are medically related

Therefore, the degree of influence between CIC and Other Governmental Agencies is depicted as a strong collaborative relationship.

In the past, the majority of changes to immigration policy had to be approved by the **House of Commons**. To do this, CIC would work with:

- **Privy Council Office** who determines what agenda items will be presented in the House of Commons to be debated and passed as new legislation or legislation changes. The degree of influence between CIC and the Privy Council Office is depicted as a collaborative relationship.

- Treasury Board who is responsible for the financial management of government programs. This agency is able to reallocate funds from other government programs to fund approved changes to immigration programs – hence the strong collaborative relationship with CIC. This stakeholder is included on the map as "**Other Governmental Agencies**".

- Department of Justice who work with CIC on drafting new or changes to immigration related legislation. This stakeholder is included on the map as "**Other Governmental Agencies**".

It is important to note that through the 2008 Budget Bill, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) was amended to grant the Minister of

Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism (the head of CIC) legislative

authority to make decisions that fundamentally alter immigration policies

and programs without having to go through the parliamentary process.

This would enable him to issue Ministerial Instructions to immigration

officers to enact these policy changes. Many stakeholders argue that this

change places too much power into the hands of the Minister as he is able

to bring about sweeping changes to immigration policies and programs

without the benefit of debate in the House of Commons. As a result of this

granting of legislative authority, further adding to CIC's power, there have

been fewer immigration related motions tabled in parliament, yet there

have been numerous immigration policy and program changes since the

authority has been granted.

For changes that do make it to the **House of Commons**, the motion is

read in the House and the **elected Members of Parliament (MPs)** have a

chance to individually influence the changes being proposed with their

votes. They are depicted in the mapping as having a mild influence on the

House of Commons unless there are substantial numbers of them

belonging to one political party.

Usually after the first reading, the motion is sent to the **Standing**

Parliamentary Committee for Citizenship and Immigration for analysis

where MPs from several political parties discuss the motion and raise concerns about changes being proposed. At these meetings, representatives from **CIC** can provide additional information on the changes being proposed. Once the committee has evaluated the proposed changes, they report back to the House of Commons where the motion goes through its second and third reading before it is approved. It is during this parliamentary process that the various **political parties** can express their views through their **elected MPs** who have been elected by the **citizens** in their constituencies. The elected MPs are therefore depicted as having a mild influence on the Parliamentary Committee for Citizenship and Immigration.

After approval in the **House of Commons**, it is sent to the **Senate** for their approval before the legislation can be officially passed. The relationship between the two is shown as a collaborative one of normal strength.

CIC is required by the Treasury Board to undergo evaluations of its programs every 5 years. These evaluations are either conducted by CIC themselves or they are contracted to an external agency. The **Auditor General** also conducts evaluations and resulting recommendations must be addressed in some way by CIC. This relationship is depicted as a strong one-way arrow or one of heavy influence.

Immigration is shared jurisdiction between the federal and provincial governments and so another set of key CIC relationships is that with the provinces and territories. CIC works with the provinces and territories on immigration levels planning and the funding and delivery of immigrant settlement related activities – to name a few.

With the rise of Quebec nationalism, Quebec was the first province to negotiate an immigration agreement with CIC. Other provinces wanted to assume more responsibility in immigration and have a greater influence in attracting immigrants to settle in their provinces. However CIC was unwilling to grant the provinces that authority but created the Provincial Nominee Program so that the provinces and territories could nominate prospective economic immigrants who would fill a particular labour need in their respective provinces. All provinces and territories negotiated agreements with the CIC with certain levels of freedom on the selection criteria for provincial nominees and no restriction on the number of provincial nominees. However, CIC has recently introduced a cap on the number of provincial nominees so that more Federal Skilled Worker applications could be processed. The provinces and territories felt that this move went against previous commitments made by CIC and strained the relations between them and CIC.

There are several agreements with the provinces and territories on how

CIC money is used on settlement related activities. In most provinces,

CIC manages the delivery of federal settlement programs. Recently,

Ontario (specifically Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration **ON**

MCI) became increasingly interested in assuming responsibility for the

management of federal settlement programs but they were unsuccessful

in negotiating this in their immigration agreement with CIC (Canada

Ontario Immigration Agreement COIA). As a result, Ontario has been

without an immigration agreement with CIC since its agreement expired in

2011. It is important to note that Ontario is the province that receives the

most immigrants every year and there is no agreement in place. Also,

Ontario share of settlement funding has been cut by $32 million since

2006 while the portion to all other provinces/territories has increased. This

was partly because of the non-negotiated COIA and the application of a

formula that directs more funding to provinces that attract more new

immigrants. Ontario's new immigrant population has been declining and

this is reflected in their allocated funding.   There have been concerns that

CIC has made decisions to immigration policy without the proper

consultation with the provinces. Since immigration is a joint responsibility

between the federal and provincial government, Ontario expected to be

part of the discussions. Due to the strained relationship between the two

levels of government, the non-negotiated COIA and Ontario's decision to create their own immigration strategy to address gaps they perceive in the CIC's immigration programming, the relationship between CIC and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration is depicted as a collaborative one of regular strength.

CIC funds and manages the delivery of settlement programs. The following receive funding to carry out these programs:

- **NFPs** provide services to immigrants in getting them settled by helping them find housing, employment and social networks and/or multicultural programs for integrating newcomers into Canadian society. NFPs also include language providers who provide language assessment and training for immigrants. To administer these programs, NFPs usually have to apply to CIC for funding at certain times of the year and they are heavily dependent on this funding for their existence. The NFPs have repeatedly expressed the opinion that CIC does not take their concerns about administering these programs into account and they are unable to make changes that they deem to be important. Therefore, the relationship between CIC and NFPs is depicted as a strong one-way arrow indicating a strong influence exerted by CIC on NFPs.

- **Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)** are the mechanism through which CIC supports the development of community-based partnerships and planning around the needs of new immigrants. LIPs try to engage various stakeholders in a locally-driven strategic planning process. Strategic partnerships between many stakeholders are encouraged to improve dialogue and information sharing between sectors, identify gaps and align services. LIPs do not directly provide services to new immigrants but they have strong collaborative relationships with **NFPs, Community Organizations** and **Municipalities**. Those relationships are depicted with strong two-way arrows between them whereas the relationship between CIC and LIPs is depicted as a strong one-way arrow as the LIPs are also heavily dependent on CIC funding.

These organizations within the settlement field rely heavily on funding from CIC. While CIC may invite them to provide input for immigration policy design, many don't consider it to be a routine practice. Starting in 2013, these organizations were required to submit a mandatory report on their activities to CIC, so this will provide some feedback on the effectiveness of their activities and which may further influence CIC funding. However, for now, each of their relationships with CIC is depicted as a heavy one-way arrow in the systems map.

With the introduction of the Canadian Experience Class, the Federal

Skilled Trades Program and the Self-Employed Program, it has been very

evident that CIC's intention is to increase the number of economic

immigrants to Canada. There have been several studies stating that

immigration will be necessary to fill the labour shortage in Canada.

Employers in the Canadian landscape have been supporting these

messages and have also been communicating them to CIC. CIC has

listened and often consulted with them when contemplating changes to

program design for the economic classes of immigration. In fact, this

collaborative relationship amongst CIC, employers and the ESDC has

produced the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to alleviate gaps in

labour for the short term. CIC's recent focus has been on economic

immigration and there is a strong linkage with employers. CIC frequently

meets with employers to hear their labour concerns. In this mapping,

employers are shown to have a strong influence on CIC.

CIC is required to hold consultations with the Canadian public including its

citizens. Most of these consultations are done in conjunction with the

annual immigration levels planning exercise done by CIC. Citizens are

invited to provide their opinions on immigration through an online channel

and there are also town hall meetings in cities across Canada.   It is

unclear how effective is this consultation because the invitation is not

widely dispersed. Searches on the websites of the national newspapers did not return any results of immigration consultations despite the current open invitation posted on CIC's website. Citizens do have influence over CIC as they vote for their political party of choice who makes up the government and CIC. The relationship between CIC and citizens is depicted as a two-way arrow of normal strength.

CIC relies on the **media** to communicate its messages to the general Canadian public. The media does have a strong influence on both **citizens** and **new immigrants** and what information they receive from CIC. CIC also relies on the media to report on feedback from citizens regarding their immigration programs and immigration as a whole. The relationship between CIC and the media are depicted as a two-way arrow of normal strength as they share information to influence each other's actions.

CIC's programs directly and strongly influence **new immigrants**. There is really no input from immigrants into the immigration process. In the system's map, the relationship is depicted as one with a heavy one-way arrow. In terms of power, the new immigrants have the least power in the system as they depend very heavily on other stakeholders in their settlement journey.

ON MCI Relationships

The ON MCI relationship with CIC has already been discussed in the previous section. ON MCI's key immigration stakeholder relationships are with:

- **Employers** – ON MCI works with Ontario employers to address the perceived labour shortages in Ontario and to help employers find the high-skilled talent that they need. Much of this is done through the Provincial Nominee program but ON MCI also advocates for Ontario employers in discussions with CIC in their annual immigration level planning exercise. There have also been recent initiatives by ON MCI under its 2013 Immigration Strategy to engage employers to better understand their labour needs and to promote the employment of immigrants in ON. The relationship between ON MCI and Employers in the systems map is depicted as a collaborative two-way arrow of regular strength.

- **NFPs** – ON MCI supplements settlement funding provided by CIC to NFPs and they support settlement programs for new immigrants. However the relationship between NFPs and ON MCI is a more collaborative one (compared to that of CIC and NFPs) because the entire NFP sector (not only those related to settlement services) falls under the governance of the ON MCI. ON MCI recently concluded an exercise with all the NFPs in Ontario to strengthen the partnership

between them. The relationship is depicted as a two-way arrow of regular strength.

- **Other Ontario Ministries** – These include Ministries of Health, Labour, and Education. ON MCI works with these ministries to coordinate the delivery of services to new immigrants in the settlement phase. Depicted as strong collaborative relationship.

- **Municipalities** – Many of Ontario cities are immigrant destinations and in the previous Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement, Ontario negotiated with CIC to include a provision to involve municipalities in planning and discussions on immigration and settlement, allowing all three levels of government to work together to meet the needs of immigrants across Ontario. This relationship is depicted as a two-way arrow of regular strength.

- **Ontario Fairness Commission (OFC)** – This non-governmental agency receives funding from ON MCI and oversees the **professional regulatory bodies** to make sure their licensing is transparent, objective, impartial and fair. The office was set up under the Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act. Its goal is to ensure that a qualified person who wants to practice a profession in Ontario can get a license to do so through the credential recognition process. While its mandate affects all foreign trained professionals (including Canadian citizens) looking to work in Ontario, immigrants make up a key

demographic that benefits from the work of the OFC. The relationship

is depicted as a one-way arrow of regular strength or one of mild

influence.

- ON MCI provides funding to **universities** in collaboration with

  professional regulatory bodies to create and deliver bridging

  programs to immigrants so that they can become licensed to practice

  their profession in Ontario. The relationship is depicted as a one-way

  arrow of regular strength or one of mild influence.

- Individual **professional regulatory bodies** report to individual **ON**

  ministries so there is a mild degree of influence on individual

  professional regulatory bodies.

New Immigrant Relationships

Because **NFPs** are closest to **new immigrants**, they have a strong

influence on them. Immigrants depend on these organizations for help with

settlement related matters e.g. finding housing, health care, education for

their children, and employment related information. The relationship is

depicted as a strong one-way arrow from NFPs to new immigrants.

Community organizations also interact with immigrants to help them

integrate in to the local communities. **Immigrant groups** related to the

new immigrants' country/region of origin also step in to assist the

newcomers in settlement but also serve as a sounding board for immigrant plans for the future. The relationship is depicted as a one-way arrow of regular strength from community organizations to new immigrants.

Immigrant relationships with **citizens** may be a bit more formal because they are in a new territory, they need to fit in and they try not to call too much attention to themselves. They rely on citizens to show them the way and they are influenced by the behavior of citizens. That relationship is also depicted as a one-way arrow of regular strength.

Immigrants also receive information from **municipalities** about working, living and accessing healthcare and educational services. The information is mostly accessed through the municipalities' websites and there is little one-to-one interaction. This relationship is depicted as a one-way arrow of normal strength.

New immigrants are very vulnerable and they have many obstacles to overcome in their settlement. They have the least power in the immigration system. There are not many feedback mechanisms to relay their concerns to CIC. Those stakeholders that have collaborative relationships with new immigrants (e.g. NFPs) either rely very heavily on CIC for funding and are heavily influenced by them and this dominates the

relationship so that immigrant feedback is not a priority. Another reason

could be that some stakeholders, such as **individual immigrant groups**,

have minimal influence on CIC, perhaps because they are not conveying

immigrant concerns during the times when CIC is willing to listen or they

are not sufficiently mobilized to have a strong voice.

FIGURE 5 - INFLUENCE IN CANADIAN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM
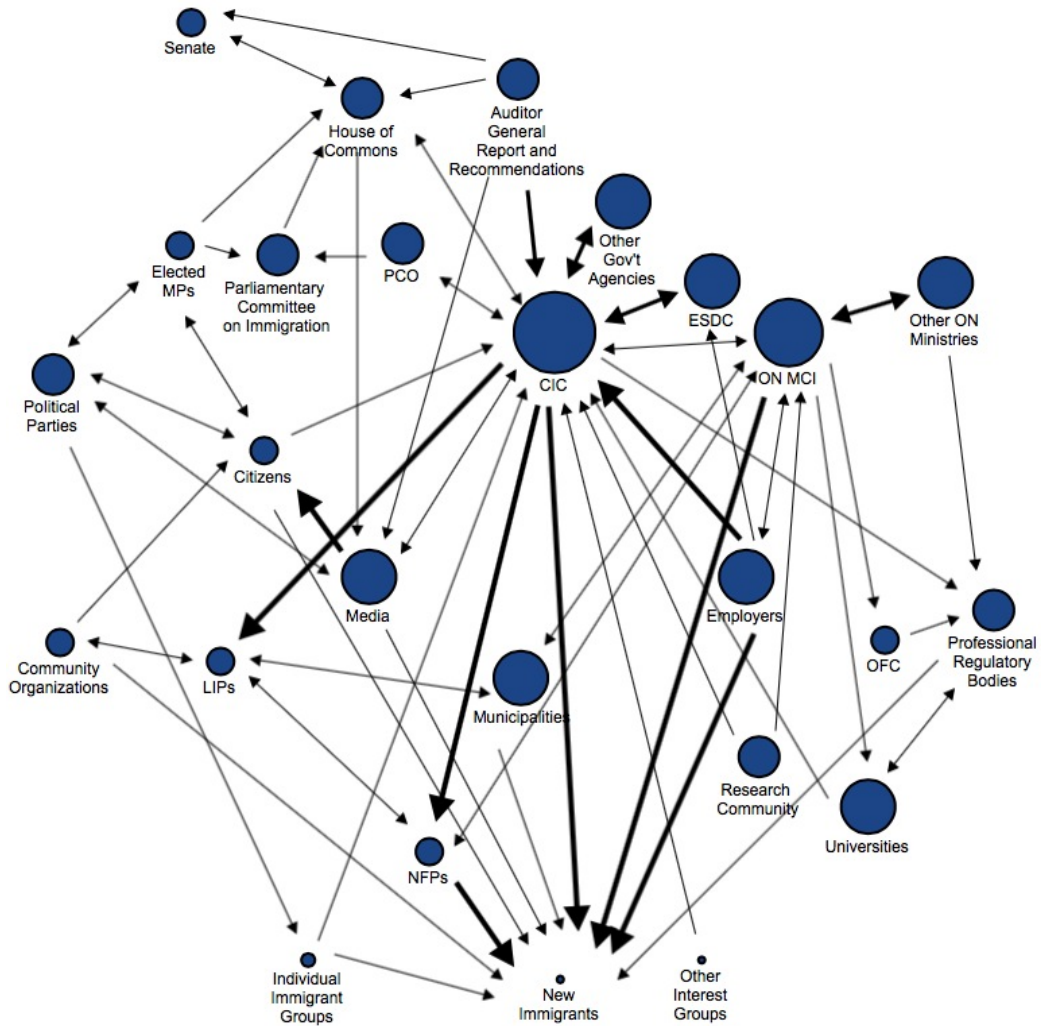
A ———▶ B - A strongly influences B

A ———▶ B - A has a mild influence on B

A ◀——▶ B - A and B have a strong collaborative relationship

A ◀——▶ B - A and B have a collaborative relationship or share information that influences each other

Larger circles indicate greater stakeholder power in the system

Figure 5 is a preliminary systems map illustrating stakeholders involved in immigration policy development and implementation with immigrant settlement as system boundary imposed in this study. Therefore stakeholders who may contribute to immigrant integration and eventual citizenship are not included in this systems map. Ontario is the provincial example used in this mapping. The reasons for this have already been outlined in the Introduction.

The systems map shows the stakeholders and how they are networked. The size of the stakeholder circles provides an idea of the power they have in the system – larger circles indicate greater power. The direction of the arrows indicates the direction of information flow. As one stakeholder shares information with another (depicted by an arrow from one to the other), the stakeholder sharing the information has the potential to influence the other stakeholder's immigration-related actions. One-sided arrows show the direction of influence of one stakeholder on another. Double-sided arrows indicate collaboration or freer information flow between stakeholders. The thickness of the lines between stakeholders indicates the degree of influence or the strength of collaboration that exists between them – thicker lines indicate stronger influence of one stakeholder on another.

Successful Immigrant Settlement

In this research project, citizens, immigrants, NFPs and employers were asked to comment on the moment when they believed an immigrant felt settled in Canada. (The questions posed to policy development professionals at CIC were more geared to finding out about policy development and implementation and hence the reason for not including them in this section.) Respondents' comments clustered around 4 success themes – employment, security, belonging and ability to participate as being necessary factors for successful immigrant settlement. Table 2 shows the percentage of respondents whose comments were related to each theme.

Table 2 – Success Themes in Immigrant Settlement

Success Themes	Citizens	Immigrants	NFPs	Employers	All	Sample Comments
Employment	100%	33%	50%	100%	70%	"Having a job", "having a stable job", "having qualifications recognized and being able to work in their field"
Security	50%	50%	50%	75%	55%	"Having shelter", "ensuring that kids were looked after" and "having documents to stay"
Belonging	50%			75%	30%	"Being a part of the community" and "interacting with people outside of your own culture"
Ability to Participate	67%	17%		25%	30%	"Being able to communicate effectively", "being aware of Canadian issues" and "participating in Canadian issues"

It is important to note that immigrant comments about being settled mostly related to having their security needs being met (e.g. they referenced "having shelter", "documents to stay") and to a certain degree employment, whereas the views of citizens and employers included factors beyond immediate settlement, such as belonging and ability to participate as being necessary factors for successful immigrant settlement. This is perhaps because in the first two years, new immigrants are solely focused on meeting their immediate settlement needs. Belonging and the ability to participate are not yet on their radar as factors of successful settlement. Respondents from the other stakeholder groups who are looking in can identify deeper aspects of settlement such as, belonging and the ability to participate as necessary for successful settlement.

Factors Negatively Impacting Successful Immigrant Settlement

During the semi-structured interviews, respondents of the citizens, immigrants, NFPs and employers stakeholder groups identified factors that negatively impact successful immigrant settlement. These factors have been grouped into four problem themes: access to settlement services, immigrant employment, culture shock, and immigrant stereotype. (Once again, the questions posed to policy development professionals at

CIC were more geared to finding out about policy development and implementation and hence the reason for not including them in this section.)

Problem Theme 1 – Access to Settlement Services

The organizations in the settlement services arena provide services to immigrants in helping them navigate the abundance of information regarding their settlement. NFPs (including language providers) and LIPs make up the core of the organizations in the settlement arena. They either offer language skills, training, employment programs and other settlement services to immigrants or they work behind the scenes to develop and implement local settlement strategies that coordinate and enhance service delivery to immigrants. Respondents in this study identified factors related to the access to settlement services as negatively impacting successful immigrant settlement. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 – Factors related to Problem Theme 1- Access to Settlement Services

Access to Settlement Services	Citizens	Immigrants	NFPs	Employers	All	Sample Comments
Long wait time for immigrants to access settlement services	33%	33%	75%		35%	• "Huge demand for services, unable to respond" • "Long waiting list" • 'Bureaucracy that prevents help from reaching immigrants"
Immigrants' lack of awareness of settlement services Immigrants lack of info about settlement services		50%	50%	50%	35%	• "There is help available to immigrants if you can find it" • "Wish I had the help then that I have now" • "It takes time to find programs of relevance"
Lack of settlement services outside of cities				25%	5%	• "Canada needs to create immigrant friendly cities with settlement services to alleviate pressure on main cities"
Immigrants depriving themselves of comprehensive settlement info by only seeking help from ethnic enclaves		17%		25%	10%	• "Immigrants not integrating well into society but staying in their enclaves" • Immigrants settle in areas with a lot of immigrants and they don't get the best information on settlement. This perpetuates the situation."

It is important to recognize that there was a lack of responses from citizens on settlement services. This is perhaps due to their lack of awareness on its existence or importance in the immigration process. This highlights an opportunity to increase awareness amongst stakeholder groups.

Problem Theme 2 – Immigrant Employment

It is well documented that many immigrants have difficulties in finding employment in Canada (Reitz, 2011b), ("Why some immigrants leave Canada," 2012). It is often the greatest impediment to settlement as they experience great pressure from their dwindling finances and they need a source of sustainable income to support other settlement activities e.g. sending their children to school, paying for housing and meeting their immediate personal needs. Based on interviews conducted, the respondents of employers, immigrants, citizens and NFP stakeholder groups identified factors related to the problem theme of employment as negatively impacting successful immigrant settlement. The results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 – Factors related to Problem Theme 2 - Immigrant Employment

Immigrant Employment	Citizens	Immigrants	NFPs	Employers	All	Sample Comments
Immigrants have difficulty in finding jobs	17%	33%	50%	75%	40%	• "Knew getting a job would be difficult but didn't realize it would be this long" • "It does take longer to get a job here compared to the US" • "Government needs to do a better job on identifying skills needed" • "I have a very good background with lots of experience. It shouldn't have taken this long"
Immigrants have difficulty in finding jobs in their own fields	17%	50%	50%	50%	40%	• "I'm doing a survival job" • "In Ontario, 24% skilled immigrants find work in their fields" • "Immigrants take survivor jobs not necessarily in their fields"
Employers hesitant in hiring immigrants			25%	50%	15%	• "Immigrants are not given sales roles and without that, they cannot progress in senior management" • "Whole society, employers seem tolerant but racism is latent" • Workplaces not very accommodating to newcomers"
Immigrants have difficulty with the professional credential recognition process	67%	17%	25%	75%	45%	• "Might not be able to work as an engineer" • "Still a mindset that doesn't value foreign trained professionals" • "Immigrants get here but have difficulty getting their credentials recognized. This is failing immigration and the country"
Lack of Canadian experience preventing immigrants from being hired				100%	20%	• "Don't believe if you don't have Canadian experience, we can't interview you for job" • "Employers believe foreign experience is inferior"
Insufficient number/ diversity of free bridging programs to help immigrants find employment in their field		17%		75%	20%	• "Need more programs to train for skills so that they can get jobs in their field" • "Most programs geared to financial services, couldn't find one for engineers"

Immigrant Employment	Citizens	Immigrants	NFPs	Employers	All	Sample Comments
Language/ accent barriers preventing immigrants from being hired	50%			25%	20%	• "They need to get rid of their accent" • "By not speaking the language, you're at a loss" • "Audio interactions a challenge in the workplace"
Employers devalue immigrants' international work experience			50%	25%	15%	• "Still a mindset that doesn't value foreign trained professionals" • "Employers believe foreign experience is inferior"

Employers shared a unique perspective as to some of the barriers to immigrant employment. In the cases of newly arrived immigrants, they may not even know that their accent or lack of Canadian experience prevent them from finding employment. This highlights the importance of the broad sharing of stakeholder perspectives for the benefit of the immigrant.

Problem Theme 3 – Culture Shock

Based on interviews conducted, the respondents of employers, immigrants, citizens and NFP stakeholder groups identified factors related to the problem theme of culture shock that immigrants experience upon arriving in Canada. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5 – Factors related to Problem Theme 3 - Culture Shock

Culture Shock	Citizens	Immigrants	NFPs	Employers	All	Sample Comments
Tendency of immigrants to lower their expectations in order to survive		67%	25%	75%	40%	• "I was prepared to lower my expectations regarding my achievements" • "I might not be able to work as an engineer" • "Immigrants willing to go into jobs so beneath their talents/skills just to have the opportunity to work and live in Canada"
Immigrant difficulty in adapting to Canadian culture	50%			25%	20%	• Even if you have the language, you sometimes struggle because you don't understand the system" • Some immigrants have difficulty understanding things like equal rights for women and gay marriage • "Immigrants need to have the cultural competency as they will be exposed to not only Canadian culture but a multitude of cultures"
Immigrant difficulty nailing down the Canadian identity	33%	17%			10%	• "I feel like an American living in Canada. Canadian culture moves away from me as I try to embrace it" • "You don't get a sense of dug in identity. Each group has a different view of identity. It gets diluted. We don't know what we are. We're under development"
Immigrants fully realizing difficulty of circumstances on arrival	17%		25%		10%	• "People don't realize how profound barriers are until they come" • "Immigrants believe that the grass is greener in Canada but when they come, they realize how hard it is"
Immigrant difficulty adapting to being an unknown in a new country		33%			10%	• Moving from a place where everyone knows you to being completely unknown – it's hard sometimes" • "It takes a while to get used to people moving along without noticing anyone else"

Most of the culture shock problems were identified by the new immigrants, demonstrating the lack of understanding amongst the rest of the stakeholder groups. This is a definite opportunity for an increased understanding of the immigrant experience for a better immigration system.

Problem Theme 4 – Immigrant Stereotype

Based on interviews conducted, the respondents of private sector professional, immigrants, citizens and NFP stakeholder groups identified factors related to the problem theme of the immigrant stereotype or the problems immigrants face after being typecast in a negative way. The results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6 – Factors related to Problem Theme 4 - Immigrant Stereotype

Immigrant Stereotype	Citizens	Immigrants	NFPs	Employers	All	Sample Comments
Canadian perception that immigrants take advantage of the social safety net	67%		50%	50%	40%	• "People believe that immigrants come to use the social welfare system and we're paying tax money for that" • "Immigrants will be successful when they have a job and are not on social assistance" • "If immigrants are only coming for health care or social systems, we don't want them"
Immigrants experience racism, prejudice and discrimination	17%	50%	50%	50%	40%	• "Whole society, employers seem tolerant but racism is latent" • "Canada is very welcoming of immigrants from Europe but not from other ethnic countries"
Lack of understanding in Canadians about the importance of immigration for Canada's success	83%		25%		30%	• "In Durham region, there is no understanding of why Canada needs immigration" • "Need to help Canadians understand the levels of immigration and issues because they believe its mostly about refugees" • "People need to be more aware of who come – think of the courage and resilience. It takes really strong people to come" • "Most Canadians feel that they are doing immigrants a favour and not the other way around"
Canadian perception that immigrants are dishonest and commit fraud	17%	17%	25%	25%	20%	• "Government needs to reduce the number of fraudulent applications. It puts a burden on the system and on immigrants that are here." • "We shouldn't assume all immigrant/Canadian marriages are fraudulent" • "Just because there are a few bad apples, it doesn't mean that all immigrants are committing fraud"

DISCUSSION

Successful Immigrant Settlement

Participants identified four themes contributing to successful immigrant settlement. They are security, employment, belonging and the ability to participate. These success themes bear some resemblance to the popular framework of Maslow's hierarchy of needs – a model that categorizes the basic needs of human beings in order of importance ("Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs," 2011). Maslow claimed that if the more basic needs of a person are not met, then the person would be unlikely to meet needs higher up in the hierarchy.

FIGURE 6 - Alignment of Successful Immigrant Settlement within Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
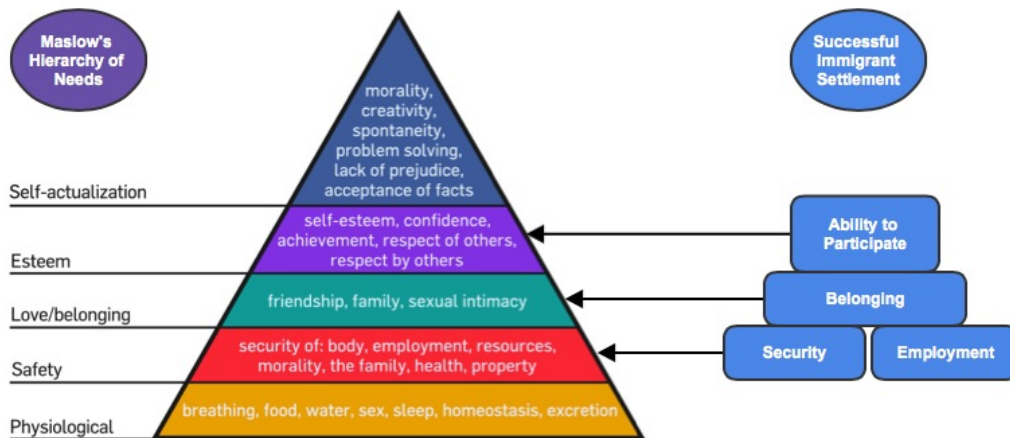
Figure 6 shows Maslow's hierarchy of needs and how the themes

contributing to successful immigrant settlement align within the hierarchy.

The success themes for employment and security align with safety in

Maslow's hierarchy. Immigrants require their permanent resident status to

freely live in Canada and to be able to work and build a life here. It allows

them the right to free health care, to obtain housing, to enroll their children

in school, to open a bank account and to have a place of residence.

These settlement activities, identified by immigrants, citizens, employers

and NFPs and grouped in the success themes employment and security,

contribute to the immigrant's sense of physical, emotional and financial

security described in Maslow's category of safety.

Once immigrants have met their employment and security needs, they

seek a sense of belonging. Belonging, identified in this study as being

part of the community, making friends and interacting with people outside

of their ethnic community, closely resembles Maslow's category of

love/belonging or the social need to connect.

Having connected with others, respondents in this study believed that

when immigrants recognized and exercised their ability to participate, it

signified successful settlement. Being able to participate in Canadian

issues demonstrates a sense of engagement and a willingness to make a difference. This success theme resembles Maslow's category of esteem where the immigrant has a sense of achievement and esteem.

The success themes are very universal in nature and are not unique to life in Canada. They represent basic human needs and efforts to help new immigrants meet them will not only benefit immigrants but Canada as well.

Problem Themes Preventing Successful Immigrant Settlement

The study identified four problem themes that prevent the successful settlement of new immigrants:

- Access to Settlement Services

- Immigrant Employment

- Culture Shock

- Immigrant Stereotype

The following sections discuss these problem areas from a systems perspective.

Access to Settlement Services

Access to Settlement Services involves the difficulties immigrants face in accessing settlement services that are designed to equip them with information, resources and connections to help them meet their immediate settlement needs. If immigrants are unaware of these services or are expected to endure long wait times before receiving services, their settlement experience is negatively impacted. Settlement services assist immigrants in finding housing and employment and in accessing health and social services. If they are unable to receive help, this reduces their chances of achieving two of the success factors – employment and security.

This section looks at the access to settlement services problem from a systems perspective, with Figure 7 showing the main stakeholders in red whose actions result in the problems associated with access to settlement services.

FIGURE 7 - STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE - ACCESS TO SETTLEMENT SERVICES
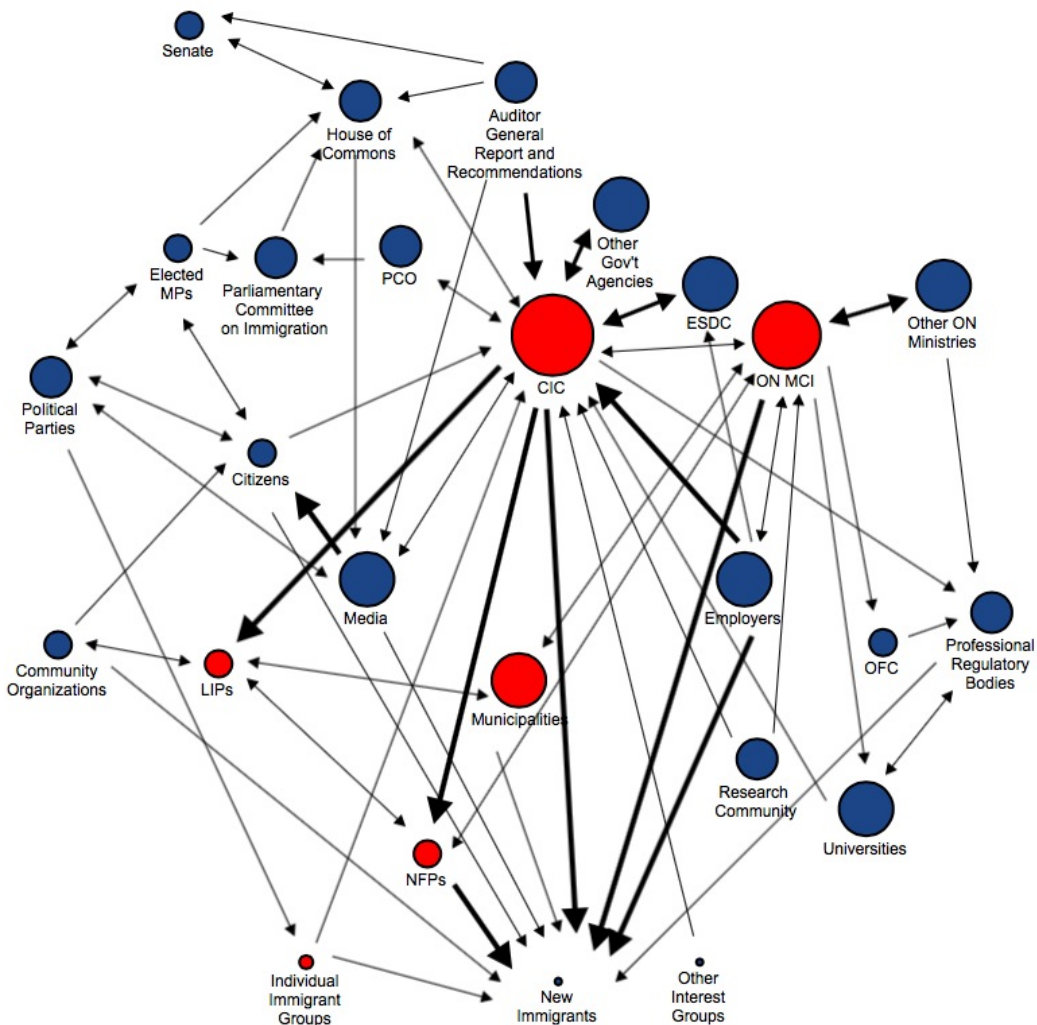
*Actions of stakeholders in red impact the Access to Settlement Services problem theme*

Problems:
- *Long wait time for immigrants to access settlement services*
- *Immigrants' lack of awareness of settlement services*
- *Immigrants lack of info about settlement services*
- *Lack of settlement services outside of cities*
- *Immigrants depriving themselves of comprehensive settlement info by only seeking help from ethnic enclaves*

Respondents in this study suggested that settlement services were

essential to successful immigrant settlement and they identified problems

related to access to settlement services as a factor that negatively impacts

successful immigrant settlement. This is supported by an OCASI Ontario-

wide study of the use of settlement and integration services by immigrants,

refugees, claimants, migrant workers and those without legal immigration

status. It stated that more than 83% of the respondents had used one or

more settlement support services (OCASI, 2012). Those with higher

levels of education were just as likely to use settlement and integration

services. Also, counseling and advice was the most highly used general

settlement service. From Figure 7, the stakeholders whose actions play a

part in settlement services and its access are CIC, ON MCI, NFPs, LIPs,

municipalities and individual immigrant groups.

To better illustrate the nature of the relationships between the above

stakeholders, they have been isolated in Figure 8 along with their impact

on the access to settlement services problem theme.

FIGURE 8 – STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS - ACCESS TO SETTLEMENT SERVICES
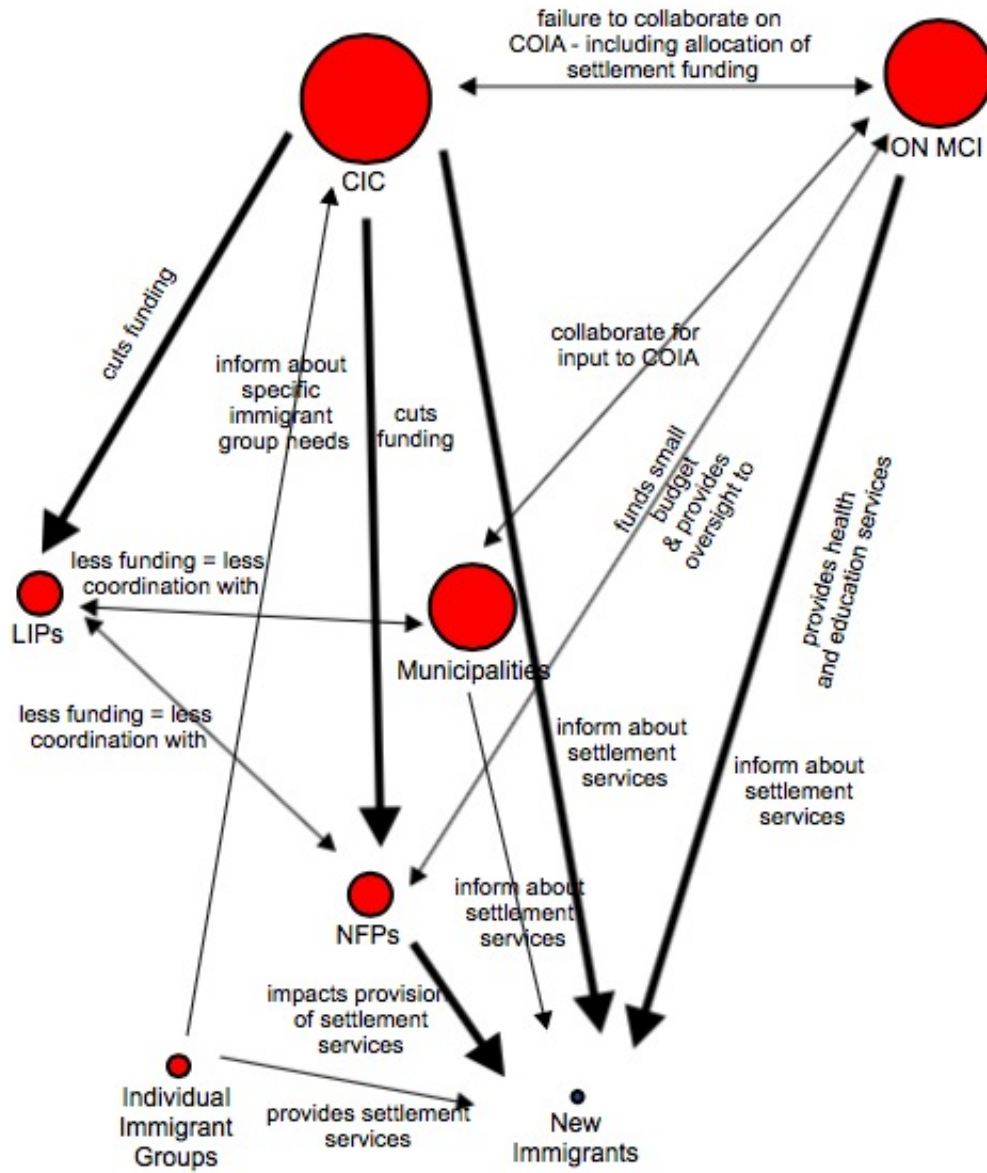
CIC provides funding to NFPs who deliver critical settlement services to new immigrants. The level of funding determines how many immigrants receive settlement services and the length of time that immigrants have to wait for these services. The amount of funding provided by CIC is derived using a formula that takes into account the number of immigrants coming to settle in Ontario.

The ON – MCI strained relationship is depicted in Figure 8 as it relates to the non-renewal of COIA in 2011 ("The Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement," 2005) and how it affected the allocation of settlement funding to Ontario. The 2012-2013 allocation of funding was the first time that Ontario was subjected to the formula determination rather than a negotiated amount through COIA. Since 2011, and due to the application of the formula, Ontario settlement funding to NFPs has decreased, resulting in service cutbacks and closures. ("Backgrounder — Government of Canada 2012-13 Settlement Funding Allocations," 2011)

Ontario's NFPs have had difficulties in adjusting to this cut in funding ("Background Information on CIC Cuts," 2011) and it is unclear if the funding cuts would have still happened had the COIA agreement been renewed between CIC and ON MCI. However, despite the strained federal – provincial relations, had there been greater common ground and

foresight to renegotiate an agreement, the NFPs would have been better served and at least, been better prepared for the cuts. This demonstrates weak feedback in the system. It is considered to be a characteristic of a faulty system and it affects its resilience or ability to bounce back after shocks (Meadows, 2008, pg 76) – in this case the non-negotiation of COIA.

CIC's actions have been fair under the circumstances of a non-negotiated COIA. CIC is responsible for immigration across Canada and they have been trying to allocate settlement services funds to other provinces for their increased immigration and achieving their economic goals. This has been demonstrated in other recent policy changes. Not only has CIC been redirecting settlement funds to other provinces to increase immigration there, they have also set much higher limits on the number of provincial nominees (2012 - 2013) that Alberta (4000), British Columbia (3000), Manitoba (4000) and Saskatchewan (3400) can admit annually when compared to Ontario (1000) for the same purpose.

While CIC's focus is national, ON MCI's goals have mainly been to attract immigrants to Ontario and to provide oversight of programs to promote the settlement of Ontario immigrants. ON MCI also provides input to CIC on their selection and admission policies which factor into the annual planning

levels of immigration. With the failure to renegotiate COIA, Ontario now has decided to create its own immigration strategy to further attract immigrants to the province and if the number increases, one of the intended consequences will be that CIC's allocation of settlement funds will increase as per the formula. Without an agreement in place, Ontario now has to act based on the rules of the system in that settlement funding will be allocated to Ontario based on the number of immigrants settling in Ontario.

ON MCI has been trying to supplement funding to NFPs (as shown in Figure 8) but their contribution is only a small fraction of what CIC provides. So the NFPs must provide settlement services to immigrants on a lower budget. Although the number of immigrants settling in Ontario is now lower than in previous years, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving immigrants (OCASI) has claimed that there is still a high demand for services as there is a backlog of immigrants in Ontario seeking settlement services despite having arrived over 2 years ago and that there are immigrants who originally settled in other provinces who are now moving to Ontario ("OCASI Comments 2012," 2012). In other words, there is still a steady flow of immigrants with a continued bottleneck at the NFP level. While Ontario's strategy to attract more immigrants may bring some relief to settlement services with additional CIC funding, it will also introduce

more immigrants into the settlement services pipeline, further compounding the problem.

Immigrants receive settlement services from NFPs, however these organizations rely heavily on CIC funding. Refer to the strong one-way arrow from CIC to NFPs in Figure 8. NFPs have stated that the demand for settlement services is high and the funding that they receive is not enough to service all the new immigrants who need settlement services. NFPs usually have to answer a call for proposals that CIC puts out in order to be considered for funding. Their funding is not guaranteed each year and because of uncertainty of funding, NFPs are unable to do much long term planning. The programming is very strictly defined by CIC and NFPs have little autonomy to make programming changes as the need arises. NFPs are heavily dependent on CIC funding for their existence.

NFPs have a limited capacity to serve immigrants and this results in long wait times for services and the inability to provide immigrants with follow up appointments to answer specific questions that they may have. These organizations cannot do extensive marketing of their services but mostly rely on government websites, limited local advertisements and word of mouth to advertise their existence. Refer to Figure 8 and arrows from ON MCI and municipalities to new immigrants. Fortunate is the immigrant who

visits these websites because only then will they receive comprehensive information about the settlement services available to them. There are obviously immigrants who slip through the cracks because they are not aware of their services. According to the OCASI study, 30% of immigrants interviewed had not used settlement services because they were unaware of their existence (*Making Ontario Home*, 2012).

FIGURE 9 – NFPs help immigrants settle

NFPs help new immigrants settle but they experience
high volumes of immigrants and operate under limited budgets.

Funding constraints also restrict NFPs in providing interpreter services. For immigrants whose first language is not English/French, interpreter services are critical in obtaining the information that they need. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why immigrants gravitate towards immigrant groups of their own communities to receive settlement information as depicted in Figure 8 by the arrow from individual immigrant groups to new

immigrants. By doing this, they may not receive comprehensive

settlement information to make the best choices for themselves.

Cited by CIC as a Canadian innovation in multi-level governance in the

settlement services arena was the creation of Local Immigration

Partnerships (LIPs) (Burr, 2011). LIPs perform an important function by

developing and implementing local settlement strategies that coordinate

and enhance service delivery to immigrants. They draw upon the

expertise of various NFPs to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

Figure 7 illustrates how networked they are as they interact with CIC,

NFPs, community organizations and municipalities to improve service

delivery.

They too depend on funding from CIC but also suffered from a cut in

funding causing the closure and consolidation of LIPs to a more regional

model. In a study done by the University of Toronto entitled *Balancing the

Budget but Who's Left to Budget the Balance: A Visual Representation of

Professional Networks within Toronto East Local Immigration Partnership*,

the funding cuts caused the loss of many of their staff and this reduced

LIPs sustainable collaborative relationships by half, their professional

linkages to 764 compared to 1466 and a network of non-integrated

localized immigrant services. The study concluded that the funding cuts

would have an adverse effect on coordinated settlement services to immigrants (Bejan, 2012).

The ability of the LIPs to become so networked with community partners is a positive sign for the settlement services arena of the immigration system. It displays a characteristic called self-organization or in this example, the ability of LIPs to take diverse services, understand their scope and bring them together into an offering to enhance the settlement of immigrants. Even though CIC will now fund a more regional model of LIPs, they may still be able to function with some degree of effectiveness though it might be in the better interests of immigrants if less funding cuts were applied to the LIPs as compared to the NFPs.

While there is information flowing between CIC, LIPs and NFPs, it appears that NFPs have only a mild influence on CIC. CIC has consulted with NFPs via the Settlement and Integration Joint Policy and Program Council - a mechanism for collaboration, consultation and planning between the settlement sector and the federal government as well as provincial and territorial governments using two in-person and three teleconference meetings. However, there have been no significant policy changes resulting from these concerns. For example, OCASI (Ontario Council of Agencies serving Immigrants) has been continually reminding CIC that

despite the recent decrease in immigrants that Ontario witnessed, there are immigrants who still need settlement services even after living in Canada for more than two years and as such, CIC should not decrease settlement funds allocated to ON. Unfortunately, funding has been reduced and one can expect to see service to immigrants impacted. This is just one example of the way in which NFPs have been unable to influence CIC for the benefit of the settlement sector.

Apart from the submission of requests for funding that NFPs must do in order to secure funding for their operations, there has only been a recent introduction of a formal review mechanism to assess NFP performance. CIC has recently designed an Annual Project Performance Report to measure this impact ("Settlement Program," 2013). Previously, CIC had conducted evaluations of their settlement programming usually through a survey of a sample of immigrants who accessed settlement services, of NFPs that deliver the programming and CIC professionals who oversee the delivery (*Evaluation of ISAP*, 2011). The findings provided evidence that the programs were relevant and those accessing the services were satisfied. However, data provided did not give a comprehensive view on the extent of the impact these programs had on immigrant settlement success. It is hoped that information gathered from each NFP through the Annual Project Performance Report will give a better idea of the impact of

CIC settlement programming and can provide recommendations for improvement. This will strengthen the feedback within the system regarding the effectiveness of settlement services.

The programming as set out by CIC relates to the very early stages of settlement – providing information on housing, health care, education and basic employment training. NFPs have voiced the need for a broader definition of settlement services to include depth of training and an increased length of time immigrants should be eligible for settlement services. Many immigrants need very specific help in breaking into the job market and settlement programs don't provide for a depth of services in that regard. However NFPs have experienced limited success in relaying the immigrant point of view.

CIC is obviously facing budgetary challenges. At least two policy development professionals interviewed expressed concern that past levels of funding may not continue in the future. Perhaps this is the reason why CIC has moved towards a position of selecting immigrants who could hit the ground running – having a certain level of fluency in either English or French and recognized educational credentials. While this may reduce the need for language assessment and interpreter services, many argue that this excludes immigrants from many non-English/French speaking

countries from applications success and makes Canada's immigration system take on a generic flavor like that of Australia and the UK. Some respondents in this study have suggested that a model like that tends to be rather simplistic and doesn't draw on the diversity of talented people from around the world who may not earn enough points to qualify as immigrants to Canada because their primary language is not English/French. They also argue that this model prevents the reunification of families, i.e. existing immigrants from non-English/French speaking countries who are looking to sponsor family members that they left behind and that this increases the chances of immigrants choosing not to stay in Canada.

It is in the best interest of immigrants to look for innovations in the settlement sector within the context of the immigration system. Newly arrived immigrants depend on NFPs to provide important information on how they can settle, find employment and begin their lives in Canada.

Immigrant Employment

This theme deals with the hardships immigrants face when trying to find suitable employment after arrival in Canada. Barriers encountered are language, credential recognition, experience and prejudice. The more barriers immigrants encounter, the less chances they will obtain suitable employment – one of the success themes for settlement. This will also impact their sense of security and due to anxiety and stress, it will decrease their chances of reaching out, forming connections and achieving that sense of belonging – another success factor for settlement.

This section looks at the access to settlement services problem from a systems perspective, with Figure 10 showing the main stakeholders in red whose actions impact the problems associated with immigrant employment.

FIGURE 10 - STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE - IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT
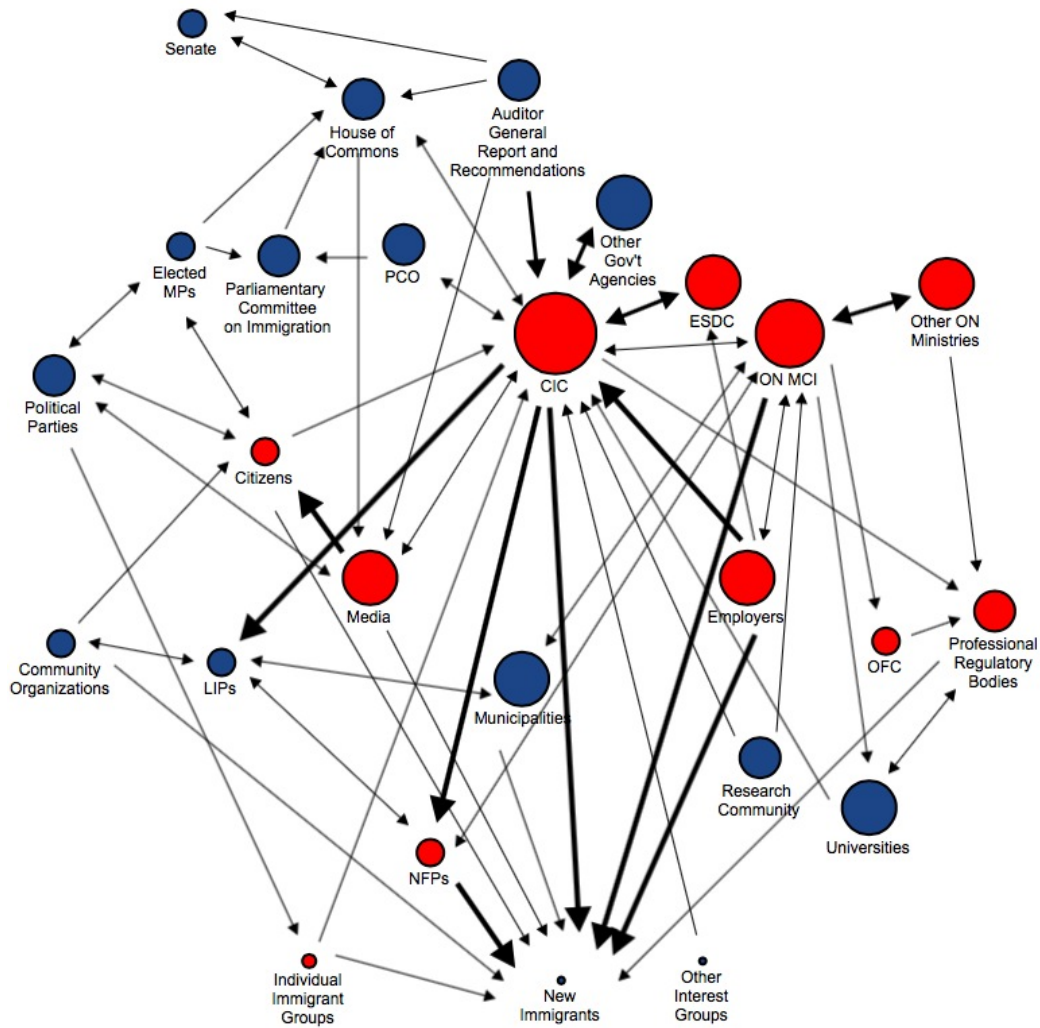
Actions of stakeholders in red impact the Immigrant Employment problem theme
Problems:

- *Immigrants have difficulty finding jobs*
- *Immigrants have difficulty finding jobs in their own fields*
- *Employers hesitant in hiring immigrants*
- *Immigrants have difficulty with the credential recognition process*
- *Lack of Canadian experience preventing immigrants from being hired*
- *Insufficient number/diversity of free bridging programs to help immigrants find employment in their fields*
- *Language/accent barriers preventing immigrants from being hired*
- *Employers devalue immigrants' international work experience*
- *Immigrants experience pay inequity*

To understand how immigrants face difficulties in obtaining employment and finding a job in their field, it's important to start at the very beginning and look at the process for determining what occupations are in demand.

### *Labour Market Information and In-Demand Occupation List*

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) estimates the projections of future labour demand and labour supply by broad skill level and by occupation. They use models of the Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) focusing on the trends in labour supply, labour demand and in their respective components and determinants over a 10-year span – allowing them to identify occupations that may face a shortage or surplus of workers over the medium term. ESDC also collaborates with employers to understand their workforce demands. Based on this analysis, ESDC produces a list of eligible occupations that CIC uses as a way of attracting prospective immigrants to apply. Many have criticized COPS, including Rick Miner - a former Seneca College president - claiming that it is based on outdated occupational codes and it doesn't take into account the fact that jobs evolve over time and require new skills (Miner, 2014). The Auditor General has also criticized data in the job vacancies report claiming that it doesn't specify where in the provinces, there are job shortages and the classifications of vacancies are too broad so effective workforce planning cannot be done (Curry, 2014).

With the level of uncertainty and complexity in the world today, the rapid evolution of technology is playing a role in how businesses operate and is having implications for occupations that will be in demand. One questions whether ESDC factors these considerations into their extrapolations to produce the occupations list.

One can also question whether employers have a good enough understanding of their future workforce needs and if this is accurately communicated to ESDC. In this study, employer respondents called for greater workforce planning on the part of their companies because they felt that there was a gap and this affected their confidence in whether employers would be able to staff positions in the future. This gap in workforce planning contributes to an inaccurate flow of information to CIC and ESDC to be used in determining which skilled immigrants are selected to come to Canada. This also demonstrates weak feedback in the system.

Refer to the Employers – ESDC relationship in Figure 11 showing the stakeholders whose actions impact the immigrant employment problem theme.

FIGURE 11 – STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS - IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT
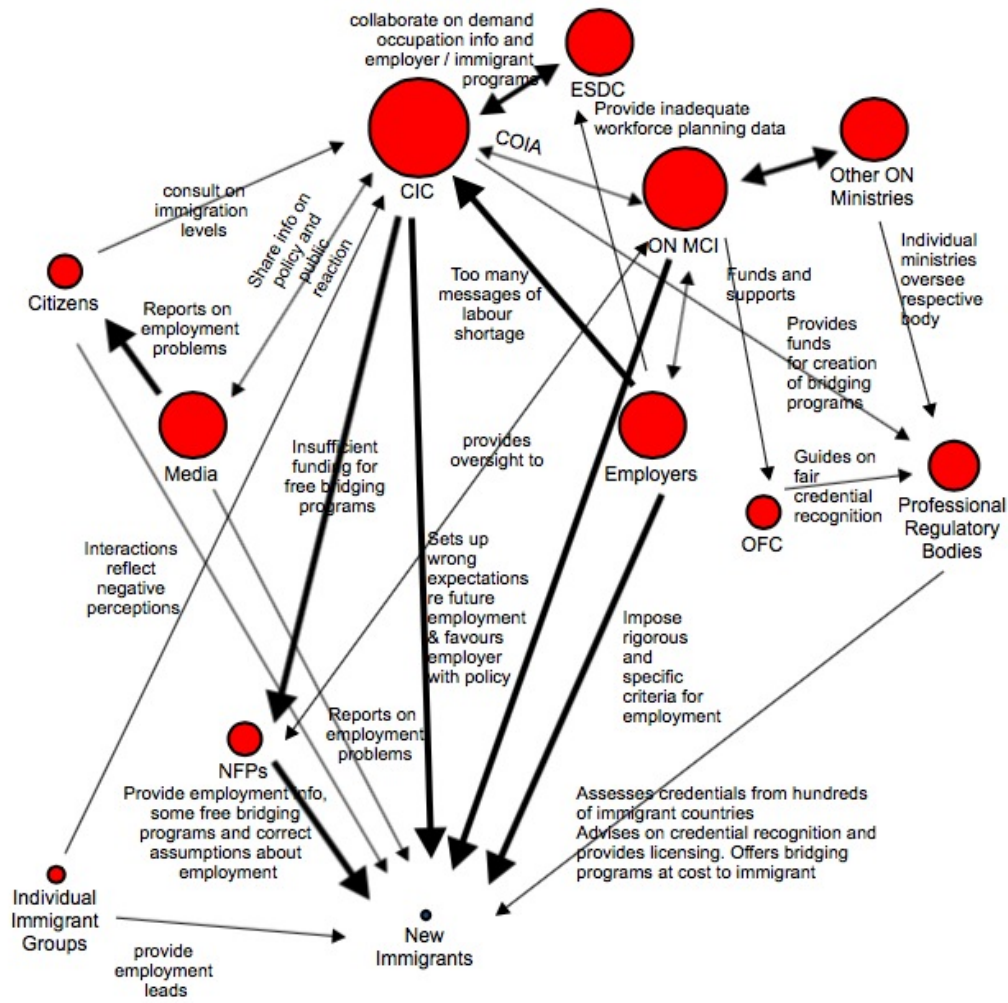
CIC uses this occupations list that critics believe to be an inaccurate forecast of in-demand occupations to recruit and screen out prospective immigrants. Prospective immigrants who possess at least 1 year of work experience in one of these eligible occupations can apply under CIC's Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP). These applicants may bring their spouse and any dependent children with them. Spouses may also have valuable work experience to contribute to Canada. If the forecast of in-demand occupations is less than accurate, the incoming immigrants will have problems finding suitable employment.

Even if the forecast of in-demand occupations is accurate, the COPs model provides this information every 10 years. With technological advancements and innovations in industries, there can be many changes to the skills that are in demand and one can question how relevant is the in-demand occupations list that COPS projects. With this timeframe for providing labour market data in the system, the demand for some occupations could decrease and can affect whether some immigrants find suitable employment in their field.

One may argue that because CIC communicates to prospective immigrants these occupations as being in demand in Canada, it sets the expectation that immigrants who are successful in the application process

should have a reasonable chance of finding employment in their field on

arrival in Canada. As immigrants can attest ("Why some immigrants leave

Canada," 2012), finding employment is hard as evidenced by the factors

identified in the employment problem theme. (Refer to the bottom of

Figure 10). And, the expectation of immigrants to find work in their field is

so strong that some NFPs interviewed feel that a strong part of their work

in dealing with newly arrived immigrants is to correct that assumption and

to advise them that credential recognition and Canadian experience are

what's required to start working in Canada. This assumption correction is

work that they feel is unfairly placed on them given the amount of

settlement counselling they must do and the very limited time that they are

able to spend with each immigrant due to their limited budgets.

CIC Activities and Employer Attitudes

CIC has tried to do a lot in terms of realigning immigration for a greater

proportion of economic immigrants at the expense of the family class. Yet,

it does not appear that employer attitudes have changed regarding the

hiring of immigrants. Immigrants today still face the same hurdles of lack

of Canadian experience and unrecognized credentials, to name a few.

There is now a perception (reflected in the views of some citizens

interviewed and critics of certain immigration policy) that Canada is taking

away the best and the brightest from other countries but not effectively

using their talents here. They believe that this is not a responsible practice and that it damages Canada's reputation as a destination of choice in the long run.

Figure 11 depicts the strong influence employers have on CIC with the heavy one-way arrow. Employers have considerable influence on CIC as they design and tweak immigration policy and very often, that tweaking directly benefits employers. A recent example of this is CIC implementing a condition that all applicants in the (FSWP) must have their educational credentials and language ability successfully assessed in order to obtain points towards their application. This change effectively screens an applicant not only for immigration selection but according to CIC, it also tends to increase their employment chances. By successfully screening language and educational credentials, CIC believes immigrants could be more easily hired by employers, especially those with a limited capacity to assess foreign educational credentials and an openness to hire someone with a slight accent.

Just as CIC designs immigration policy and relies on stakeholders to help in its implementation, there is a certain expectation on CIC's part that employers will do their part in hiring skilled immigrants if they can compete for roles with Canadians. However, it is unclear whether that expectation

has been explicitly communicated and currently, employers are not held accountable by any government agency for doing less than their fair share of immigrant hiring. Despite the consistent unemployment of immigrants (Paperny, 2014), CIC continues to sustain the level of immigration to Canada each year.

CIC, while unwilling to grant the provinces more control over the selection of immigrants under the FSWP, and in an effort to maintain federal – provincial relations, allows the provinces and territories to recruit skilled workers through the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). In this program, ON MCI works with employers to identify potential skilled immigrants for particular roles. Together, they work with CIC and ESDC to obtain permanent residency status for those immigrants and their families and in these cases, the primary applicants will have a job upon their arrival. Priority processing is given to employers who have already tried to recruit Canadians for the roles in question. This program in some ways addresses the issue of immigrants' difficulties in finding employment on arrival into Canada, however, the PNP is capped at a certain level each year. This only accounts for a portion of the immigrants who come to Canada but not for the thousands of others coming in under the FSWP or the family class who don't have the benefit of a job offer prior to arrival.

ON MCI, under its recent immigration strategy, has started to play a more active role in engaging employers in understanding the labour market needs in the province via the Minister's Employers Table and in championing the employment of immigrants as one component of their Ontario Award for Leadership in Immigration Employment. How these developments contribute to alleviating the employment problem for immigrants is still to be observed.

Employers have been constantly expressing concerns about labour shortages in their industries. This has been reflected in many studies published by universities and business interest groups. Employers have mobilized well through industry association and chambers of commerce to communicate those concerns to government both at the federal and provincial levels. Yet despite government interventions in immigration policy to address these labour shortage concerns, there is still insufficient hiring of immigrants as evidenced by the consistent levels of immigrant unemployment. As one citizen respondent remarked, "immigrants still face the same barriers in employment since the 1970's." There is a blockage to the flow of immigrants towards settlement at the employers.

CIC has not only addressed employers' concerns by tweaking immigration programs to provide a potential source of permanent labour but has also

adapted the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) to provide a short term supply of labour to industries who are experiencing perceived shortages of labour (Goar, 2014). Employers have taken advantage of this program because they are able to hire foreign workers at a lower wage. In these cases, it appears that credential recognition and language skill assessment are not as critical to employers when compared to hiring permanent resident immigrants. Despite this program's aim of addressing short-term labour shortages, it is now creating a perception that all immigrants are stealing jobs away from Canadians and casting a negative light on immigration as a whole. The program is now being overhauled by CIC and ESDC.

Some of CIC's interventions in immigration policy to increasingly produce economic immigrants who are more likely to succeed in Canada have been welcome. For example, efforts to have immigration educational credentials recognized prior to coming to Canada will shorten the time to settlement. However, some interventions have had mixed reviews. While the creation of the TFWP would alleviate perceived labour shortages in the short term, it has the effect of shifting the burden off employers to do proper outreach and recruitment of Canadians and permanent residents. CIC's willingness to always accommodate employers creates a kind of addiction that employers have for CIC intervention while reducing their

duties as responsible employers for having a diverse and inclusive workplace, to promote their companies as employers of choice and build a pipeline of talent starting from kids in high school and universities.

It is also important to understand why employers may have such a reluctance to hire permanent resident immigrants, why they use the lack of Canadian experience and why they seem to devalue immigrants' foreign work experience. An immigrant is an unknown entity that is unproven in a Canadian context. It is easier to hire a Canadian with recognized educational credentials and Canadian work experience and for them to have performance issues. The blame attributed to the recruiter or hiring manager will be less compared to hiring an immigrant with unknown credentials and work experience who performs badly in their role. This tendency to blame could be related to the frequency at which businesses are measured for success. Many have to prove themselves annually or even quarterly, showing consistent growth of revenues and profits. Having to take on an immigrant as a new employee may seem the right thing to do but not one that will contribute to profits in the short term. The training and cultural adaptation that the immigrant must go through seems to be a cost that the business cannot bear. Though employers cannot have it both ways – communicating messages that there is a shortage of talent yet not hiring immigrants with that talent when they have been screened and

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selected based on the job data information that employers have provided to ESDC.

FIGURE 12 – Difficulties finding employment

Immigrants experience difficulties in finding employment.

As depicted in Figure 11 and the heavy one-way arrow from employers to immigrants, immigrants are dependent on employers for jobs - a critical aspect of their settlement. Employers influence the actions of immigrants by having them conform to fit the employers' system. Immigrants must make efforts to get their credentials recognized. They must speak fluent English and French and lose their accents; they should take business acumen courses; they must prove themselves by getting Canadian experience (an oxymoron considering that they need employment in order to get Canadian experience). While immigrants must take some actions on their part to conform, most employers are not making any accommodations to their system to increase the hiring of immigrants. For

an immigration system, in which employers are a key stakeholder and play an important role in immigrant settlement, employers need to play a greater role in removing barriers to immigrant employment.

Professional Credential Recognition

One of the key barriers that immigrants have to overcome is having their professional credentials recognized by going through a licensing process to practice their professions in Canada. Examples of professions where licensing is required are registered nurses, doctors, architects, engineers and accountants. CIC, in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments and other stakeholders, have taken a number of measures to address this barrier. CIC launched the Foreign Credentials Referral Office in 2007 to provide information to individual immigrants, referring them to appropriate credential recognition services. Services are offered through the Website (http://www.credentials.gc.ca), in person through Canadian embassies overseas, and in Canada through Service Canada Centres, outreach sites, and toll-free telephone. The FCRO also works with provinces/territories, regulatory bodies and employers to coordinate federal/provincial/territorial efforts, share best practices across the country and avoid overlap and duplication.

In Ontario, the professional regulating bodies such as the College of Nurses in Ontario and Professional Engineers of Ontario are responsible for evaluating an immigrants professional credentials and determining whether they are licensed to practice as a nurse or engineer in Ontario. This process is a necessary function as it compares the credentials of the immigrant with the Canadian standard for that profession to ensure that the levels of knowledge, skills and ethical conduct match. This is an important safeguard for the public.

Professional credential recognition and the licensing process have proven difficult for many immigrants. It takes time due to the regulatory bodies having to assess the increasing number of applications from skilled immigrants who have studied in diverse educational programs in various institutes and colleges around the world. Immigrants were also receiving application rejections without sufficient explanation. To help address these difficulties, the Government of Ontario passed Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act in 2006 to ensure the foreign-trained professionals have a fair chance at finding work in their field of expertise in Canada and they also introduced the Office of the Fairness Commissioner (OFC) to hold the some 40 regulatory bodies accountable for the specific and general duties set out in the legislation. However, each of the regulatory bodies report to the corresponding Ontario Ministry. For

example, the College of Nurses of Ontario reports to the ON Ministry of Health. The OFC has limited influence in having regulatory bodies adopt its recommendations due to their reporting structure. (Refer to Figure 11 to view the relationships.) The OFC depends on ON MCI to work with the other ON Ministries to influence the regulatory bodies to change. The change takes time. Since the OFC came into existence, there has been some progress in understanding what the barriers were to the licensing process and the regulatory bodies have been slowly trying to implement some of the recommendations set out by the OFC. However, there is still a long way to go.

One of the major areas of progress is the availability of several bridging programs to bridge the experience necessary for some internationally trained professionals to achieve licensure. These programs have been created by some of the regulatory bodies and employers and are delivered by certain universities and colleges. The bridging programs have received funding by the ON MCI. While this is a step in the positive direction, immigrants still face challenges accessing these programs. Immigrants have to pay tuition fees to the universities delivering the programs and it takes time to complete the programs – sometimes over a year. For a new immigrant, usually the primary breadwinner in the family, it is a financial hardship to pay this tuition in addition to the application fee for the

licensing process and to commit to the time required to complete the program. Therefore for many immigrants, their professional credentials go unrecognized. The OFC continues to try to change the mindset of the regulatory bodies to consider what is fair when assessing applications and one of their conclusions is that to really capitalize on the skills that immigrants bring, there needs to be greater collaboration and information sharing amongst regulatory bodies and their members, the federal and provincial governments, employers and the research community to better understand the barriers to licensure.

While immigrants, whose professions fall under those of the provincially regulated bodies, require bridging programs to shore up their experience for licensure, there are thousands of immigrants looking for roles that don't require licensure and are having difficulty finding suitable employment. Employers in this context are made up of hiring managers and recruiters, some of whom are citizens with varying degrees of ignorance and intolerance of other ethnicities and cultures. This may explain why some immigrants may face difficulties in landing a job in Canada but visible minority immigrants tend to experience more discrimination from employers. In a recent study, "*Why do some employers prefer to interview Matthew but not Samir?*" conducted by University of Toronto's Philip Oreopoulos and Diane Decheif, it was shown that employers across

Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver significantly discriminate against applicants with common Indian and Chinese names compared to English names. In addition, recruiters responded that employers often treat a name as a signal that an applicant may lack language or social skills.

While the media reports on the difficulties immigrants have in finding employment, including the rigorous credential recognition process, sometimes they tend to focus on the problems rather than highlighting areas where employers have made accommodations for the consistent hiring of immigrants. This tendency to only focus on the problems in the system reinforces the negative perceptions in the general public and makes the immigrant employment problem more overwhelming to overcome.

The activities of the stakeholders, as described above, all serve to impact the immigrants on their way to settlement – specifically in finding employment. Their actions block the flow of immigrants through the system and result in employment as a key barrier towards settlement.

Culture Shock

In the negative stages of culture shock, the period of adjustment immigrants must go through in order to acculturate to a Canadian way of life brings about stress, anxiety and discomfort. This impacts many aspects of their life. Specifically, the lack of confidence and lowered self-esteem affect their ability to finding suitable employment, make new friends and engage in discussions about Canadian issues. This reduces their chances of achieving all the success factors for settlement – employment that bars them from security, belonging and the ability to participate.

It is important to realize that culture shock is more of a psychological issue. No specific stakeholder causes the culture shock for immigrants but immigrants experience culture shock when they encounter a new environment. This section looks at the culture shock problem theme from a systems perspective, with Figure 13 showing the main stakeholders in red whose interactions with immigrants raise the negative aspects of culture shock but who may also be able to help them overcome it.

FIGURE 13 - STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE - CULTURE SHOCK
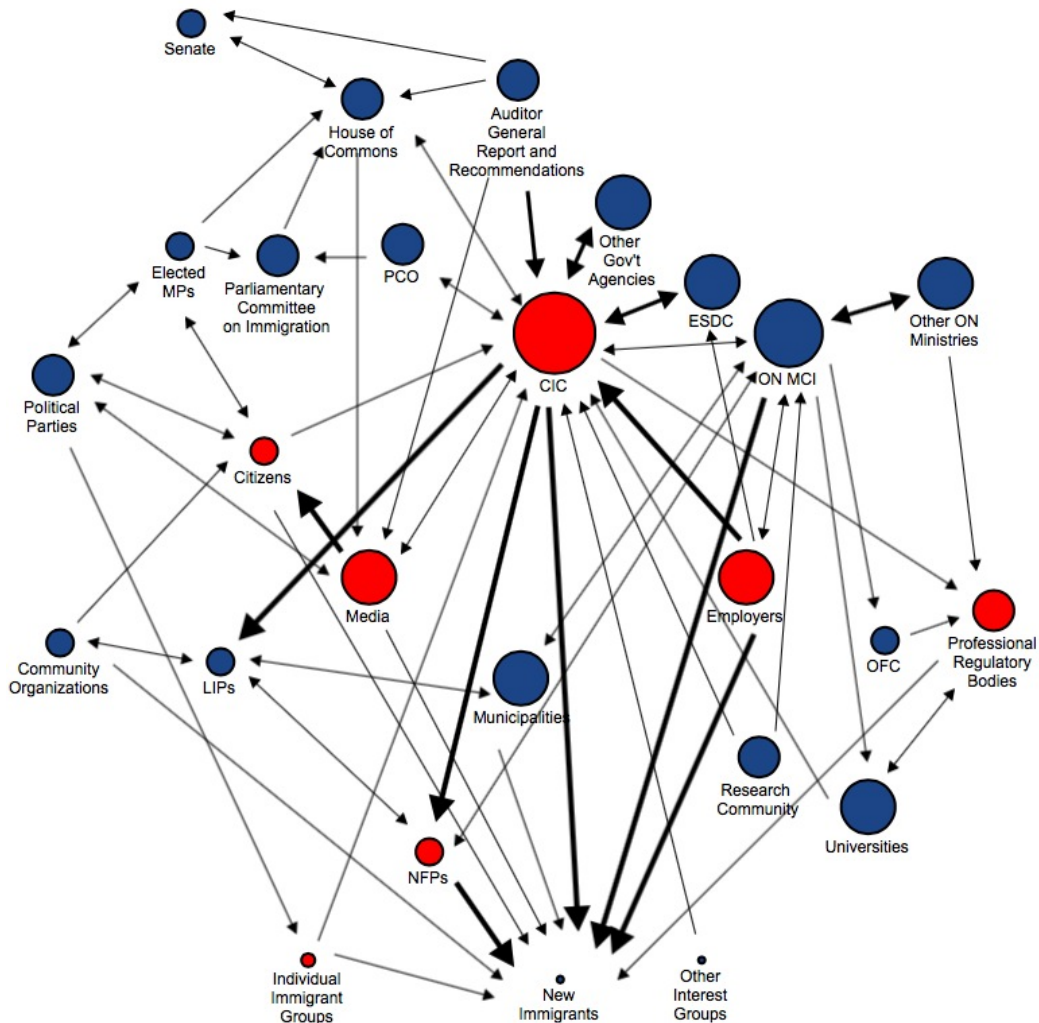
Stakeholders in red whose interactions with immigrants raise the negative aspects of culture shock resulting in the following

Problems:
- *Immigrant difficulty in adapting to Canadian culture*
- *Tendency of immigrants to lower their expectations in order to survive*
- *Immigrant difficulty nailing down the Canadian identity*
- *Immigrants fully realizing the difficulty of circumstances on arrival*
- *Immigrant difficulty adapting to being an unknown in a new country*
- *Tendency of immigrants to remain in their ethnic enclaves*

Respondents in this research project identified problems related to culture

shock as key barriers to successful immigrant settlement. Culture shock is

a normal process in adapting to a foreign environment. It plays an

inevitable part in the settlement experience of new immigrants to Canada.

Culture shock (as defined by the Merriam Webster Dictionary) is a sense

of confusion and uncertainty sometimes with feelings of anxiety that may

affect people exposed to an alien culture or environment without adequate

preparation. In its negative stages, culture shock causes the following

symptoms - homesickness, feelings of frustration and some forms of

alienation and isolation. It leads to irritability, loneliness and depression.

Culture shock delays successful settlement and while it is impossible to

eradicate it, it's in Canada's best interest to minimize its negative effects

for new immigrants.

There are several variations of models that describe stages one goes

through in adapting to culture shock. However, at its simplest, there are

four stages of culture shock that individuals progress through when they

encounter a foreign culture. ("Adapt to a new culture," 2009) It is the same

for immigrants on their journey to settlement in Canada. There is no

definite timeframe for an immigrant to progress through the culture shock

stages. Sometimes, it takes 6 months to 6 years and it really depends on

their experiences in Canada during the settlement phase, their

personalities and how well they overcome obstacles and the degree of difference between their culture and Canadian culture. The majority of problems occur in the second stage of culture shock and the faster that an immigrant moves through the stages, the greater the chances of successful settlement.

Stages of Culture Shock

STAGE 1 – Honeymoon stage

The first stage of culture shock starts with the phase of happiness and fascination where immigrants are excited to be in Canada. They feel like tourists in a new country, ready to explore with open minds. They have achieved a certain sense of security (one of the stages of successful settlement) in the sense that they have their permanent residency status and they have probably obtained other documentation (e.g. health card, driver's license etc.,) that makes them feel legitimately a part of Canada. They have high hopes and expectations about what they want to achieve and their confidence is high, believing that they can overcome most problems. They tend to find similarities with Canadian culture and the one in their old country. Everything is new and exciting.

In this stage, immigrants are under the belief that they can find a job in their field. They have not yet interacted with the employment system to realize the difficulties that they will face. They are also operating under the assumption that they were brought here to practice the skills in their field. This is due to the interactions they had with CIC during the recruitment and application process. Most immigrants may not have had a pre-departure orientation which may have prepared them for the difficulties they are about to face as only a small percentage of immigrants (20% from China, India and the Philippines) coming into Canada receive this orientation.

STAGE 2 – Crisis stage

After the initial stage of culture shock, immigrants enter the second stage and begin to experience frustration, disappointment and confusion. This is the "real" culture shock stage. Here, immigrants fully begin to understand the difficulties in settling. As one respondent from the study stated, "People don't realize how profound the barriers are until they come." Immigrants miss their families and their old country and they even experience guilt about leaving their families behind. They now start to focus on the differences between them and Canadians. They are pleased with their progress but this stage of culture shock presents some unease

and uncertainty, manifesting in difficult scenarios that they must overcome. A few of them are described below.

- Employment – In Canada, there are so many rules and regulations to follow. Immigrants are faced with standards in credential recognition or language ability in their employment search. Finding employment is more difficult than they envisioned. Employers discount their hard-earned experience. (Refer to section Immigrant Employment) In this study, employment is a key factor towards successful settlement. Immigrants either adapt quickly or they begin to regret their decision to come to Canada. Either choice results in anxiety, negatively impacting their settlement journey.

- Being unknown - In this stage, immigrants feel Canadians are not as friendly as they first believed them to be. Immigrants experience difficulty forming strong connections with Canadians, unlike the ones formed in their home country. In this new culture, they experience confusion about what's expected of them in forming relationships with citizens and employers. They question if they are doing too much or too little. They experience embarrassment when they act inappropriately. Many immigrants experience despair when they leave their home countries as loved, established individuals and then come

to a country where they are virtually unknown. One immigrant

respondent remarked, "It takes a while to get used to people moving

along without anyone noticing anyone else." Immigrants, like all

individuals, long for a sense of belonging and it takes great effort to

form relationships in their new communities and workplaces to be

known and respected for who they are. Rejection, when trying to make

friends, prevents immigrants from further reaching out and results in

isolation, delaying that sense of belonging – a key factor for successful

settlement.

- Lowering of Expectations - As immigrants face each hurdle in finding

  housing, a job, or making new friends, they begin to experience a

  Canadian life that is quite different from what they envisioned. Here

  we can draw a parallel in system's theory – lowering of expectations.

  As immigrants compare their reality of not having a job to what they

  had hoped to achieve – being employed and self-sufficient, they

  believe that the difference is too great to overcome and this supports

  their decision to basically lower their expectations regarding their

  employment. They may settle for a job that is below their level of

  experience or they may choose an entry job that is perhaps not in their

  field of work. They also consider should they decide to pursue their

  dreams (e.g. full accreditation to finding a job in their field), it would

require, time, money and effort. They often don't make that sacrifice because there is a delay in realizing ideal employment with its benefits when they must meet their and their families' immediate settlement needs. So, what tends to happen is that they tend to settle for these less-than-ideal-scenarios that are a departure from their original dreams. Some may call it adaptation and resilience but in effect the immigrants settle for something less. They may have a long-term vision for improving their lives – jobs, housing but their late start definitely plays a part in their progress. As time progresses and coupled with varying economic situations, they let their original aspirations fall by the wayside. This is unfortunate for Canada because they choose to not work in the occupation that was in demand via which they were granted residency in Canada.

- Comparison to past - In this stage of culture shock, when things aren't going the way they envisioned, they tend to compare their lives prior to Canada and how much better off they seemed to be. Immigrants experience a sense of loss in status, profession and even possessions. For some, this difference is a constant reminder of how unsuccessful they perceive themselves to be and it causes them tremendous anxiety and a constant doubt in their minds as to whether Canada was the right choice for them. They may begin to question their vision of what

they wanted to achieve in Canada and whether they would ever

achieve it.   They begin to ask whether they should return. This state

of mind impacts their settlement experience, which in turn, perpetuates

the negative state of mind. This prevents them from achieving that

sense of belonging and the ability to fully participate in Canadian

society – two key factors for successful settlement.

- Pressure to prove themselves to friends and family back home – In

  addition to comparing their Canadian achievements with that of their

  home country, as immigrants leave their established lives in their home

  countries, they have a tremendous pressure to at least maintain the

  same level of independence in Canada. Those they left behind

  considered them to be very fortunate in being allowed to come to

  Canada. For the new immigrants, failure to achieve a good standard of

  living is not an option and they experience shame when they relate

  their progress to their friends back home. This pressure to prove

  themselves creates anxiety and takes a toll on their health, negatively

  impacting successful settlement.

- Decreased health - Some immigrants who have the support of family

  and friends are able to get the required information for settlement and

  form the right networks to land a job quickly – sometimes within the

first six months of arrival. Others are not as fortunate and they take

much longer to develop relationships, obtain relevant information and

even develop the confidence and resilience to achieve a state of

settlement that they can live with. As time goes by, their view of the

Canadian dream morphs, they become despondent and may even

succumb to mental and physical illnesses. This was suggested in the

research *The Global City: Newcomer Health in 2011*. It claimed that

settlement is a health issue and while most newcomers arrive in better

health (including mental health) than Canadian-born residents, they

lose their health advantage and their health declines over time. The

longer time it takes for immigrants to feel settled, the greater the

chances that they will become sick which further prolongs their time to

settlement successful.

- Remaining in ethnic enclaves - The less immigrants overcome the

  second stage of culture shock, the greater the chances of them either

  returning to their home country or integrating into an ethnic enclave.

  Depending on the origin of immigrants, there are already established

  ethnic communities where immigrants can settle and where there is no

  need for much interaction with the mainstream Canadian public.

  However at some point they do have to interact with the broader

  Canadian public and they experience difficulties. By confining

themselves to their own community, they are denying themselves the benefit of living in a diverse, multicultural society. These enclaves deter immigrants from interacting with cultures other than their own and prevent their integration into Canadian society. The enclaves create a false sense of belonging and these immigrants are less likely to participate in issues affecting Canadian society. One respondent said, "It's one thing to have the support of your home country community but they prevent you from experiencing Canadian culture."

- Canadian Identity – The ease with which an immigrant moves from the crisis stage to the recovery stage depends on how well they overcome the problems in the crisis stage. It often helps if they have a clear idea of what it means to be Canadian so they can anchor themselves around those themes. However, some immigrants find it hard to find anchors that represent Canadian identity. Watching hockey and drinking Tim Hortons coffee are examples of what they see as being Canadian. For them, these examples may seem superficial, especially when they come from countries with rich cultural traditions. This difficulty in embracing something Canadian causes them to hold on to their traditions even more, preventing their integration into Canadian society. One new immigrant described, "I feel like an American living in Canada. Canadian culture moves away from me as I try to embrace

it." And an immigrant respondent who turned citizen over 20 years ago said, "You don't get a sense of dug in identity. Each group has a different view of identity. It gets diluted. We don't know what we are. We're under development."

FIGURE 14 – Negative stages of culture shock

During the negative stages of culture shock,
immigrants experience depression and loneliness.

STAGE 3 – Recovery stage

In the third stage of culture shock, when perhaps some immigrants compromise their initial expectations and as they have more interactions in Canadian society, through work or social connections, they experience a recovery and a gradual acculturation. They become more confident and more in control of their lives. They speak the language more freely and

they are also more involved in the community. They now seem to have a better idea of what it takes to have a successful life in Canada and they recover some hope that they can achieve it.

STAGE 4 – Adjustment stage

In the final stage of culture shock, immigrants then move on to the stage of acceptance and adjustment when they've made friends and are more involved in their communities. They are comfortable making plans for the future and they generally feel content about moving to Canada. It's at this stage, immigrants feel settled.

It is important to realize that not all immigrants move from the crisis stage to the recovery phase. Depending on the difference between immigrant and Canadian culture, some immigrants experience severe anxiety, disgust or anger after having realized the extent of the cultural differences. They may adopt a chauvinistic attitude where they believe they are culturally superior to others. This obviously will cause conflict during interactions with citizens, employers and other stakeholders. Therefore, cases like these underscore the need to address problems related to culture shock.

Stakeholder Actions

CIC and NFP's both in Canada and overseas have implemented programs to address culture shock felt by new immigrants. However, as previously discussed in the Access to Settlement Services Section, there is limited awareness of these programs and to compound the situation, there are long wait times for immigrants receiving these services. Therefore, immigrants are mostly on their own in overcoming culturally related issues aka culture shock.

Figure 15 summarizes the nature of the relationships amongst stakeholders influencing the culture shock problem.

FIGURE 15 – STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS - CULTURE SHOCK
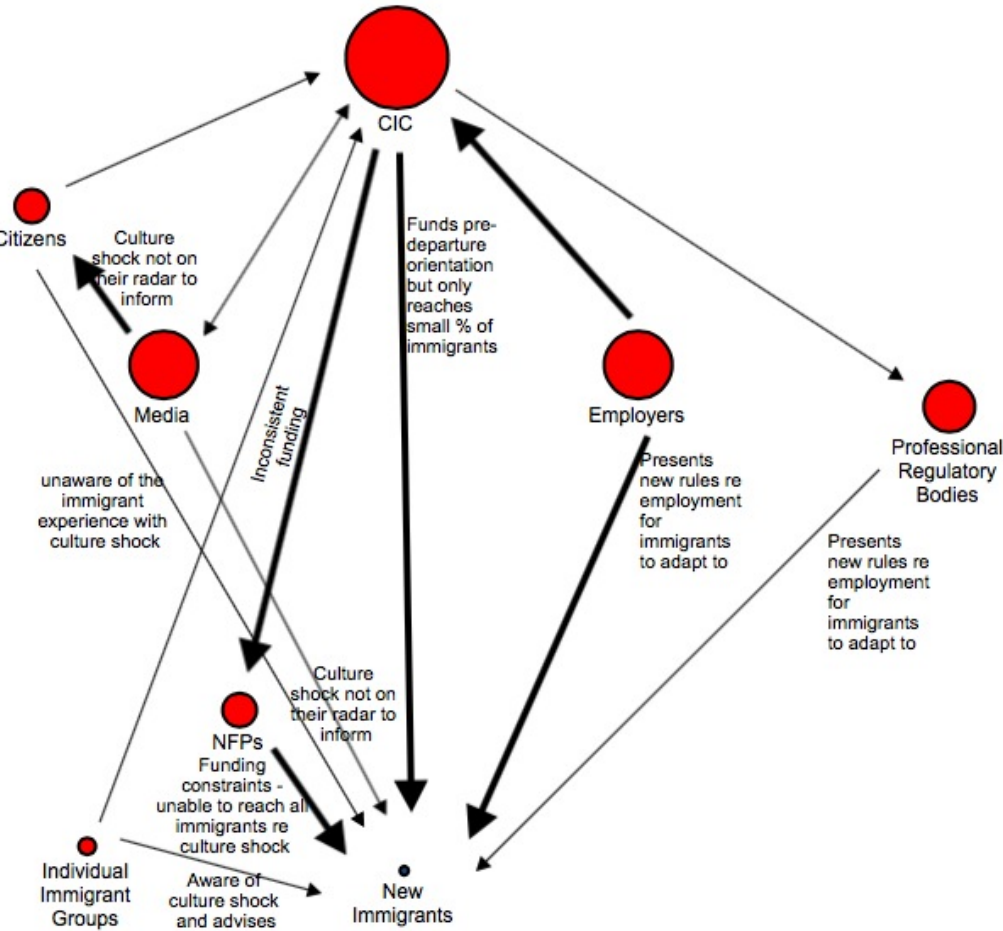
Culture shock is not usually mentioned in the media as a problem that immigrants face. As shown in Figure 15, neither citizens nor immigrants learn about culture shock from the media. Most recent media stories have been about lack of employment prospects and clashes with Canadian culture - an actual symptom of culture shock. However, the stories are not discussed with a culture shock lens. Culture shock is assumed to be a rite of passage for all immigrants – just like puberty. However, it brings about a cost to Canada. If immigrants don't move through the four stages in a timely manner, they can stagnate, not fully achieving their potential and contributing to Canadian society. The negative aspects of culture shock result in immigrant health issues and a cost to Canada's health care system. It also provides the basis for building upon bad initial experiences. Attempts to minimize the damage that culture shock causes will positively impact immigrants' settlement experiences and benefit Canada.

The lack of awareness in citizens and community organizations about culture shock also prevents them from being more welcoming to immigrants and perhaps helping immigrants feel that sense of belonging that they crave. Conversely, the awareness of the effects of culture shock in individual immigrant groups and their inability to mobilize across ethnicities and advocate for new immigrants on this topic is unfortunate.

The actions of employers (shown in Figure 15), inadvertently contribute to

culture shock because their standards have not been communicated to or

understood by immigrants prior to their arrival. Whether it is the job of

employers or that of CIC to communicate this is not at debate here. We

are doing immigrants a disservice in telling them their skills are needed in

Canada, while in good conscience knowing that they must go through

tremendous hoops on arrival in order to use these skills. Canada must

make a greater effort to prepare new immigrants for the negative effects of

culture shock.

It's in the best interest of immigrants that they move quickly through the

four stages of culture shock. Then, they are better prepared to achieve all

four factors in successful settlement – a win/win for immigrants and

Canada.

Immigrant Stereotype

This problem theme involves the perceptions that Canadians have about immigrants and how it negatively impacts the interactions between them. If negative stereotypes produce bad behaviours during immigrant interactions, this prevents immigrants from obtaining employment, making friends (sense of belonging) and discourages them from participating – preventing their successful settlement.

This section looks at the immigrant stereotype problem from a systems perspective, with Figure 16 showing the main stakeholders in red whose actions result in the problems associated with immigrant stereotypes.

FIGURE 16 - STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE - IMMIGRANT STEREOTYPE
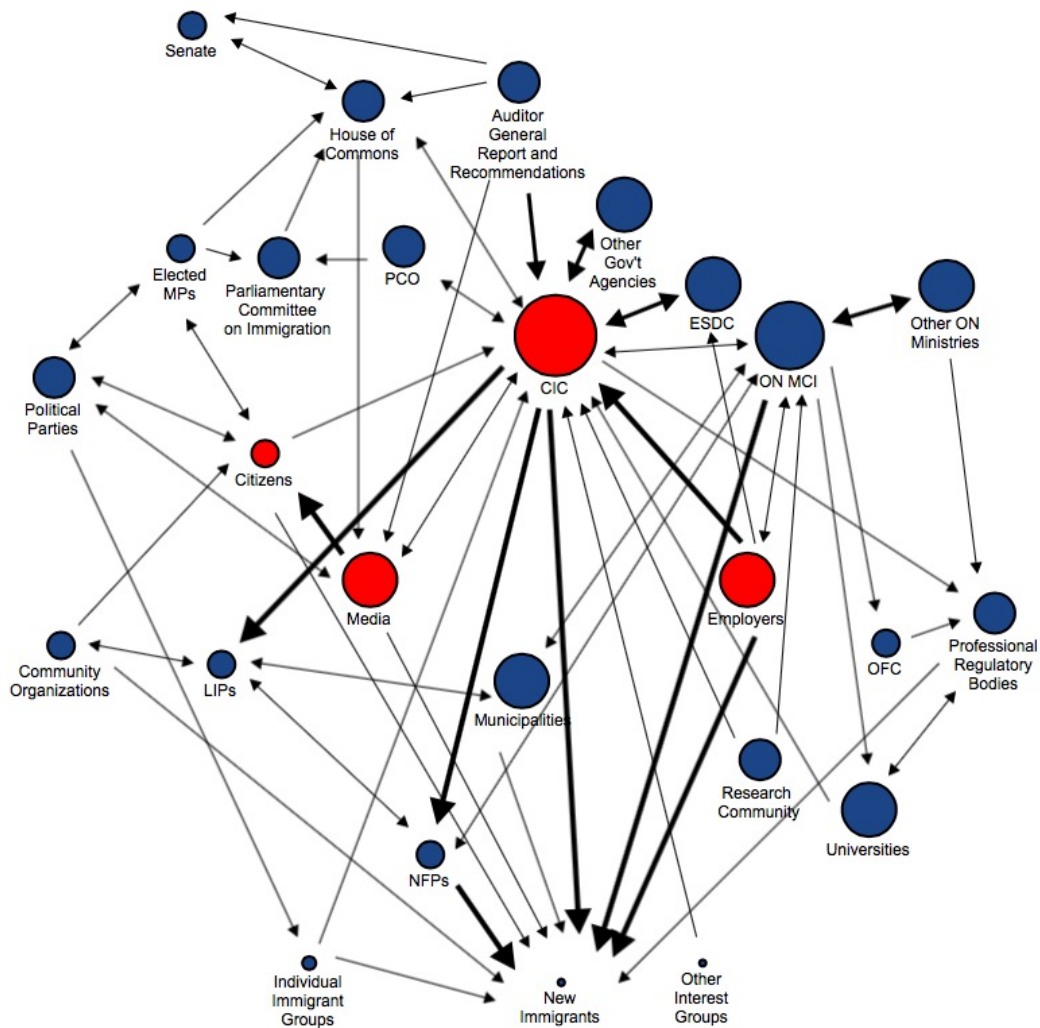
Actions of stakeholders in red result in the Immigrant Stereotype problem theme

Problems:
- *Canadian perception that immigrants take advantage of the social safety net*
- *Immigrants experience racism, prejudice and discrimination*
- *Lack of understanding in Canadians about the importance of immigration for Canada's success*
- *Canadian perception that immigrants are dishonest and commit fraud*

Stereotype means to believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same ("Stereotype," 2014). Respondents in this study identified common stereotypes about immigrants as a barrier to their successful settlement because they believed that the stereotypes affected the nature of the interactions between immigrants and Canadians – not only in social interactions but also in work situations and dealing with the law. Some of the stereotypes that are perpetuated are that immigrants come to Canada to take advantage of the social safety net, that immigrants commit fraud to be able to stay in Canada or that immigrant work experience is inferior to that of Canadians.

Stereotypes often arise when there are power struggles between two groups or when one group believes that their goal is incompatible with that of the other group (Alexander et al, 2005).   Alexander et al described a scenario where the ingroup believes that the outgroup (the other group) has a lower status but possesses high power to influence the outcome on the ingroup. The ingroup is threatened and even though they have no concrete information on the outgroup, they give rise to specific outgroup images that justify treating them negatively. For example, the ingroup may refer to the outgroup as barbarians and the resulting attitude would be to defend and protect what resources the ingroup has. In the immigration context, the ingroup represents Canadians and the outgroup, immigrants.

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While Canadians have shown strong support for immigration, there are

some members of Canadian society who are threatened by the consistent

numbers of immigrants (outgroup) coming into Canada. Many Canadians

are suffering economic hardships and they feel that immigrants are taking

jobs away from them. Without looking at the evidence that immigrant

unemployment is consistently higher than the rest of Canada, some

Canadians invent the stereotype that immigrants are stealing jobs away

from Canadians.

The result is that these Canadians insulate themselves from immigrants

and are not as open and welcoming.   Canadians, who are also

employers, may withhold jobs from immigrants citing lack of Canadian

experience or finding fault with their international work experience.

Figure 17 summarizes the nature of the relationships amongst

stakeholders influencing the culture shock problem.

FIGURE 17 – STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS - IMMIGRANT STEREOTYPE
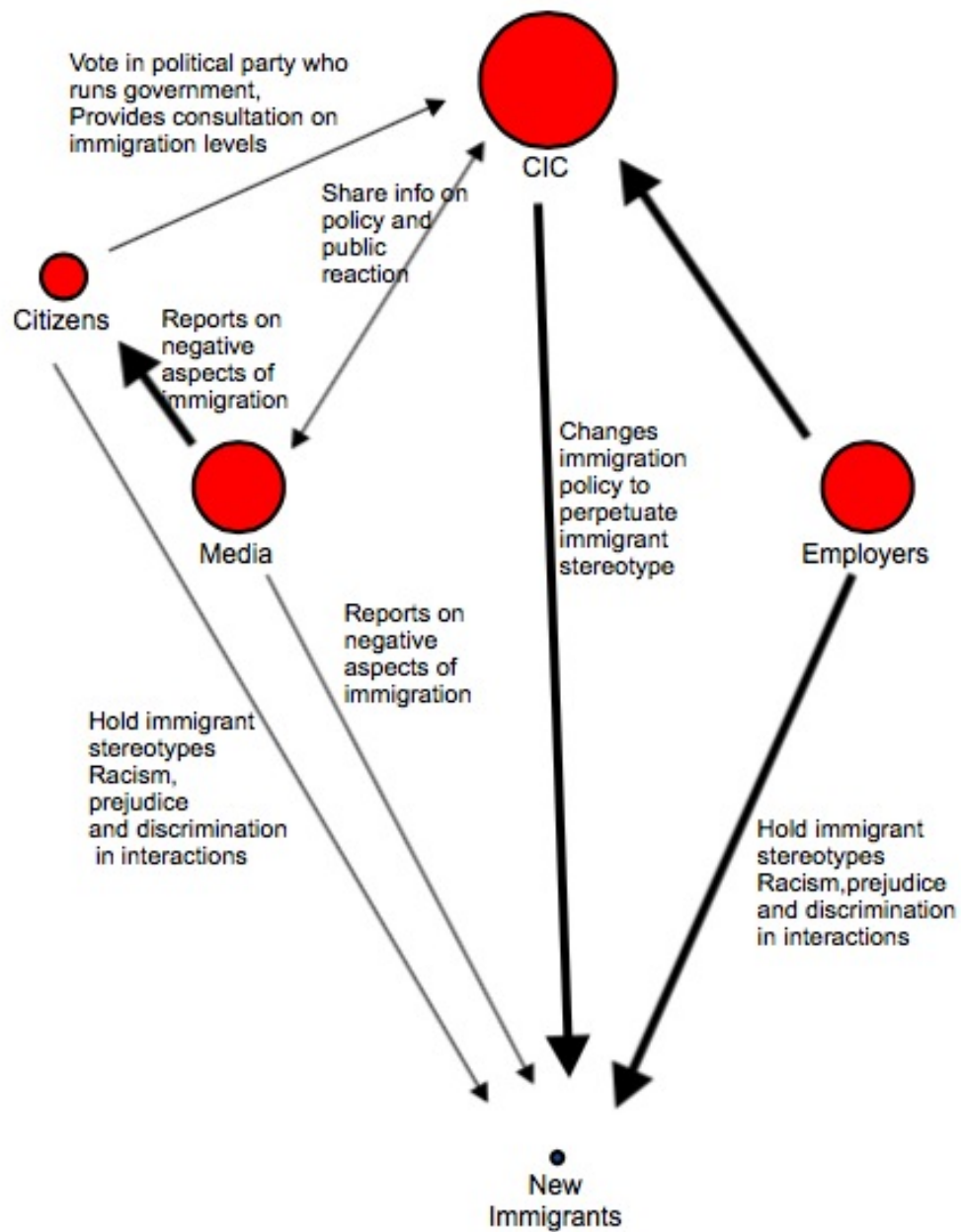
The actions of both employers and CIC are perpetuating the stereotype of immigrants stealing jobs away from Canadians. As shown in Figure 17, employers have significant influence with CIC and they have been communicating to CIC that there is a current labour shortage and that they need workers now to fill certain low-skilled jobs. CIC created the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to help fill that perceived shortage. This resulted in employers bringing in unprecedented numbers of temporary workers. Now, Canadians were seeing many more immigrants occupying roles in retail, service and other industries. This created a perception that immigrants as a whole were responsible for taking away jobs when many Canadians were unemployed. Some Canadians were not able to make the distinction that these were temporary workers and they were different from immigrants who attained permanent residence status. In addition, (as shown in Figure 17) the media did little to make this distinction and they continued to report on growing numbers of temporary foreign workers, encouraging anti-immigration sentiment in the public domain and this perpetuated the stereotype for Canadians that all immigrants were coming to steal their jobs away.

While it cannot be generalized to all immigrants, there are some immigrants whose main objective is to obtain the Canadian passport and benefit from the public health system. Due to these instances, another

stereotype held by some Canadians is that all immigrants are not interested in advancing Canada but are just here to take advantage of the social safety net. One respondent said, "if immigrants are only coming here for health care or social systems, we don't want them." And another respondent, "people believe that immigrants come to use the social welfare system and we're paying tax money for that." Referring to Alexander et al once again, stereotypes arise when there is perceived goal incompatibility. In this case, Canadians believe that immigrants only care about themselves (wanting to take advantage of free health care) and not Canada (not wanting to reside in Canada, work and pay taxes).

One possible reason why some Canadians feel that immigrants' goals are different from theirs is that they are unfamiliar with all the aspects of immigration and they believe refugees account for a large portion of incoming immigrants. They think that refugees are a drain on Canada's social welfare system. This illustrates a lack of understanding on the role of immigration in Canada for its future success the more recent shift to increased economic immigration. One respondent stated, "We need to help Canadians understand the levels of immigration and issues because they believe it's mostly about refugees." Another hinted at this ignorance by saying, "most Canadians feel that we are doing immigrants a favour, not the other way around."

Some Canadians have also been perpetuating the stereotype that immigrants come into Canada by fraudulent means. Immigrants either lie about their language or credentials during the application process or they enter into false marriages so that they can be granted permanent residency. While some of these cases have occurred, there has been no concrete evidence presented by CIC to demonstrate that this is an epic problem. Immigrants are increasing being painted with this brush – that they are untrustworthy.

The media has reported cases of fraudulent immigration activity in the past. However, they have failed to counterbalance their reporting with legitimate immigration activity. So the Canadian public only hears the negative and this allows them to perpetuate the stereotype that immigrants cannot be trusted.

In addition, CIC has made policy changes to support the stereotype. In 2010, CIC introduced new conditions that require sponsored spouses married less than two years and without children to live with their sponsor for a two-year period before they can be considered permanent residents ("Backgrounder — Conditional Permanent Resident Status," 2012). If during the two-year period, the sponsored spouse leaves the relationship,

then the sponsor can withdraw the sponsorship and the spouse can lose their conditional permanent residency and they will be required to leave. This is in an effort to counter marriage fraud. Critics say that this diminished sensitivity to the human rights of immigrants is disturbing and that this policy change leaves the sponsored spouse vulnerable ("Emergent trends in Canadian immigration policy," 2012). Should there be legitimate reasons for the sponsored spouse to leave the marriage, the sponsor can assert power by making the threat of residency being taken away. By CIC making these types of policy changes without presenting evidence, they are substantiating and perpetuating the stereotype that immigrants are out to defraud Canadians.

As immigrants interact with Canadians who hold these stereotypes, they experience prejudice and discrimination. They feel like an outsider no matter how much they try to conform to what Canadians expect them to become. They see Canada as not a welcoming place and they question whether they can successfully settle. If stereotypes hold them back from finding employment, they cannot achieve the settlement factor of security and employment. If stereotypes prevent them from making friends, they cannot feel that sense of belonging. If they don't belong, they will not be engaged to participate in issues affecting Canada so in effect, their settlement is not successful.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to realize that there are no quick and easy interventions to make the system more efficient and effective overall and specifically in settling immigrants in Canada. The system is a complex one, made up of several stakeholders with unique interactions. Over time, it has evolved to include more stakeholders (not all of which were represented in the systems map in this study), resulting in greater complexity. The more complex a system becomes, the harder it is to predict the effect of policy changes. However, understanding the structure of the system can provide insight on stakeholders reactions and can suggest overall strategies when contemplating policy changes so that they don't produce unwanted effects when introduced. This section will describe these strategies for the overall immigration system and will also propose innovations for each of the problem themes that prevent successful immigrant settlement.

In many of the strategies, CIC will be the recommended stakeholder to take action because CIC holds the portfolio for immigration and is responsible for setting overall immigration and settlement policy. They also yield the most power and influence in the immigration system. Refer to the size of the CIC circle in Figure 5.

Overall Strategies

Having a Shared Vision for Immigration

In every system, each stakeholder has an intrinsic goal that serves their interest. Stakeholders will align themselves with each other if there is alignment with their respective goals. In the immigration system, stakeholders expect immigration to help them achieve certain goals.

Based on the increased proportion of economic immigrants coming into Canada, CIC's goal for immigration is economic growth in the long term. However, CIC has also used immigration policy for economic growth in the short term by allowing employers to hire great numbers of temporary foreign workers. Employers, based on quarterly and annual measurement of economic performance, want immigration to provide an immediate supply of labour – short-term economic growth. NFPs main goal is for the social welfare of immigrants, reflected in their activities of settling them. Citizens are concerned with economic and social progress in Canada because that enables them to have a good quality of life. Immigrants want to be economically stable and have a sense of belonging first before they can want economic and social progress for Canada.

One can never expect all stakeholder goals to be the same, however, there is room for alignment and broadening of goals to include that of other stakeholders. For example, for CIC to expect immigration to drive economic success, they need to recognize and respect the goals of immigrants and use their policies effectively to ensure that immigrants have a good chance of achieving their goals.

To understand and incorporate goals of stakeholders in the immigration system, it is necessary to create a shared vision. This involves bringing as many stakeholders together and having an honest discussion about what they want the immigration system to achieve. Of central importance in such an undertaking is demonstrating how the various interests are actually intertwined and interdependent. Once a vision becomes clear, and individual stakeholder goals align with that vision, designing and implementing immigration policy becomes easier.

More stakeholders will now have ownership of the immigration strategy and this approach provides the basis for letting go of more narrow goals (like importing too many temporary foreign workers) for the long-term benefit of the system (the employment of Canadians and permanent residents).

Include the Immigrant

Based on the system mapping of influence in the immigration system, the immigrant has the least power and no influence. Immigration activities are designed around them and not with them in mind. Immigrants are a key part of the immigration system. Without them, it would not exist.

If one were to broaden the boundaries of the Canadian immigration system, we would see that the immigrant has considerable power because they can decide in which immigrant destination country they wish to contribute their skills. However, once they arrive in Canada, they are bogged down in the complexity of settlement issues related to the immigration system. Since CIC shoulders the most power and responsibility for immigration policy development, they need to invite immigrant input and closely examine the immigrant experience when settling. Currently, there are no forums that do this.

At the basic level, having immigrant input in policy development is a way of building feedback into the system. Not only does it provide more feedback, it introduces an element of human-centred design that might greatly aid innovation. It brings about a level of empathy for the immigrant and a greater understanding of their struggles in successful settlement. One way to do so might be to expose key CIC staffers to the settlement

stories of successfully settled immigrants. Also focusing on the immigrant

forces stakeholders to takes their eyes off their constraints and conditions

or the bounded rationality in which they operate.

This strategy is very important because if immigrants continue to

experience hardships in settlement, they may choose to leave Canada.

As the difficult settlement experience becomes public knowledge, future

immigrants will not choose Canada as their next home. As less of the

brightest immigrants come, Canada's reputation suffers as an immigration

destination and we will fail to address problems of dwindling population

growth and expected labour shortages, putting the economy at risk.

Continue Refining Immigration System Models

It would be naïve to believe that CIC doesn't already have models of the

immigration system. It is important to continue building on and refining

those models as more stakeholders become involved. Recently,

universities and employers have been given more power to select possible

future immigrants via students and temporary foreign workers. A systems

model can help envision the effects of proposed immigration policy

changes.

The systems model can be refined to test the effects of demographic changes in other countries from which immigrants arrive. For example, China is also experiencing an aging population. The model can help understand what will happen if Chinese prospective immigrants remain in China or if Chinese immigrants living in Canada decide to return to China.

The systems model helps in understanding the underlying structure of the immigration system and can provide insight into how current events and future scenarios will affect the immigration system. It is also a stepping-stone for foresight and envisioning the future of immigration in Canada for strategic planning purposes.

Autonomy for Stakeholders

One of the keys to a more effective and resilient system is one where the system components can each rapidly adapt to its changing environment. If stakeholders are allowed certain autonomy, when faced with challenges, they can innovate, self-organize and become resilient.

One way of increasing autonomy is through the NFPs. NFPs are heavily influenced by CIC as they receive funding. Each year, NFPs need to reapply for funding and this impacts their ability to plan for the longer term.

Given that funding is becoming more limited, it is understandable for the need for CIC to closely guard it. However, there are opportunities for NFPs to earn their autonomy. CIC could use the recently implemented Annual Performance Report for Community Partnerships that mandates NFPs to report on their activities as a way to assess their performance. By setting clearly defined metrics about what constitutes success and by NFPs demonstrating achievement, CIC can reduce the need for them to reapply for funding each year and guarantee funding for those NFPs for a longer term.

Good performance can also result from the ability to make design changes to settlement programming as the NFPs see fit. This frees up the NFPs to plan more effectively, increase efficiencies and redesign services for the effective settlement of immigrants coming to them. To assist with greater collaboration in the settlement sector, funding should be based on performance outcomes rather than numbers of immigrants served which causes NFPs to compete with each other rather than cooperate for the benefits of immigrant settlement. By changing the rules of funding, it provides the NFPs with the ability to self-organize – another characteristic of a successful system.

Another example of increasing autonomy is for CIC to allow the provinces and territories to admit more immigrants through the Provincial Nominee Program. Provinces and territories, together with employers, are in a better position to understand what jobs are in-demand and can do targeted recruitment and selection of immigrants for that province/territory. This reduces the instances of immigrants arriving in Canada and facing barriers in finding employment, getting their credentials recognized and even accessing settlement services as the employers would assist with some of those activities.

In effect, a system that allows for more autonomy of its stakeholders can learn to cope with changes in the immigration landscape and become better prepared for uncertainty.

Expand the Boundaries Placed on Immigrant Settlement

Currently settlement services are available to permanent resident immigrants within the first two years of their arrival. However, it sometimes takes much longer for immigrants to achieve all four aspects of successful settlement – security, employment, belonging and the ability to participate.

By recognizing that settlement usually occurs after several system delays and by reframing settlement from a time interval to a more human-centred definition, one can better understand how to design and deliver settlement services to immigrants. If the settlement definition is expanded to include employment, then NFPs can enhance their employment referral or bridging program offering. CIC settlement policies should take this into account and expand the definition and eligibility for settlement in their redesigned settlement policies.

More Data in a Timely Manner

In any system, timely feedback is a critical factor in its success. It serves to assess whether the changes made to the system are successful and it also provides an indication if there are delays in having the desired effect. For the immigration system, any efforts to better understand factors affecting immigrant settlement would be helpful.

CIC should be commended for their success using the Longitudinal Immigration Database that tracks the tax filings of yearly cohorts of immigrants since 1982 and assesses their earnings over time. However, data needs to be collected to understand immigrant unemployment,

access to and suitability of settlement services, and perceived attitudes about immigrants. For example, surveys can be conducted with cohorts of immigrants semi-annually for 3 years. This can give a good indication of whether settlement policies are working or whether there are problem areas that require attention.

The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data can better position CIC as a more agile ministry with greater evidence-based policy development. Using data can silence their critics and it makes convincing stakeholders easier when it comes to proposing a policy change that affects them.

Understand Limits in the Immigration System

Very often when we want a desired outcome, we put more effort into achieving it. However, by pushing harder, the system pushes back with more problems. System thinkers often advocate for growth but slow growth as it gives the system time to adjust. Too much growth and the system slows down by imposing limits that prevent achieving the desired outcome.

In the case of Canadian immigration and immigrant settlement, having a consistent number of immigrants enter Canada without addressing the limiting factors within the system, is the wrong approach. Consider immigrants entering Canada on their way to settlement. The system capacity for providing settlement services places limits when immigrants try to access settlement services, to find employment, to navigate the second stage of culture shock and to gain the acceptance of all Canadians.

To enable a free flowing immigrant system, CIC needs to understand and address these capacity limits – either by slowing the rate of immigrants entering the system or by using policy to incentivize or punish stakeholders to remove their constraints. For example, CIC could work relevant government ministries to provide tax incentives for employers who introduce programs to employ immigrants.

It is important to also understand that as one limit is addressed, the system will place another limit elsewhere. For example, as employers start employing immigrants, more immigrants may apply to come to Canada, prompting CIC to impose stricter selection rules (the limit) and then receiving greater criticism from immigration advocates. Therefore having a close-to-life model of the system and strong, timely data are

important in simulating these scenarios. Understanding the limits in the system will also prevent the reactive introduction of policy changes in the system.

Communicate Information

Once a shared vision for immigration is established and CIC continues to make policy changes for a free-flowing immigration system, communicate relevant information, supporting data and intentions to stakeholders. Not only does the data help in decision-making in other parts of the system but it sends a message of openness and collaboration for the long-term benefit of the system. This strategy is specifically important in CIC – provincial relationships due to its strained nature and in CIC/Canadian government – citizens relationships to reiterate the goals and importance of immigration to Canada. The media may focus on adversarial politics but the benefits of increased stakeholder engagement may outweigh any negative press.

Consider the introduction of an annual immigration scorecard (similar to the annual report on immigration to parliament) that draws qualitative and quantitative data from stakeholders and distills it to demonstrate the progress made on immigration.

Mobilization of Immigrant Groups

In Canada, there has been little collaboration between these individual immigrant groups. They want the successful settlement and prosperity of immigrants coming from their countries or regions. However, there is benefit in banding together to advocate for all immigrants. They gain strength in numbers and can exert a stronger influence on CIC. Their collective votes in elections are also a reason for CIC and the federal government to take notice.

Interventions by Problem Theme

Access to Settlement Services

Address the limits placed on immigrants flowing through settlement services:

- NFPs should consider that annual funding may not last for a long time and perhaps they should look to other models of funding. There will likely be a sustained high demand for settlement services as immigrants continue to come to Canada whether funding is received from CIC or not. NFP's, if incorporated, can make a profit as long as the money is used to further the goals of the organization. Some NFPs are already charging fees for services.

- CIC might want to explore charging a settlement fee for sponsors and employers looking to bring immigrants into Canada to fund settlement services. While there might be resistance, this increases the chances that immigrants will learn about settlement services and they will not experience such long wait times for settlement services. It will better their chances of successful settlement and reduce the need for sponsor support should they become unemployed.

- NFPs and CIC should evaluate what services can be offered online to reach a wider group of immigrants, reducing the volume of in-person

visits to NFPs. Employers who wish to brand themselves as an employer of choice for immigrants can supplement financial support.

- Since individual immigrant groups are already providing settlement advice on their own, LIPs should try to engage them in the coordination of settlement service delivery. This way the immigrant groups will be able to provide more comprehensive settlement advice to new immigrants.

- Connect immigrants who have already settled with newly arrived ones to assist them in their settlement. Allow the volunteer time to count towards citizenship.

- CIC could consider expanding pre-departure orientation to new immigrants prior to their arrival in Canada. This would alert immigrants that there is settlement help on arrival in Canada and reduce the instances of immigrants not being aware of how to get help.

- CIC and NFPs should work together to introduce human-centered communications that are more relevant to the immigrant. For example, to illustrate what to expect in Canada, produce and show a video of an actual immigrant from that country as he/she settles in Canada. Be transparent about the issues and let the immigrant come better prepared to deal with them.

- (Already mentioned) - CIC should expand the definition and eligibility for settlement as settlement usually occurs after several system

delays. By reframing settlement from a time interval to a more human-centred definition, one can better understand how to design and deliver settlement services to immigrants. If the settlement definition is broader to include employment, then NFPs can enhance their employment referral or bridging program offering.

- (Already mentioned) – CIC should provide more autonomy to NFPs. This will encourage innovation and more collaboration in the settlement sector and will allow them to become more resilient.

- CIC should reconsider funding cuts to LIPs because they perform an important function of self-organization in the system by coordinating settlement services for immigrants with relevant partners.

Immigrant Employment

- Prior to arrival in Canada, CIC should be clear with immigrants about expectations of obtaining jobs in their field. This appropriately sets their expectations so that when they experience difficulties in the job search, they are able to be resilient.

- ESDC should educate employers about better workforce planning and how poor data affects Canada's and their ability to prepare for the future labour shortages. There could be greater collaboration with the research community and academia to better understand how to do

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workforce planning. ESDC should work with employers to strengthen their data for better modeling and prediction. This will increase the chances that the right occupations that are in demand are communicated to prospective immigrants and there is a better skills match when they come to Canada.

- ESDC should also collaborate with employers and other stakeholders to put a foresight lens on Canada's workforce. This will also strengthen the prediction of future demand for skills so that immigration selection can address Canada's future workforce needs.

- Employers should stop expecting CIC to intervene (with programs like the Temporary Foreign Worker program) whenever there is a perceived labour shortage. An argument could be made that the Immigration System has a certain system delay, which makes it unsuitable to respond to short-term needs and shortages. Employers should act in the long-term interest of the system by doing proper outreach to Canadians and existing permanent resident immigrants to recruit them. By getting creative in selling low skilled jobs through perhaps a good benefits package and a defined career path for advancement, prospective applicants can look beyond the lower wage. This creates a pipeline of labour and builds the reputation of the employer in the community, allowing immigrants and Canadians a fair shot at employment.

- CIC should consider how policy is used to encourage employers to hire immigrants. In the past, when certain designated groups were disadvantaged in employment, the federal government used employment equity legislation to bring about the increased employment of women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities. Perhaps there is an opportunity to do something similar here. For those who say that immigrants are covered under the visible minority category, there are immigrants who are not visible minorities and who also experience challenges when trying to obtain work. One of the benefits of employment equity's effects in workplaces is that it raises awareness of the inequity and calls on employers to examine their hiring and advancement practices to ensure that they are as inclusive as possible and these employers reap the benefits of a diverse workforce with wider connections for new business in the community. One example of government/employers collaboration is that ON MCI is working more closely with employers to promote hiring of immigrants through the Minister's Employment Table with an award for leadership in immigrant employment.

- Employers should work with organizations that specialize in the integration of immigrants into the workforce. Often these organizations collaborate with regulatory bodies, professional associations, community groups, immigrants and other stakeholders to create

programs that involve mentorships, internships and learning tools to help employers integrate immigrants into their workforce, Examples are TRIEC and SITO.

- ESDC, ON MCI and the ON Ministry of Labour should investigate ways to assist the group of professional regulatory bodies in managing the volume and diversity of licensing applications they receive. For example, having one body maintain networks with institutions in hundreds of countries for the purpose of doing preliminary assessments and validation of credentials, this would not only assist licensing bodies in Ontario but those across the country in making the final decisions for applications.

Culture Shock

- One of the most effective ways to deal with problems associated with culture shock is to ensure that immigrants are prepared about what to expect as they go through the stages of culture shock. It is also important that they believe there is a way out of the despair. By broadening the pre-departure orientation to include more details of culture shock and its effects, CIC can better prepare immigrants before they arrive in Canada. NFPs can also supplement their services to reinforce learning about culture shock when immigrants are in the

midst of settlement. Also by showing real people talking about their experiences through videos, stories etc., rather than printed information on a website, immigrants will be able to better relate and this will help in their settlement journey.

- NFPs can equip individual immigrant groups with the "culture shock conversation" so that they can reach more immigrants in their social circles and help to reduce the negative effects of culture shock, especially the one where immigrants let go of their high aspirations for life in Canada.

Immigrant Stereotype

- In general, CIC should resist making policy changes in reaction to events. For example, the imposition of the conditional permanent residency for spouses due to few examples of immigration marriage fraud. As previously discussed, this strengthens the immigrant stereotype that immigrants cannot be trusted. Instead, CIC should use policy when there is a strong evidence-based reason for it. Data is more believable and can counter stereotypes.

- By having a shared stakeholder vision for immigration, it reduces rhetoric about immigrants coming to steal jobs away from Canadians and weakens immigrant stereotypes. This is because stakeholder

goals are now aligned and citizens don't perceive immigrants as a threat.

- If citizens perceive the immigrant threat to be less, there is less reason for the media to report incidents of citizen/immigrant conflict. It also follows if CIC makes less reactionary changes to policy, there is less for the media to report on immigration and its negative effects for Canadians, thereby reducing the anti-immigrant sentiment. This will greatly aid immigrant settlement by not disrupting their sense of belonging.

NEXT STEPS

To bring about an immigration system that is more efficient and effective in settling immigrants, key stakeholders should consider the following actions. CIC is the recommended stakeholder for many of the actions because they yield the most power and influence in the immigration system.

CIC

Table 7 - Recommended actions for CIC

Overall Recommendations	Specific Actions for CIC
Having a shared vision for immigration	CIC to work Canadian government to facilitate a national discussion on immigration, its goals, benefits and how it meets the needs of stakeholders in the system. The aim is to build engagement and foster greater understanding amongst shareholders about each other's goals – challenging the bounded rationalities through which they behave and act when it comes to immigration activities and interacting with the immigrant. This will also enable a greater alignment of stakeholder goals. One possible avenue is to introduce the discussion under the Canada Action Plan series.
Include the immigrant	In an effort to improve the immigrant experience from selection to settlement, CIC should: • Examine the immigration process to identify where they or their agents can obtain immigrant feedback • Work with the stakeholders who implement immigration policy (e.g. NFPs) to institute feedback mechanisms (surveys, online evaluation forms) in a relatively frequent manner • Collect and analyze information received to determine if policy changes are necessary The aim is to obtain a more real time indication of how well immigrants are moving through the system towards settlement and act accordingly to improve the flow. To further instill a sense of empathy for the immigrant, CIC should introduce an element of interaction between policy makers and immigrants. Having that contact can influence policy makers to take a more human-centred approach to developing policy and will translate into a better immigrant experience in the long run.

Overall Recommendations	Specific Actions for CIC
Continue refining immigration system models	CIC should work with systems thinking consultants and CIC staff from varying hierarchical levels to develop a comprehensive system model. It is important to have a diverse staff mix for this exercise because there will be better understanding of cause and effect of action and behaviours in the immigration system. If not already in progress, CIC should conduct horizon scanning and foresight research into possible futures for Canadian immigration. This will allow CIC to envision changes that could possibly take place and their related impact on Canada's future.
Autonomy for Stakeholders	1. CIC should consult with NFPs to get their ideas on where NFPs believe they can innovate in the settlement services sector. By understanding what currently prevents them from doing so, CIC can determine how it can relinquish some of its control - either through its methods of granting funding or the design of/changes to settlement programming. This can only be done if CIC makes clear how the innovation will be judged on its success. Successful innovations can be rewarded with more freedoms to experiment and innovate. One mechanism that is already in place and that can be used to facilitate this action is the Annual Project Performance Report for Community Partnerships mandating NFPs to report on their activities to assess their performance. Demonstrating a willingness to engage NFPs will improve the relationship with CIC and foster greater collaboration for the future improvement of the immigration system. 2. CIC should work with the provinces and territories to better understand their labour needs and allow them greater use of the Provincial Nominee program to meet those needs. This would involve increasing the cap for provinces/ territories of immigrants entering through this program.
Expand the Boundaries placed on Immigrant Settlement	CIC should reconsider re-defining the eligibility criteria for immigrants receiving settlement services from a time perspective (2 years after arrival) to a definition that is more human-centred and involves immigrants meeting their needs of security, employment, a sense of belonging and having the ability to participate. By developing policy with these success criteria in mind, it becomes easier to communicate and obtain buy-in from some stakeholders. It also increases the chances of immigrant settlement of success.

Overall Recommendations	Specific Actions for CIC
More data in a timely manner	Using current information where immigrants experience problems in settling, CIC should examine if and how data could be collected to gain a more real time understanding of the impact of their policy changes on immigrant settlement. This would involve greater collaboration with stakeholders (Statistics Canada, ESDC, NFPs, employers, citizens) to understand problems such as immigrant unemployment, access to and suitability of settlement services and perceived attitudes about immigrants. The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data can better position CIC as a more agile ministry with greater evidence-based policy development. Using data can silence critics and it makes convincing stakeholders easier when it comes to proposing a policy change that affects them.
Understand Limits in the Immigration System	Using models of the immigration system and simulating policy changes and their effects on stakeholders in system, CIC can better understand where there are limits. Limits usually occur when there is a blockage of immigrants at certain stakeholders on their way to settlement e.g. immigrants having difficulty finding employment - limits at the employer level. Limits in the system may change from one stakeholder to another and CIC needs to be prepared to adjust policy accordingly. By identifying limits and developing policy to address them, CIC can better address the flow of immigrants and in turn, improve their settlement experience.
Communicate Information	CIC should develop communication strategies to inform stakeholders in the immigration system about its policy, changes and supporting data and intentions. One possible way to do this for a broader stakeholder audience is the introduction of an annual immigration scorecard using qualitative and quantitative data from stakeholders to demonstrate progress on immigration. Communication of information helps decision-making in other parts of the system and also communicates a message of openness and collaboration for the long-term benefit of the system.

Recommendations by Problem Theme	Specific Actions for CIC
Access to Settlement Services	• Explore charging a settlement fee to sponsors and employers looking to bring immigrants into Canada. There will likely be a high demand for settlement services as immigrants continue to come to Canada whether CIC funds NFPs or not. • Work with NFPs to evaluate what services can be offered online to reach a wider group of immigrants and work towards implementing web-based delivery of those settlement services to reduce the volume of in-person visits to NFPs. • Investigate how to connect newly arrived immigrants with those already in Canada. This one-to-one connection can provide great insight to the new immigrant on how to navigate challenges in settling. CIC can allow the volunteer time of the mentoring immigrant to count towards a faster time to Canadian citizenship. • Expand the pre-departure orientation program to all new immigrants prior to their arrival in Canada. This should be mandatory for all immigrants. • Work with NFPs to introduce human-centred communications relevant to the immigrant (same country, language etc.,). This includes videos of actual immigrants relating stories of their settlement journeys. Human-centred communications often resonate better with the audience and can help to communicate important information on settlement services within a deeper context. • Reconsider funding cuts to LIPs. LIPs form an important function of self-organization in the system, one that strengthens the system for the long term.
Immigrant Employment	• Be clear with immigrants that acceptance to Canada based on current occupation does not equate a guaranteed job in the same occupation in Canada. This better sets immigrants for the reality when they arrive. • Stop frequent short-term interventions to address labour shortages expressed by employers. This places the onus on employers to do required activities such as proper outreach to Canadians and immigrants to create a sustainable source of labour to address the labour shortage. • Work with other government agencies e.g. ESDC and use policy to incentivize employers to encourage the greater hiring of immigrants. This may include tax breaks for employers who invest in diversity programs that address the hiring, representation and inclusion of immigrants in the workforce (includes mentorships, internships and educational tools for managers and recruiters). Explore the possibility of using employment equity legislation to encourage the hiring of immigrants.

Recommendations by Problem Theme	Specific Actions for CIC
Culture Shock	• Include information on culture-shock and its effects on immigrants in the pre-departure orientation session and make the session mandatory for ALL immigrants about to enter Canada. Explore delivery of training on the internet. This better prepares immigrants for difficulties they are about to face on arrival in Canada.
Immigrant Stereotype	• Resist policy changes in reaction to negative public sentiment. It is better to act based on evidence derived from strong feedback loops in the system - set up to provide timely data on where stakeholders are abusing the rules of the system (fraudulent marriages, employer abuse of Temporary Foreign Worker Program) • Work with Canadian government to facilitate a national discussion on immigration, its goals, benefits and how it meets the needs of stakeholders in the system. Alignment of goals (including that of citizens) and creating a shared vision for immigration reduce the chances of citizens perceiving immigrants as a threat and lessen the effects of immigrant stereotypes.

NFPs

Table 8 - Recommended actions for NFPs

Overall Recommendations	Specific Actions for NFPs
Having a shared vision for immigration	NFPs, in their forums of interaction with community organizations, should advocate for a greater shared vision for immigration. By helping to build a stronger voice, this can have a greater influence on CIC to work with the Canadian government to facilitate a national discussion on immigration, its goals, benefits and how it meets the needs of stakeholders in the system. The aim is to build engagement and foster greater understanding amongst shareholders about each other's goals – challenging the bounded rationalities through which they behave and act when it comes to immigration activities and interacting with the immigrant. This will also enable a greater alignment of stakeholder goals. One possible avenue is to introduce the discussion under the Canada Action Plan series.
Autonomy for Stakeholders	NFPs should collaborate with each other and explore ideas for innovation in the settlement services sector. Innovations should include specific success criteria, costing, risk factor and mitigating plans. This preparedness can have a greater influence on CIC to relinquish some of its tight control on funding and settlement services design.
Expand the Boundaries placed on Immigrant Settlement	NFPs should continue communicating to CIC the need for expanded settlement services to include employment aids and job-bridging programs.

Recommendations by Problem Theme	Specific Actions for NFPs
Access to Settlement Services	• Consider alternative funding models to promote less reliance on CIC for funding. These may include NFP incorporation and charging fees for services, using the income to further enhance and develop settlement services. • Propose to CIC what services can be offered online to reach a wider group of immigrants to reduce the volume of in-person visits. NFPs can then do more quality follow up visits with immigrants who already attended online sessions. • Propose and work with CIC to introduce human-centred communications relevant to the immigrant (same country, language etc.,). This includes videos of actual immigrants relating stories of their settlement journeys. Human-centred communications often resonate better with the audience and can help to communicate important information on settlement services within a deeper context.
Culture Shock	• Expand offering on culture shock to immigrants, emphasizing that it is normal and demonstrating ways to quickly move through the stages.

Employers

Table 9 - Recommended actions for Employers

| Overall Recommendations	Specific Actions
Having a shared vision for immigration	Employers who understand immigration to be an important source of labour and the key to Canada's prosperity should advocate for a greater shared vision for immigration in their forums of interaction with CIC and their peers. Employers can use their strong influence on CIC to work with the Canadian government to facilitate a national discussion on immigration, its goals, benefits and how it meets the needs of stakeholders in the system. The aim is to build engagement and foster greater understanding amongst shareholders about each other's goals – challenging the bounded rationalities through which they behave and act when it comes to immigration activities and interacting with the immigrant. This will also enable a greater alignment of stakeholder goals. One possible avenue is to introduce the discussion under the Canada Action Plan series.

Recommendations by Problem Theme	Specific Actions for Employers
Access to Settlement Services	• Explore sponsorship of NFP settlement initiatives to brand oneself as employer of choice for immigrants.
Immigrant Employment	• Work with organizations that specialize in the integration of immigrants into the workforce. These organizations can assist with bridging programs, mentorships, internships and educational tools for managers and recruiters to promote the inclusion of immigrants into the workforce. Examples are TRIEC and SITO • Do proper outreach to Canadians and immigrants to recruit them and to create a sustainable source of labour to address the labour shortage. Start building a talent pipeline by selling your job and industry to possible candidates, highlighting the career path and a competitive benefits package. • Stop expecting CIC to provide frequent short-term interventions to address labour shortages. • Work with other government agencies e.g. ESDC and use policy to incentivize employers to encourage the greater hiring of immigrants. This may include tax breaks for employers who invest in diversity programs that address the hiring, representation and inclusion of immigrants in the workforce (includes mentorships, internships and educational tools for managers and recruiters).
Immigrant Stereotype	• Address the negative effects of immigrant stereotypes in diversity programming within the organization

ESDC

Table 10 - Recommended actions for ESDC

Recommendations by Problem Theme	Specific Actions
Immigrant Employment	• Collaborate with the research community and academia to understand best practices in workforce planning and strengthen modeling for better and more timely prediction of in-demand occupation reports • Work with employers to improve their workforce planning capabilities so that the data that is fed to ESDC is accurate. • Collaborate with employers and other stakeholders to put a foresight lens on Canada's workforce and not only rely on past and current quantitative data. • Collaborate with ON MCI and ON Ministry of Labour to investigate how to assist professional regulatory bodies in managing high volumes of licensing applications. An example is having one body to maintain networks with institutions in hundreds of countries for the purpose of doing preliminary assessment and validation of credentials, leaving the regulatory bodies to make final decisions on applications.

Figure 18 is a preliminary systems map illustrating stakeholders involved in immigration policy development and implementation after the implementation of recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of settling immigrants in Canada. Elements of the mapping that are in green represent changes to power and influence of stakeholders due to changes in autonomy and degrees of information sharing and collaboration.

FIGURE 18 - INFLUENCE IN CANADIAN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

(POST-IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS)
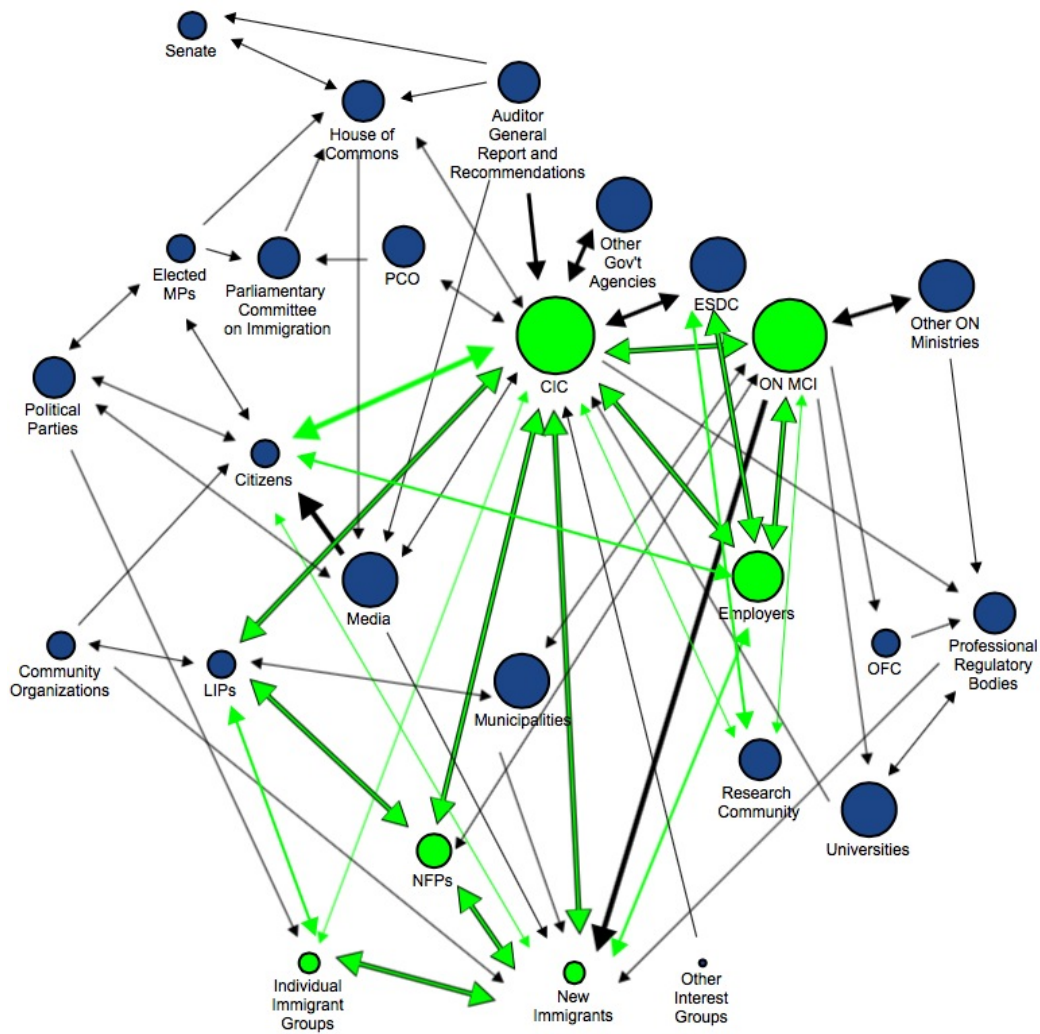
Changes to the systems map are shown in green – representing changes in power of stakeholders and degrees of influence in stakeholder relationships.

Changes to Power and Influence in the System Mapping

CIC's power has decreased because it has relinquished some of its control to NFPs and ON MCI. As a result, the size of the NFP and ON MCI circles has increased.

CIC now solicits the input from immigrants on their settlement experience and sometimes makes changes to settlement programming and policy to address immigrant concerns. This is shown in Figure 18 as a strong two-way arrow between these stakeholders.

CIC now allows NFPs to make changes to settlement service programming. NFP funding is now based on success of innovations and this fosters greater collaboration in the settlement services sector. Therefore the lines between NFPs and LIPs, CIC and new immigrants are thicker and are two-way. Since NFPs understand the new rules of funding, they have self-organized to ensure that they are successful.

CIC has passed on some of their power to ON MCI. ON MCI can now select more immigrants through the Provincial Nominee Program. The

relationship between CIC and ON MCI has improved and there is greater collaboration as evidenced by a stronger two-way arrow.

CIC does not intervene as often on behalf of employers to address labour shortages in the short term. This has decreased the power of employers somewhat in the system. CIC has now placed a greater accountability on the part of employers to hire immigrants as evidenced by a stronger two-way arrow between CIC and employers.

CIC now communicates regularly with citizens on it's immigration programming and its changes, providing information on its intentions and supporting policy changes with data. This reduces the chances of citizens negatively stereotyping all immigrants.

CIC shares information and solicits the input of the research community to further understand how the actions of stakeholders, demographic changes and future events can impact the Canadian immigration system. This is represented by a two-way line of regular strength.

ON MCI now has greater power due to its increased selection of immigrants. Their relationship with CIC has improved and there is a stronger collaboration (stronger line with two-way arrow). This ability to

select more immigrants through the PNP involves a greater collaboration with employers on their workforce needs.

The power of employers has decreased slightly. CIC is intervening less on their behalf to address labour shortages in the short term, however, they are working more with ON MCI to select immigrants through the PNP.

Employers now have an increased accountability to CIC for the hiring of immigrants through tax breaks and employment equity legislation. This is represented in the mapping as a strong line with two-way arrow when previously employers were the one influencing CIC.

Employers collaborate with ESDC to improve their workforce planning capabilities and to strengthen the data supplied to ESDC for the determination of the in-demand occupation list. ESDC now solicits the input of the research community to understand the best practices in workforce planning, data modeling and foresight for the prediction of Canada's future workforce.

Employers now do greater outreach to citizens and new immigrants. They now influence each other and their relationships are represented with two-way lines of regular strength.

NFPs now have greater power in the system and they collaborate more with stakeholders (LIPs, CIC, Immigrants) in the settlement services sector to innovate and fine tune services for immigrants. Lines between NFPs and stakeholders are stronger and two-way.

Individual immigrant groups have mobilized to advocate more for immigrants. Their power has increased in the system and they now have a stronger influence on CIC.

Immigrants are now able to share their concerns with NFPs, employers and CIC regarding their settlement problems. They now have more power to influence stakeholders to bring about some changes for their benefit. Their circle is larger and they can now influence more stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

Canada needs immigration for its future prosperity. Canada's population is not growing fast enough to replenish the large number of workers set to retire and this means that the country cannot maintain its economic status nor can it develop and advance. Immigration is a solution to this problem.

Respondents from key stakeholder groups suggest that immigrants experience settlement problems in accessing settlement services, finding employment, dealing with culture shock and immigrant stereotypes because it impacts their ability to achieve employment, security, a sense of belonging and the ability to participate.

Examination of the immigration system, through systems-thinking methodologies has enabled a systems model of the Canadian immigration system to be created to demonstrate a complex structure of stakeholders with varying levels of power and influence. In this system mapping, the immigrants have significantly lower power and influence when compared to other stakeholders.

The mapping offers a strategic view of the immigration system and allows for the examination of the effects of policies as they impact stakeholders,

influencing their actions on other stakeholders and resulting in immigrant settlement problems. The mapping also allows for the identification of leverage points to improve the immigrant settlement journey. This approach is unique in that it emphasizes the importance of all stakeholders (including the immigrant), who make up the immigration system.

The results suggest that the Canadian immigration system could benefit from a greater shared vision for immigration amongst its stakeholders. A broader definition of settlement in policy development could address problems related to employment. Timely and accurate data can improve system feedback and better assess the degree of immigrant settlement, preventing reactionary policy changes that produce unintended consequences. A loosening of control by CIC and increased autonomy for stakeholders can encourage innovation and resiliency, strengthening the system for the long-term. It may be beneficial to slow the rate of immigration until system limits e.g. barriers to employment and those created by culture shock and immigrant stereotypes are addressed. However, of critical importance is placing a focus on the immigrant experience on their settlement journey and allowing them to provide feedback for better policy development. This balances stakeholder power and makes the immigration system more stable.

As immigration is a key to Canada's future prosperity, the insular policy development practices have not enabled an efficient and well-functioning immigration system. Immigrant skills continue to be under-leveraged and their health is affected during difficulties in their settlement journey. A systems approach to Canadian immigration can help address problems that have been occurring for a very long time despite policy efforts to address them. The alternative is continued damage to Canada's brand as an immigrant friendly country, the subsequent decline of prospective immigrants choosing Canada and its future economic troubles.

FURTHER RESEARCH

The topic of Canadian immigration is such a rich one to explore as it is subject to many changes in governments and their planned and reactive immigration policy changes due to stakeholder influences, world events and economic and demographic changes.

Change is the only certainty in this world of increasing uncertainty. Foresight research on immigration futures can provide insight into how the immigration system could be impacted by change and uncertainty. By studying immigration trends and drivers and creating possible future scenarios for immigration, one can unearth current and future strategies for key stakeholders (including CIC) in becoming better prepared for immigration.

For Canadian immigration to achieve the desired effect of replenishing the population, the workforce and in addressing the labour shortages, it is important that the system be more geared to meeting the needs of the immigrant – a more human-centred approach. Research into specific ways to do this can help stakeholders become aware and better understand how they can contribute to successful immigrant settlement.

Success in Canadian immigration also depends on its further acceptance by Canadians. Research into Canadian attitudes on immigration can identify their perceived inequities contributing to their resistance to immigration. Identifying and addressing those inequities can possibly increase the chances of government being able to make the required policy changes necessary for successful immigration with less fear of antagonizing the Canadian public.

These are a few areas for possible further research.

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APPENDIX A – CIC Questionnaire

1. Can you tell me about your role in immigration policy development?
2. In your experience, what are the biggest factors that influence the development of immigration policy?
3. What is the policy development cycle like for immigration?
4. Who do you consider to be stakeholders in the immigration system? How do they fit in?
5. Who are the decision makers?
6. How does your ministry engage them?
7. How do their contributions play a part in policy that is developed?
8. What goes into implementing immigration policy?
9. How do you know if an implemented policy has been successful? How long does it usually take before you know its impact? How do you test it? What do you look for?
10. In your opinion, what are successful aspects of the immigration system? How has gov't policy facilitated that success?
11. Where are areas for improvement? Can gov't policy address those in a meaningful way? Why/Why not?
12. There are many processes that guide the immigration system but in your experience, how does it really work?
13. What are some of the tradeoffs that stakeholders make to accommodate immigration?
14. If you had the power to change one thing, what would it be?
15. Give me a sense of what it will look like 10 years from now?

APPENDIX B – Citizens Questionnaire

1. How has immigration influenced your life? Was it a positive or negative influence?
2. Do you believe immigration is necessary for Canada? Why/Why not?
3. Do you think Canada is doing a good job when it comes to immigration? Why/Why not?
4. What do you think are the trade-offs for Canadians and for immigrants?
5. How would you know when an immigrant has successfully settled in Canada?
6. Which group do you think has the biggest impact on immigrant success? Why?
7. Which group could do more?
8. In your opinion, how big a factor is immigration in determining Canadians' votes for a political party in elections?
9. In your opinion, how can the immigration system be improved? <Consider: what gov't, citizens, immigrants, companies, NFPs can do> or, if you could pick one thing to change what would it be?

APPENDIX C – Immigrants Questionnaire

1. When did you come to Canada?
2. What motivated you to come to Canada?
3. Are you the first in your family to migrate to Canada? If yes, what made you take that risk?
4. Why did you choose Canada (as opposed to another country) as your new home?
5. How would you describe the immigration process?
6. If you were telling the story of your experience to your grandchildren how would you tell it?
7. Can you tell me what it was like when you arrived? What was your greatest help in those early days? What was your biggest obstacle?
8. When was the moment/event that you felt that you were settled? Can you tell me about it?
9. Compared to what you expected when you left your home country, how have your expectations changed?
10. Is your story unique? How is it the same or different than others?
11. Do you feel successful? If yes, why? If not, why?
12. Why do you believe immigration is important to Canada?
13. What do you think are the trade-offs for Canadians and for immigrants?
14. What is working? What is not working?
15. In your opinion, how can the immigration system be improved?
    <Consider: what gov't, citizens, immigrants, companies, NFPs can do>

APPENDIX D – NFPs Questionnaire

1. Can you tell me about your role in the immigration and settlement landscape?
2. Why do you believe that immigration is important? Or how do you know it's important?
3. The immigration system in Canada, what do you believe it is meant to do?
4. In what ways is the immigration system successful? <Remind: immigration includes migration and settlement>
5. Can you share a story of success? What makes this story different than others?
6. In what ways does it fail or need improvement? Is there one thing in particular that causes the most challenge?
7. How does your work help? If you weren't there what would happen?
8. Who wins/loses in the immigration system?
9. What do you think are the trade-offs for Canadians and for immigrants in order for immigration to be successful?
10. In your opinion, does government policy help the system? Why/Why not?
11. What are your main concerns regarding the immigration system? Is there enough awareness about these concerns? Are they being addressed? Can you please elaborate?
12. What do you think are the top three things that could be implemented to immediately improve the immigration system? <Consider: what gov't, citizens, immigrants, companies, NFPs can do>
13. What keeps you awake at night regarding immigration?

APPENDIX E – Employers Questionnaire

1. How has immigration influenced your company's business? Has it been a positive or negative influence?
2. Do you believe immigration is necessary for Canada? Why/Why not?
3. How well are immigrants filling the demand for talent/labour in your organization?
4. How work-ready are immigrants or do organizations need to invest in getting them ready for work?
5. Can you tell me some of the job-seeking pathways that immigrants take before obtaining roles at your company?
6. How dependent are you on NFPs serving immigrants to get the right talent for your organization?
7. What are some of the possible reasons for immigrant wages remaining below those of native-born Canadians?
8. How would you describe when an immigrant has successfully settled in Canada?
9. What do you think are some systemic flaws that impact immigrant success in settlement?
10. There are processes to guide immigration and immigrant settlement but in your opinion, how successful are they? Can you please provide any examples?
11. Do you think Canada is doing a good job when it comes to immigration? Why/Why not?
12. Which group do you think has the biggest impact on immigrant success? Why?
13. Which group could do more?
14. In your opinion, how can the immigration system be improved?
    <Consider: what gov't, citizens, immigrants, companies, NFPs can do>

APPENDIX F – GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are commonly used throughout the text.

Acronym	Expansion	Description
CIC	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada	Government ministry responsible for the development of immigration and citizenship policy
COIA	Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement	Agreement between CIC and ON MCI that specifies how they will work together on developing and implementing immigration policy
COPS	Canadian Occupational Projection System	A model used by ESDC to estimate the projections of future labour demand and labour supply by broad skill level and by occupation
ESDC	Employment Skills and Development Canada	The department of the Government of Canada responsible for developing, managing and delivering social programs and services
FCRO	Foreign Credentials Referral Office	Its mandate is to provide internationally trained individuals with the information, path-finding and referral services to have their credentials assessed and recognized
FSWP	Federal Skilled Worker Program	A CIC immigration program designed to recruit and select skilled workers as permanent residents in Canada. It assesses the candidate's overall capacity (including language, education, work experience, etc.) to adapt to Canada's labour market.
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act	Legislation that has been in effect since 2002 and governs immigration related policy and activities in Canada
LIP	Local Immigration Partnership	LIPs work with NFPs, community organizations and other local parties to coordinate services to immigrants
MP	Member of parliament	Member of parliament individuals who are associated with political parties and who have been successful in federal elections
NFP	Community organizations serving immigrants	Provide services to immigrants in getting them settled by helping them find housing, employment and social networks and/or multicultural programs for integrating newcomers into Canadian society
OCASI	Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants	Acts as a collective voice for NFPs and coordinates responses to shared needs and concerns
OFC	Ontario Fairness Commissioner	Oversees the Ontario professional regulatory bodies to make sure their assessment and licensing of foreign trained professionals is transparent, objective, impartial and fair

Acronym	Expansion	Description
ON MCI	Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration	Supports the successful economic and social integration of immigrants
PCO	Privy Council Office	Provides advice to the Prime Minister and determines what agenda items are tabled at Cabinet meetings
PNP	Provincial Nominee Program	A CIC immigration program that authorizes provinces and territories to nominate for permanent residence individuals who will meet specific local labour market needs
TFW	Temporary Foreign Worker	A foreign national hired by Canadian employer in the short term to address immediate labour shortages
TFWP	Temporary Foreign Worker Program	A CIC immigration program that allows employers in Canada to hire foreign nationals in the short term to address immediate labour shortages