

A SETTLEMENT JOURNEY

A CASE FOR A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HOW WE SETTLE NEW ARRIVALS
IN VICTORIA: LEARNINGS FROM CANADA AND THE USA 2016



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CANADA'S REFUGEE STORY: A TOUCHSTONE FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

The world is in the grip of the biggest mass migration since World War II, and as such, the plight of the refugee journey is facing global scrutiny like never before. Markers such as faith and cultural identity are often subject to public debate.

But Canada, through its political leadership and courageous public narrative is offering the world a new story, one where refugees are welcomed and embraced as new citizens.

Australia, along with Canada, has been shaped by migration. Both countries were amongst the world's first to adopt multicultural policies in the early 1970's. Today both countries define themselves as proudly multicultural. And both countries' settlement approaches are consistently ranked as amongst the best in the world.

So why should Australia, along with the rest of the world, stop to take notice of Canada's unique approach to the Syrian refugee crisis, defined by its responsiveness and welcoming and supportive communities?

As Australia's contemporary story of migration arrives at another crossroad where identity politics play out in contentious policy directions, narratives and public attitudes around migration and integration, the opportunity to reframe our approach is a key priority.

Ultimately, a successful society where diversity thrives and cities prosper is one where citizens are able to realise their full potential as active and equal citizens and where the reciprocal relationship with the host nation is a fair and equitable one, creating opportunities to add value to the social cohesion and economic landscape of the host nation.

If we are looking to raise the bar in these challenging times, the metric that counts the most is one where inclusion and welcoming initiatives become part of a state's DNA.

To that end, we believe settlement service delivery has the flexibility to evolve in a more coordinated response across the board, where genuine service delivery gaps are identified and addressed across all levels of government, where a clear directory of services is transparent and accessible, and where social services such as arts, culture and sport play an important role in creating more welcoming and inclusive communities.

The seven key themes that emerged from these findings are offered as opportunities and next steps to strengthen Victoria's overall settlement response of new arrivals for all levels of government, non-government organisations (NGOs) and community organisations.

THEME 1: A case for political leadership to galvanize a nation towards positive outcomes for newly arrived refugees.

THEME 2: Connect, collaborate and coordinate settlement agencies to ensure positive settlement service delivery outcomes.

THEME 3: Right pathways to a new start of settlement services and programs to support refugees and humanitarian entrants.

THEME 4: Identity politics and media narratives are a major determinant of national discourse and can impact the cohesiveness of a society.

THEME 5: A home for everyone – building welcoming communities and preparing refugees prior to their arrival directly correlates with good settlement outcomes.

THEME 6: Social inclusion through the power of sports, arts and culture programs in peacebuilding and engaging communities.

THEME 7: Measuring outcomes to ensure the effectiveness of any settlement system.

At the Victorian Multicultural Commission we believe a more holistic framework in the settlement landscape is an important first step.



Helen Kapalos
Chairperson.

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CANADA IS EMERGING AS A COUNTRY PREPARED TO DEFINE ITSELF THROUGH ITS COMPASSIONATE AND SWIFT RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN CRISIS

Monocle, November 2016, Vol 10, Issue 98.

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- 1 VANCOUVER
- 2 TORONTO
- 3 OTTAWA
- 4 WASHINGTON DC
- 5 NEW YORK CITY

CANADA

UNITED STATES

WHY?

It was a photo of three-year old refugee Alan Kurdi, lifeless on a beach in Turkey, which prompted a public outcry to the Syrian refugee crisis, following a desperate attempt by his family to seek asylum in Canada. It brought home to the world the tragic implications of the war in Syria.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees described the mass displacement from the Syrian War as 'the biggest refugee and humanitarian crisis of our time'. Consequently, the global response by world leaders and governments was unprecedented in modern times. Several countries, including Australia announced an increase to their humanitarian refugee intake for Syrian and Iraqi refugees. The Australian Government committed to a one off increase of 12,000 permanent humanitarian places for Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Australia.

The Victorian government directed the Victorian Multicultural Commission to take a lead role in the response to settlement co-ordination services as the state prepared to welcome an additional approximately 4,000 new arrivals.

In order to inform the Victorian response, I travelled to Canada and the United States from 21 September to 6 October 2016 to investigate best-practice refugee settlement programs. Refugee settlement programs explored on this trip have been distilled in this report and will be used to help inform a wrap-around, holistic, and long-term service delivery strategy to support sustainable settlement outcomes.

I met with government officials, local agencies, service clubs, local volunteer groups and members of the community in Canada and the United States, who have primary responsibility in overseeing and delivering

resettlement services for newly arrived Syrian and Iraqi refugees. I also met with stakeholders responsible for promoting, coordinating and supporting approaches to strengthen multiculturalism and social cohesion and academics with a range of insights into the multicultural story.

My travel took me to Vancouver, Toronto and Ottawa in Canada where I met with British Columbia and Ontario Government officials and stakeholders that have primary responsibility in settling new arrivals in communities, housing, childcare services, employment, skills training, healthcare, interpreting services and overseas qualification assessment.

Canada is currently applying the lessons it learned from its 25,000 refugee intake in 2015 to speed up processing times for family class immigration, economic immigrants and refugee claimants. The response to the heavy influx has also improved settlement coordination across provinces, facilitated collaborative partnerships across the Canadian settlement sector and inspired a greater emphasis on the public and private sponsorship model.

I also met with state-based government officials, and not for profit organisations in Washington DC and New York in the United States that provide sport and art programs. The meetings with academics and other stakeholders were also insightful in understanding how to support successful settlement of refugees by promoting participation and creating more inclusive communities.

The partnerships and connections made during this trip have ensured a deepening of collaborative relationships with both state and international colleagues in Canada and the United States to enhance and support Victoria's settlement of Syrian and Iraqi refugees.

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WHO IS A VICTORIAN?

SOCIAL COHESION

In many parts of the Western world, broader fears around migration and concerns of local populations about how to effectively respond to the changing diversity remains a challenge. Social cohesion refers to the forces that bind individuals at both the community and national level, including common values, civic order, democratic participation, equal opportunities and a sense of belonging.¹ Therefore, diversity has the potential to strengthen or weaken social cohesion.

Results of a 2011 international survey published by the Conference Board of Canada², identified that the vast majority of Canadians (80%) believe their community was accepting of people from different racial, ethnic and cultural groups, placing it ahead of all other countries surveyed.

The Victorian Government believes in the value of migration, as does the majority of the Australian population. Over the last four years, the Scanlon Foundation found that an average of 56% either support the current immigration intake or consider that it should be increased (with 37% believing

it should be decreased). Similar findings were obtained by the 2014 ANU poll and the 2016 Lowy Institute poll. In a survey by the Scanlon Foundation (2016), Australians Today, there is an indication of shared understanding between Australian born and recent migrants about what is valued as the most liked features of life in Australia: the Australian way of life, freedom and democracy, and the standard of living.

On the whole, Victoria enjoys relatively high levels of community harmony and social cohesion. This is a result of government policy and a long standing bi-partisan approach, cooperation between community organisations, and the building of relationships between and among our multicultural communities.

Table 1: 'What do you most like about Australia?'

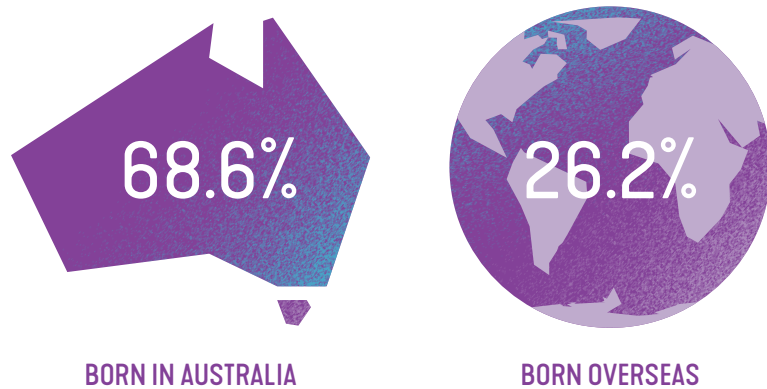


[Source: Australians Today, The Australia@2015 Scanlon Foundation Survey (2016)]

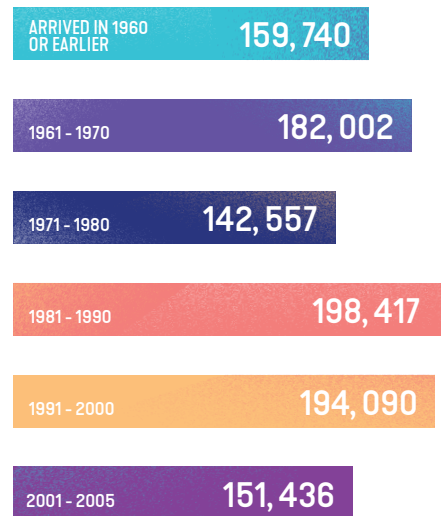
¹ Diversity, Dlentity and the Social Cohesion Advantage <http://www.horizons.gc.ca/eng/content/diversity-identity-and-social-cohesion-advantage>
² <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/details/society/acceptance-of-diversity.aspx>

VICTORIAN POPULATION ACCORDING TO RESIDENCY STATUS IN 2011

26.2% of Victoria's population was born overseas from over 200 countries



Established Immigrants (Immigrated before 2006)
Year of arrival in Australia



73.2%
ESTABLISHED IMMIGRANTS
IMMIGRATED BEFORE 2006

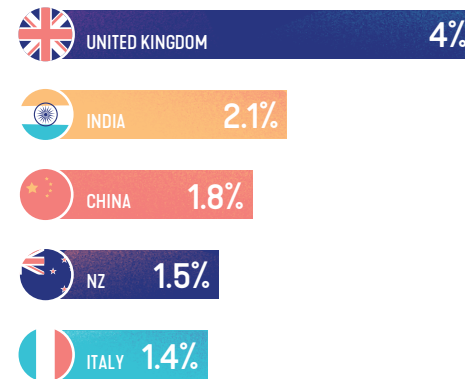
23%
RECENT IMMIGRANTS
IMMIGRATED BETWEEN
2006-2011

* In these figures, recent immigrants are people born outside of Australia who immigrated between 2006-2011. Established immigrants are people born outside of Australia who immigrated to Victoria before 2006.

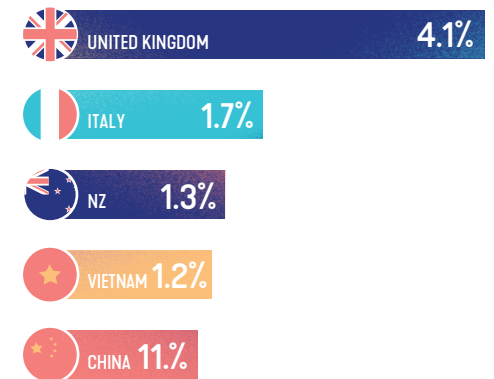
[Source: Data sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011, (Usual residence data) and profile.id]

BIRTHPLACE OF IMMIGRANTS

Recent (Immigrated 2006-2011)



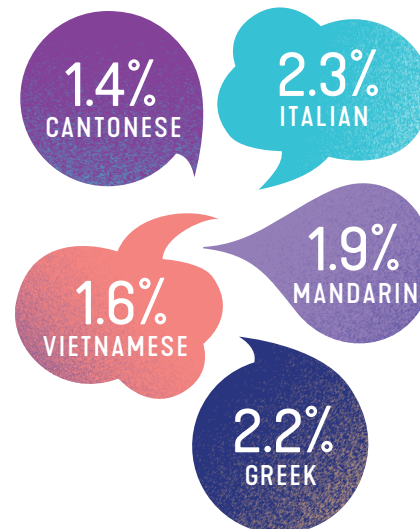
Established (Immigrated before 2006)



* The largest non-English speaking country of birth in Victoria was India, where 2.1% of the population, or 111,723 people, were born.

MOTHER TONGUE

Languages spoken at home



23%
OF VICTORIANS REPORT A
NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS
THEIR MOTHER TONGUE

260
DIFFERENT MOTHER TONGUES
REPORTED BY VICTORIANS IN 2011

CANADA'S UNIQUE APPROACH

According to statistics on Canada's population diversity projections³, the proportion of the total population that is foreign-born will continue to increase, reaching between 25% and 28% by 2031. Every year, more than 250,000 people migrate to Canada. More come to Canada to visit, study or work on a temporary basis. While the vast majority of migrants to Canada since 1911 have been from Western European countries, significant populations from other regions of the world were present in Canada before 1911 and since.

CANADA'S RESETTLEMENT POLICY

Canada's resettlement program is administered by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Canada has a long history of providing humanitarian assistance to people fleeing persecution in their homeland or displaced by conflicts. Former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau started multiculturalism and bilingualism in Canada in the late 60s and early 70 where the emphasis on accommodating the cultural practices of Canadian immigrants was integral to their identity.

The objectives of Canada's refugee program are to save lives, offer protection to the displaced and persecuted, meet Canada's international legal obligations with respect to refugees, and respond to international crises by providing assistance to those in need of resettlement. In addition, one of Canada's core immigration priorities focuses on family reunification because, as put to me on many occasions, when families are able to stay together, their integration and ability to work and grow their communities all improve.

This is consistent with feedback received by the VMC at its community consultations with recently arrived Assyrian communities

who were separated from their families when they fled the war in Syria to neighbouring countries. Australia's visa provisions mean that family reunification is often not an option for refugee status claimants which, in many circumstances, has compounded the suffering and mental issues experienced by many refugee arrivals.

With the implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act in 2002, Canada has placed emphasis on the following principles for refugee resettlement:

- ▶ A shift toward protection rather than ability to successfully establish;
- ▶ Long term, multi-year planning;
- ▶ Group processing where possible to increase efficiencies where common group resettlement needs are present;
- ▶ Rapid family reunification;
- ▶ Accelerated processing of urgent and vulnerable protection cases; and
- ▶ Balancing inclusiveness with effective management through a closer relationship with partners.

A resettlement target is established by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship following consultations with

stakeholders on an annual basis. In 2016 the refugee resettlement admissions range was 41,000 to 46,000, with a range of 24,000 to 25,000 for Government assisted refugees and 2,000 to 3,000 for Blended Visa Office-Referred refugees.

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DIVERSITY IS
CANADA'S STRENGTH

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

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³ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-551-x/91-551-x2010001-eng.pdf>

CANADA'S SYRIAN REFUGEE INTAKE

Refugees can be sponsored by the government, sponsorship agreement holders, communities, groups of five citizens over the age of 18, and constituent groups who work with sponsorship agreement holders⁴. Canada has resettled 35,147 Syrian refugees since 4 November 2015, under the following migration programs:

Syrian refugee intake (as of 2 January 2017)

- ▶ Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR) Program – 21,751 Syrian refugees have resettled under this program, all of whom were referred to Canada for resettlement by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Resettlement is supported by the Canadian Government or the province of Quebec (due to their strict immigration policies), and is delivered by service provider organisations. Support lasts up to one year from the date of arrival or until self-sufficient, whichever happens first, provides for accommodation, clothing, food, pathways to employment and other resettlement assistance as required.

- ▶ Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) Program – 3,923 Syrian refugees have resettled with the joint assistance of private sponsors and the Canadian government's Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). The program aims to be a three-way partnership; the UNHCR identifies refugees for resettlement, the Government provides up to six months of income support through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP), and private sponsors provide an additional financial support and up to a year of social and emotional support.
- ▶ Privately Sponsored Refugee – 13,997 Syrian refugees have been resettled by a private sponsor (faith based organisation, community group or Group of 5 people) that make a commitment to assist refugees in finding a place to live, provide food, clothing and financial support for one year after arrival or until self-sufficient, whichever happens first – with general oversight by local councils. Residents of Quebec are excluded from this program and fall under provincial jurisdiction.

4 Beaman et al Syrian Refugees pg 2-3

5 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/08/canada-doubles-refugee-target>

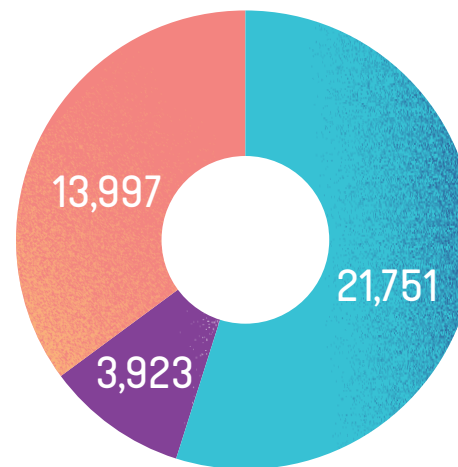
6 <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2016/docs/plan/ch6-en.html>

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WE'RE CANADIAN AND
WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,
71st Session of the UN General Assembly, September 2016

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35,147
SYRIAN REFUGEES SETTLED
SINCE 4 NOVEMBER 2015



Syrian refugee intake (as of 2 January 2017)

- Government-Assisted Refugee
- Blended Visa Office-Referred Refugee
- Privately Sponsored Refugee

Budget and expansion of Syrian refugee intake

On March 8, 2016, the Canadian Government announced plans to take in between 51,000 and 57,000 refugees in 2016, approximately double the number received in 2015.⁵

In November 2015, the Canadian Government showed leadership by committing \$678 million Canadian dollars, over six years, to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees arriving by February 29, 2016, and by committing to resettle an additional 10,000 government-assisted Syrian refugees over the course of 2016. Budget 2016 provided \$245 million over five years, starting in 2016–17, for the identification, overseas processing, transport and resettlement of the additional 10,000 Syrian refugees.⁶



FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS

Information and insights gathered during the Chairperson's visit was collated and analysed. This section of the report summaries the key findings into themes and suggests next steps to improve and ensure a holistic settlement response.

1. A CASE FOR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Canada has shown how compassion, positive narratives and political leadership have galvanized a nation towards positive outcomes for newly arrived refugees from Syria and Iraq. Under the Trudeau Government, good will has ensured that all players involved in Canada's overall immigration system are able to broaden their conversations to consider the humanistic aspect of migration. This allows for discussions at a broader level to support all communities and not just newly arrived cohorts.

Leadership in Political Narratives

Many of the organisations commented on how the most recent change in political narrative at the highest level of government around immigration and multiculturalism has influenced how the Canadian people, and all levels of government, view and support refugees.

A keynote address given by Catherine Dauvergne⁷ at the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies' annual general meeting summarised this notion well – that overall support for the arrival and settlement of Syrian refugees in Canada was due in large part to the Canadian Government's proactive, positive narrative

and injection of resources (funding and staff) into the settlement system. She also discussed recent policy shifts in the Canadian immigration landscape, with previous policies being described as draconian and somewhat limiting. In contrast current policies have been developed in response to the refugee displacement crisis and in some cases, they have exceeded international obligations. A summary of this address is at Appendix A.

An example of recent policy shifts includes each of Canada's ten provinces opting in to receive Government-Assisted Refugees⁸. For example, British Columbia settled approximately 10,000 Syrian refugees in late 2015, and created a \$1 million Refugee Readiness Fund designed to augment federal government efforts in aid of Syrian and other refugees. Half of the funds were earmarked for five regional refugee response teams formed to proactively plan for the settlement of refugees in their communities.⁹

Similarly, the Province of Ontario has settled approximately 13,000 Syrian refugees to date and invested \$8 million towards settlement infrastructure.

Leadership in Community Participation

Canadians are also active participants in informing the policies or strategies that affect them. For example, in developing Ontario's Immigration Strategy, feedback was sought from Chambers of Commerce and Industry to attract highly skilled immigrants, and international students to ensure an investment in Canada's social and economic capital.

Similarly, in Toronto, The Hon Michael Coteau¹⁰ held a community consultation to inform the establishment of an Anti-Racism Directorate for Ontario. Key discussions at this consultation focused on systemic racism (particularly Islamophobia which is considered the fastest growing hate in Canada), holding institutions accountable to practices that may be considered discriminatory, and data collection to create an evidence-base to inform the development of government programs, services and policies – *'data is key. No data. No problem. No action'* – The Hon Michael Coteau, Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services and Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism. A summary of the community consultation discussion is at Appendix B.

⁷ Professor of Law, Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia

⁸ <http://www.cic.gc.ca/ENGLISH/refugees/outside/resettle-gov.asp>

⁹ <http://metrovanrrt.ca/>

¹⁰ Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services and Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism

Afsoon Donna Houshidari, a Persian refugee to Canada and Counsel in the Advocate, Public Safety, Defence & Immigration Legal Issues Coordination Group, Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister Department of Justice Canada, spoke to the topic of identity, integration and xenophobia and the need for Governments to adequately support and develop policies that address threats to peoples' identity, which mirrored the sentiments of a consultation participant – *“stop thinking about identity but start talking about identities; we do not discuss nor support intersectionality among our community – which one do they [the Government] want people to be - black, gay, female - I am all of these things - these are people's identities”*.

Leadership in Place-based Initiatives

At the local level, the City of Vancouver developed a federally-funded Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP) which brings together community groups and organisations to support immigrants as they settle in Vancouver. This Citizenship and Immigration Canada funded program is designed to assist newcomers in integrating into city life. By supporting the sharing of community-based knowledge and local

strategic planning, improving accessibility to services, and creating an overall Vancouver Immigrant Settlement and Immigration Strategy – New Start Strategy, VIP helps newcomers on their path to becoming Vancouverites¹¹. One of the interesting aspects of the VIP is the Immigrant Settlers and Immigrant Employers Program for newcomers which is now in its sixth year.

VIP builds on the successful Welcoming Communities Initiative (2013/14), a City of Vancouver project that involved 27 key community service agencies and also links in with the City's Healthy City Strategy. This collaboration saw the development of innovative and effective strategies designed to increase understanding, awareness and communication in supporting the unique needs and experiences of Vancouver's new arrivals. VIP focuses on the following four areas¹²:

1. Enhancing Newcomers Access to Services and Programs
2. Strengthening Intercultural and Civic Engagement
3. Creating Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces
4. Having Governments and Public Institutions Address Newcomers Needs

Negative rhetoric around migration still exists within Canada with sentiments of refugees being 'queue jumpers' and 'funding drainers'. However, the Hon Laura Albanese, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, advised that negative messages are prevented from permeating the positive stories and benefits of migration, mainly through positive media messaging and political leadership. She further outlined that the champions promoting respect and leadership reinforce the message that Canada's identity is built on waves of migration through nation building which "makes our province stronger and ensures that multiculturalism is engrained in our values". She further outlined Canada's wide ranging approach to participation, including learning from one another, understanding difference and ensuring that community diversity is reflected in the government's Ministry.

In contrast, a discussion with Professor Bryan Turner¹³ brought to the forefront America's own settlement issues. He explained that Multiculturalism is a term rarely used in America, *“if you were to ask Americans what they think of multiculturalism, they would stare at you blankly. American society*

struggles with racism, not multiculturalism.” Eileen Shields-West, Chair, and Hans Hogrefe, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Refugees International further outlined that the US Government is selective of the number of migrants they allow into America, going so far as to choosing which countries they come from. However, the US expedited an intake of 10,000 Syrian refugees in the preceding 12 months in response to the refugee crisis.

The US presidential election has also changed the landscape of debate, where border protection issues and Islamophobia are more of a focus than in the past. What then has made American society successful, or at the very least, harmonious enough to live side-by-side with one another? As Professor Turner explains, America is not a homogenous society, but a diverse group of cultures and as long as they are economically viable, they will co-exist. A sentiment supported by Professor Patrick Imbert, University of Ottawa, who expressed the view that you cannot speak about multiculturalism without speaking about economics. Demographics is also very important in the debate about multiculturalism. In the late 1940s to late 70s America was successful, the

¹¹ <http://www.vancouverimmigrationpartnership.ca/about-vip/>

¹² <http://www.vancouverimmigrationpartnership.ca/about-vip/>

¹³ Director of the Graduate Center's Committee for the Study of Religion at The City University of New York

workforce was thriving, cars and land were cheap. In today's era, 85% of young men aged between 18-25 are not married – “there is a clear decline of the family as a basic societal concept” according to Professor Imbert. This example articulated a change in societal norms that coincides with a more diverse society generally.

Interestingly, Professor Turner expressed scepticism around the longer term success of Canada's settlement model, the only professional to do so of all meetings conducted on this visit. He outlined that Canada has a modest population and social conditions which favor a large intake of refugees. However, true citizenship to any country is based on nation states applying a human rights model to all aspects of citizenship – a sentiment supported by Professor Imbert when discussing Canada's democratic system based on human rights.

According to Professor Turner, only time will tell how successful the Canadian model of settlement has been considering the very present issues they have around black, Indigenous and LGBTQI rights.

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ALL LEVELS OF
GOVERNMENT,
ON BOTH SIDES
OF GOVERNMENT
TO COME AND
PARTICIPATE [IN
SUPPORT OF SYRIAN
REFUGEES], IT'S NOT A
POLITICAL STORY, IT'S
THE SUCCESS STORY
THAT UNITES

Laura Albanese,
Ontario Minister of Citizenship
and Immigration

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? WHERE TO FROM HERE

Political leadership

- ▶ The Victorian Government to lead ongoing discussions with federal, state and local government leaders on the importance of political leadership, positive narratives and resources around multiculturalism and settlement of new arrivals with particular focus on the Syrian and Iraqi cohort. Focus areas would include:
 - Putting family reunification at the heart of Australia's immigration policies
 - Developing positive narratives and rhetoric around immigration
 - Fostering the advantage diversity affords Australia both now and in the future
 - Harnessing the collective goodwill of the Australian community by promoting the Community Support Program through community outreach
 - Ensuring that the Australian Government is providing sustained investment in place-based settlement infrastructure to support a needs based and flexible support service.
- ▶ VMC's role as the lead agency responsible for steering Victoria's coordinated settlement response is supported
- ▶ Develop a long-term state-based settlement and welcoming strategy for migrants and refugees in Victoria.
- ▶ Ensure an evidence-based approach to government decision making to identify monitor and prevent systemic racism and discrimination when developing legislation, policies, programs and services.
- ▶ Facilitate discussions with local government on opportunities for refugee settlement and local government assistance and service provision for both newly arrived and settled refugees. This could include:
 - Collaboration or local corporate partnership funders
 - Co-contribution agreements by local agencies and businesses to support a state-based settlement and welcoming strategy.



2. CONNECT, COLLABORATE AND COORDINATE

Although Canada has a number of settlement agencies servicing the refugee community, each of the agencies look to collaborative partnerships to coordinate best settlement service delivery outcomes.

One example is Canada's Welcome House at Toronto Pearson International Airport which is an old airport wing converted into a welcome centre. New arrivals were greeted by multiple government agencies, provided with warm clothing, processed and provided with their identification numbers and short-term hotel accommodation, and then transferred to settlement agencies who facilitated longer term housing assistance.

Discussions with Minister Albanese captured the real sense of collaboration and togetherness by all service and community providers that support Syrian refugees. The Ontario Government established a coordination group consisting of Ministers and various service providers and stakeholders to oversee Ontario's Syrian refugee intake. The coordination group joined up with other government departments such as the Department of Health to streamline and improve service coordination.

The Secretariat that supported this coordination group collated data on the settlement processes of new arrivals, as previous settlement data was not captured and was largely anecdotal.

In addition, Ontario's settlement services connect in with services that support immigrant and refugee community networks, in particular health and long term

care services, primary school registrations, summer holiday programming for young people, and provision of university bridging programs for qualified and skilled refugees so that their accreditation can be recognised in Canada. In addition, university student groups held welcoming events for mature-aged new arrivals.

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA) in Vancouver has a similar governance structure to the VMC, as its role is to strengthen and coordinate member and community agencies who support immigrants and new arrivals¹⁴. Following the recent announcement on Canada's increased Syrian and Iraqi refugee intake, AMSSA arranged a two day planning meeting with provincial and territory representatives, settlement services, the United Nation's Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Resettlement Assistance Program providers, and private sponsorship providers to coordinate Vancouver's response. Participants undertook a community mapping and capacity exercise to ensure that communities within British Columbia could support new arrivals and fill gaps where required¹⁵.

MOSAIC is another key organisation that mirrors many of the values and vision of the VMC, particularly around advocacy of multicultural communities. A keynote address delivered by Professor Gillian Creese from the University of British Columbia, spoke to MOSAIC's success in leading social advocacy on behalf of migrant and refugee communities. This is due in large part to MOSAIC staying close to its grassroots as an advocacy body that employs members of diverse communities, and focuses on partnerships that lead to social change. MOSAIC's advocacy work focuses on intersectionality as no one group is homogenous. For example, a working group was established with partner organisations to address gender based issues in settlement programs.

Canada has placed great emphasis on including its First Nations people as part of its welcome strategy for newly arrived refugees known as First Peoples: A Guide for Newcomers. This provides new arrivals with the opportunity to learn about the rich and diverse history and experiences of Canada's First Peoples which is key to building understanding between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal communities¹⁶.

? WHERE TO FROM HERE

State-based initiatives

- ▶ As lead, VMC to provide oversight of Victoria's settlement response including connecting stakeholders, the collaboration of settlement providers and coordinating a settlement and welcoming strategy
- ▶ VMC to foster cooperative partnerships across federal, state, local government settlement agencies, and private and philanthropic partners to encourage wrap-around settlement service responsiveness to the specific needs of refugees.
- ▶ Ensure Australia's Indigenous peoples are at the forefront of Victoria's settlement response, including as part of a proposed settlement and welcoming strategy for migrants and refugees in Victoria. This could be achieved by also including indigenous teachings and cultural practices in all educational, language and citizenship ceremonies.
- ▶ Engage with the Australian Government's Department of Social Services to develop a one-stop online resource, similar to Canada's #WelcomeRefugees website (<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/>) that provides a centralised hub for new arrivals.
- ▶ Establish or expand existing settlement coordination committees to oversee Victoria's settlement response. Membership could include whole-of-government representatives, stakeholder, host community and private sector organisations.
- ▶ Establish a Ministerial level settlement oversight group to ensure the highest level of government action, coordination and strategic direction for Victoria's settlement planning. The settlement committee and a suite of community consultations with Syrian and Iraqi arrivals would inform this group as an evaluative mechanism.

¹⁴ <http://www.amssa.org/about/>

¹⁵ AMSSA is a member of several networks that engage with migrant and refugee services across Canada to share information, dialogue, and consult at both a national and regional level

¹⁶ <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/First-Peoples-A-Guide-for-Newcomers.pdf>

3. RIGHT PATHWAYS TO A NEW START

Settlement services and programs are widely available to support refugees and humanitarian entrants in Canada. Common to many of these services was a collaborative approach to service delivery through partnerships to ensure timely responsiveness, joined-up services and flexibility.



Nearing the end of 2015, the first of the Syrian arrivals to Canada were supported by Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) service providers. RAP providers facilitated the following:¹⁷

- ▶ loans for travel to Canada;
- ▶ assistance upon entering Canada;
- ▶ counselling and cultural orientation;
- ▶ information and orientation;
- ▶ referral to community resources;
- ▶ translation and interpretation;
- ▶ language training; and
- ▶ job-related services.

Immigrant Services

COSTI Immigrant Services in Toronto traditionally serviced 750 refugees a year but this increased to 2000 following the arrival of the Syrian refugees in 2015. In response to this client increase, COSTI up-scaled their capacity to support new arrivals through additional funding from Government, stakeholder partnerships, increased staffing and in many instances, acquisition of larger buildings to support its increased response activities. COSTI also provided temporary housing to 100 government-sponsored Syrian refugees in central hotels which are

in close proximity to hospitals, and other amenities, until permanent housing was able to be provided.

ISSofBC built a first of its kind Welcome Centre in British Columbia as a 'one-stop-shop' service hub providing housing and general support to refugees and immigrants in metropolitan Vancouver. The Welcome Centre is a 58,000 square foot facility that addresses the immediate needs of refugees, with or without legal status, and immigrants by providing the following:¹⁸

- ▶ 18 (up to 138 beds) housing units
- ▶ Primary health care clinic
- ▶ Multilingual trauma support and treatment centre
- ▶ Newcomer youth drop-in and resource space
- ▶ Child minding spaces, including outdoor playground and family area
- ▶ Eight dedicated English language classrooms
- ▶ Multilingual settlement support staff including settlement, employment and volunteer services
- ▶ Multiple meeting spaces
- ▶ ISSofBC corporate service offices

Housing

As the Syrian cohort was often comprised of larger family sizes (some 13 – 14 people), appropriate childcare and housing were amongst the biggest challenges. In Toronto, municipalities were involved in sourcing appropriate housing and landlords that were willing to support new arrivals. The housing market in Canada is largely inaccessible for many Canadians and therefore a national strategy that focuses on everyone, not just new arrivals, but all refugees or low-income earners, single mothers, First Nations people, and the older population is required.

Language Services

The Canadian Government, in cooperation with local school boards, community colleges, immigrant and community organisations, offer French and English language training across Canada through Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC).¹⁹ Provincially, any accredited group or school board can teach English as a Second Language (ESL). There are large waiting lists for access to LINC language services, so practical solutions such as this one can be mobilised quickly to provide the necessary services. For example, a group of nine individuals in Toronto held a 12 week

¹⁷ <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/resettle-providers.asp>

¹⁸ <https://issbc.org/welcomecentre/>

¹⁹ http://www.eslincanada.com/english/linc_programs.php

intensive language training class within a corporate environment that enabled new arrivals to expand their networks.

Legal Services

Professor Jennifer Bond²⁰ spearheaded an innovative project called the “Refugee Hub” and its three flagship initiatives:

1. The University of Ottawa’s Refugee Assistance Project (UORAP), a \$1.5 million initiative that identifies and mitigates justice deficits in Canada’s refugee system;
2. The Refugee Law Research Team (RLRT), which engages in appellate-level public interest litigation; and
3. The Refugee Sponsorship Support Program (SSP), a national project that mobilises sponsorship experts, pro-bono lawyers, law students, and community organisations to offer direct support to Canadians seeking to sponsor refugees.

Over 3,000 SSP pro bono lawyers across 11 cities have been trained to date (late 2016) to provide support to sponsorship groups across Canada.

Other notable work by Professor Bond include research projects that explore:

- ▶ engagement models involving private actors in international refugee resettlement;
- ▶ the use of criminal law to deny refugee protection;
- ▶ access to justice issues relating to the use of evidence in the refugee status determination processes;
- ▶ the constitutional implications of underfunding Canada’s criminal legal aid system;
- ▶ the limitations of duress as a defence in both refugee proceedings and international criminal law;
- ▶ the link between gender and the responsibility to protect; and
- ▶ the failure of a mechanism designed to ensure legislative compliance with Canada’s human rights instruments.²¹

Professor Bond discussed that no matter how well intentioned governments are with their policies, if there is limited funding and infrastructure investment to upscale capacity, then any system will struggle

to cope with a large influx of cases - as was seen during the Syrian resettlement process. One potential way to counter this, is through public relations campaigns and media engagement, partnerships with invested stakeholders such as the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers, and mobilisation of firms and infrastructure. This is a sentiment shared by almost all stakeholders engaged with on this visit.

Employment

ISSofBC leverage the partnerships built over 20 years to support their coordinated response to the Syrian settlement initiative. Chris Friesen or “Mr Syria”²² as he’s referred to in Canada, outlined that their priority lies in “*providing services that weren’t only about survival, but longer term integration*”. For example, ISSofBC partnered with credit unions to provide financial literacy support to new arrivals and through other partnerships, including with the private sector, procured needs-based employment placements, access to local labor markets, and other mentoring based employment opportunities. Another great example of collaborative partnerships exists between ISSofBC and Microsoft Corporation

regarding the inclusion of Syrian refugees in a talent pool to fill labor market shortages.

Professor Bond also acknowledged the overwhelming support from the corporate sector during the Syrian intake – “*it was a great example of the private sector taking the initiative and engaging in a space they would traditionally not have*”. While some challenges were experienced, particularly around language barriers, settlement service providers and corporate sponsors ensured that adequate language services and supports were available.

Professor Bond’s focus was to ensure that mainstream services were able to support and engage with new arrivals. Patricia Woroch²³ emphasized that a holistic, connected settlement system “*requires stakeholder commitment, looking outside the box and creating new strategic alliances that support new arrivals. We need to educate employers to the benefits of taking on migrants but at the same time, we require more comprehensive assessments from government of new arrivals that lead to better aligned settlement programs and services – information, data, skills set etc.*” These sentiments were also supported by

²⁰ Co-founder and Director, Refugee Hub, University of Ottawa

²¹ <https://llmphd.uottawa.ca/en/about/faculty/bond-jennifer>

²² Executive Director, ISSofBC

²³ CEO, ISSofBC

? WHERE TO FROM HERE

Resourcing Effective Settlement

Promote integrated service pathways and joined-up collaborative approaches with regards to partnerships and coordination of settlement services to meet refugee and host community needs. This could be achieved by:

- ▶ Involving the Syrian cohort in the planning, management and delivery of appropriate programs
- ▶ Encouraging information sharing for better local area coordination, including sharing of resources (for example, bilingual workers).
- ▶ All levels of government and multiple sectors to work together to improve the settlement experiences of new arrivals by utilising 'The Australian Standard for Welcoming Cities'²⁴ in Victoria.

COSTI and Professor Imbert who pointed out that many immigrants establish successful companies (e.g. Blackberry) as they are often entrepreneurial and ambitious, adding to a country's economic and social benefits.

Private Sponsorship

Canada's longstanding private sponsorship program is often recognised for its unique approach to refugee resettlement. Canadians have responded to the current Syrian displacement crisis with extraordinary generosity:

"In the context of this major global refugee crisis, individuals, groups and lawyers across Canada are mobilising to help. There is an amazing amount of energy, and people are reaching out in a way that has not been seen in decades. There are a large number of individuals who are prepared and able to sponsor Syrian refugees, but these groups require assistance in navigating the process... private sponsorship gave us the opportunity to seek assistance from all levels of government and enabled citizens to lead this process; government then followed."

Professor Jennifer Bond, University of Ottawa.

Professor Bond's observations of Australia's settlement model are that private sponsorship should be modelled on Australia's strengths. Features of the Australian model prevent it from being able to duplicate the Canadian model - "the incentive focus is very different -

the symbolism is very different, the Australian model is missing all the attributes that will make a [private sponsorship] program successful. The main thing is that it doesn't supplement the main government's intake. If you feel like you are picking up a government bill, the messaging is quite different". Professor Bond is leading the reporting around economic benefits of immigration which she states will provide an opportunity to have a discussion with opponents of immigration as they consider the outcomes of the report.

²⁴ See <https://welcomingcities.org.au/>

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HER CONCERN WAS NOT ABOUT WEARING THE HIJAB, OR WHETHER HER KIDS COULD EAT HALAL MEAT BUT RATHER, NOT BEING ABLE TO WALK TO THE LIBRARY

No Mosque, No Refugees: Some Reflections on Syrian Refugees and the Construction of Religion in Canada, Lori G. Beaman, Jennifer A. Selby, and Amélie Barras

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4. IDENTITY POLITICS AND MEDIA NARRATIVES

Media is a major determinant of national discourse. Our perceptions are influenced by the media which either activates people's convictions or sways them to form new ones. Thus, those who control the media have the capacity to shift public opinion and attitudes that may more broadly, impact the cohesiveness of a society.

We live in a society where those who can capitalize on and manipulate information are a small but powerful group. To be competitive and creative in this environment, the ability to effectively transmit self-images in multiple areas of information reception is crucial. As Canada seeks to live within a global framework, many francophones find themselves in an enviable position, thanks to their ability to communicate fluently in French and English, two global languages. In an information society poised for the future, identity questions are of prime relevance²⁵.

A discussion with Professor Lori Beaman²⁶ raised an interesting notion around interfaith dialogue pushing people to identity corners. Recently, Professor Beaman led research on print news media stories to capture a sense of the way in which Syrian refugees were being perceived by the Canadian public.²⁷ Our discussions with Professor Beaman, coupled with her research articulated how media stories can, to some extent, reflect community and public discourse. There are inherent limitations in relying on media sources as 'fact', particularly in that journalists often craft stories and in so doing may be selective in their reporting. Nonetheless, the circulation of these stories creates a narrative of influence that dominates the construction of who Syrian refugees are.²⁸

As Canadians mobilised to receive refugees, there was a significant amount of media attention around potential settlement locations and which community would be best placed to receive them. As discussed with Professor Patrick Imbert, the way a city is built can help migrants integrate and plays a significant role in how they communicate with each other and the wider

community. Particularly, the existence of a mosque was seen as a prerequisite for a community's ability to host Syrian refugees. Preoccupation with the mosque was coupled with undercurrents of public anxiety about integration and the interplay of religious difference. However, the transformative effect of the refugees was premised on their 'Muslim-ness', rather than, for example, allowing the community an opportunity to work together or even simply to be regarded as an addition to the population.

Common misconceptions often place refugees into a particular faith or identity corner. Often refugees are labelled as Muslims, which is not representative of the diversity within the Muslim culture, nor the Muslim faith. In contrast, Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton²⁹ discusses the coming together of church leaders from both orthodox and evangelical groups to support the settlement of Syrian refugees especially in smaller communities in Ottawa. She discussed the fragility of interfaith conversations but similar to Professor Beaman, pressed on the importance of interfaith and cultural dialogue.

Influence, as it circulates here becomes a condition of belonging, and highlights a particular way of being Muslim that is acceptable - it demarcates religious identity as primary when it may not have been for refugees in their previous lives. Professor Beaman relayed an example of a CBC Radio-Canada interview with two married physicians of Syrian origin—Manar Alfarra and Ghaftan Shaaban—in a Montreal suburb, and how while religion played a role in their lives in Syria, especially when it came to family law, for this family of four, it was not at the center of their professional or social interactions or identities before the war - *“Syrians are never Muslims or Christians only and religious affiliation is not an all-encompassing aspect of a person's social being. Class background, religion or place of origin, profession, clan or kin group and political affiliation are equally important in how Syrians represent themselves and in how they classify others.”*³⁰

Another finding of Professor Beaman's media analysis was the notion of labelling Syrian Muslim refugees as 'strangers'. This public discourse of “the stranger”

²⁵ <https://arts.uottawa.ca/lettres/personnes/imberty-patrick>

²⁶ from University of Ottawa

²⁷ No Mosque, No Refugees: Some Reflections on Syrian Refugees and the Construction of Religion in Canada. Lori G. Beaman, Jennifer A. Selby, and Amélie Barras

²⁸ No Mosque, No Refugees: Some Reflections on Syrian Refugees and the Construction of Religion in Canada. Lori G. Beaman, Jennifer A. Selby, and Amélie Barras

²⁹ Canada Council of Churches (CCC)

³⁰ No Mosque, No Refugees: Some Reflections on Syrian Refugees and the Construction of Religion in Canada. Lori G. Beaman, Jennifer A. Selby, and Amélie Barras

? WHERE TO FROM HERE

Media Representation

Encourage greater media engagement in informing public and community discourse on multiculturalism. This could be achieved by:

- ▶ Work with media and communications industry to develop strategies to challenge stereotypes and negative media coverage of migrants and refugees
- ▶ Partner with media experts to promote positive representation of new arrivals
- ▶ Provide opportunities for greater participation of migrants and refugees to have a voice through various mainstream media platforms



is intended to counter ignorance or fear in a well-meaning retort. However, by perpetuating a framework in which refugees are imagined as strangers, or worse, temporary visitors, the difference and foreignness of refugees is highlighted. Shared values and goals, such as a commitment to peace, a hopeful future for their children, or economic security are rarely mentioned.

Professor Beaman also explained how refugees might have numerous similar non-religious concerns post-migration. Shifting and widening the public imagery around Syrian refugees is thus essential. Doing so not only carries the possibility of impacting the lives of refugees and how they live in their host country, but it might also change the conversation from a focus on strangeness and religious difference, to one where the emphasis is on shared values and goals, such as economic security, positive contributions to society, educational opportunities, and access to healthcare and other services.

This notion similarly articulated by ISSofBC when discussing the social stability of Canada and leveraging the reach of media. Their media engagement focused on providing narratives that operationalised the practical aspects of the resettlement process, for example the amount that each refugee received in comparison to low income earners rather than a discussion on religion or difference. Media was also used as a mobilising tool for volunteers which led to a spike of volunteerism across Canada. To prevent negative discourse in Ontario, anti-hate and anti-Islamophobia campaigns

were conducted across the province, via the media, to educate and dispel myths about Syrian refugees. Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister McCallum set the tone with proactive positive media messaging by reporting on the resettlement of Syrian refugees, rather than the refugee crisis itself.

Media for social change was an interesting concept discussed with Search for Common Ground based in Washington DC. In Palestine, a show titled *The President* consists of a panel of politicians and prominent Palestinians who talk about the policies they would focus on if they were President. The ideas generated resonated with many Palestinians because they were included in the dialogue to help frame the political and policy initiatives developed by the Palestinian Government. Any dialogue or media commentary should be inclusive of real life characters as it resonates with communities and is a reflection of the individual.

Government strategic communications is often a one-way distribution, instead of providing a platform for active engagement and a voice for communities.

5. A HOME FOR EVERYONE – BUILDING WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

Community and refugee readiness was a theme that emerged from many of the meetings with service providers. Mainly, that preparing new arrivals prior to their migration, and the extent of community welcoming directly correlated with good settlement experiences.

It was over a traditional Persian meal in an apartment in Ottawa, that Afsoon Donna Houshidari, shared her migration story as a Persian refugee to Canada in the 1980s. Her most vivid memories were of how welcoming her new community was to her and her family, and how this was possible due to positive immigration policies and community readiness to support new arrivals – *“the welcoming experience starts with a community well before new arrivals arrive”*.

As discussed in the previous chapter, negative media narratives influence common misconceptions about refugees and their identities. Ms Houshidari discussed the importance of storytelling to invoke personal and owned imagery, created through the storyteller, to reflect one’s own settlement experience. It is through storytelling that individuals find they have the power to transcend boundaries – *“people resonate and listen when they’re*

hearing a story; there is a difference between telling and storytelling”.

Through her advocacy and professional roles, Ms Houshidari speaks of her experience seeking refugee status in Canada and how she translates that to everyday Canadians – *“when you tell the story, you have to be very careful – you have to be mindful of the bigotry of low expectations... people only see you in that fixed period of time. When people come here we have to be careful not to put everyone in the same boat – be careful not to stereotype and create low expectations of a group of people and altruism. For this to be sustainable it can’t end with altruism”*.

One of the Canadian Government’s key learnings from the first 12 months of the Syrian-intake was the importance of preparing communities to welcome refugees. Due to the positive narratives and mobilisation request of all Canadians from Prime Minister Trudeau, the Government was able to set up “subcontracting” communities to support Syrian arrivals. This enabled local provinces to invest money into refugee readiness training, establish refugee hubs that provided capacity building resources to settlement providers and garnered an overwhelming response of volunteerism and donations of furniture, money, food and clothing.

Linking in with established communities is the key driver for access and support services. In Toronto for example, established Syrian communities would assist newly arrived refugees to find housing, provided Syrian cuisine to hosting accommodation centers, created a Whatsapp group that connected the community with service providers seeking assistance or goods, collected non-perishable items for donation, organised sporting and cultural activities and more broadly, connected new arrivals with other established communities in Canada to build their support networks. It also provided a platform for effectively mobilizing community goodwill.

Another key learning focused on preparing humanitarian entrants prior to their settlement to Canada and as a result, Canada now offers free online and in-person services for new arrivals. These services are free of charge by most settlement service providers and are offered while the applicant is still in their country of origin and includes information on:

- ▶ orientation to life in Canada,
- ▶ finding employment, and
- ▶ accessing other free settlement services upon arriving to Canada³¹.

In addition, managing expectations was another key learning, as many Syrian arrivals

“ INTEGRATION IS AN ONGOING ADVENTURE ”

Afsoon Donna Houshidari, Counsel | Advocate

presumed they would find employment immediately upon arrival. The first wave of arrivals were low-skilled and ranged significantly in terms of family sizes. The need to provide has to be balanced against work place culture and retention of arrivals once placed into employment. A meeting with MOSAIC revealed that for many new arrivals to Canada, the settlement experience starts positively, but may lead to depression once the reality of life sets in in a new country and having to negotiate a new way of life.

The Mayor of New York established the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA)³² to promote programs and policies that ensure the inclusion and participation of immigrant New Yorkers³³. MOIA has created a set of Blueprints for Immigrant Integration, a resource for local governments and organisations to foster economic, civic and cultural vibrancy by promoting the well-being and integration of immigrants.

Commissioner Nisha Agarwal from MOIA led the development and implementation of IDNYC, the country’s largest municipal identification program, ensuring that all New Yorkers have access to identity documents (ID). MOIA’s objective was to make IDNYC’s implementation as effective and inclusive as possible. IDNYC benefits every New York City community, including

³¹ <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/before-services.asp>

³² http://www.nyc.gov/html/records/pdf/section%201133_citycharter.pdf

³³ <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/programs/social-economic.page>

? WHERE TO FROM HERE

Getting Involved

- ▶ Launch a mainstream campaign to encourage established communities in Victoria to share information and help migrants and refugees learn more about local services.
- ▶ Promote intercultural and civic engagement by building local councils' capacity to reach out and connect people of diverse backgrounds. Approaches may include volunteerism opportunities.
- ▶ Provide new arrivals with opportunities to tell their story and be heard on mainstream platforms.

Measure to welcome new refugees

- ▶ Encourage local governments to utilise the Australian Intercultural Standards and Index³⁸ for self-assessment and seamless benchmarking of regional, national and international local governments of similar size and cultural diversity.
- ▶ Determine the scope and relevance of adopting or reviewing existing identification programs in Australia/ Victoria that is inclusive of all communities, particularly new arrivals to access to a range of public services and discounted rates to participate.

the most vulnerable communities, such as undocumented immigrants, the homeless, youth, the elderly, formerly incarcerated individuals and others who have difficulty obtaining a government-issued ID. As of September 2016, one million people had signed up for a card with 75% confirming that the ID card contributed to their sense of belonging.

Although many humanitarian entrants to Canada are issued with identification cards, there are many undocumented arrivals with limited or no forms of identification, mainly due to documents being lost during displacement or war. This is also prevalent in Australia as advised by many migrant youth support organisations. A program such as IDNYC enables access to justice and legal support services, health services, banking and credit union services, a range of sports, arts, culture and entertainment benefits, educational classes, libraries and U.S. Veteran Designation.

The positive uptake of the IDNYC was due in part to partnerships formed with corporate, faith and community organisations and grassroots engagement at schools and community events. In

addition, a communications and media campaign in partnership with ethnic media targeted to all residents of NYC, ensured the success of the initiative and support from all sections of the business and government sectors.

Additional projects and resources at the local level of the City of Vancouver which are worth noting are:

- ▶ *The Healthy City Strategy* which focuses not only on physical health or treatment in the health care system but about the social determinants that shape well-being in a broader sense. The three focus areas include healthy people, healthy communities and healthy environments. The Strategy is intended to engage all residents and all sectors of the community in taking action to build toward a "Healthy City for All"³⁴.
- ▶ *The Engaged City Strategy* which seeks to increase neighbourhood engagement, and improve upon the many ways the Vancouver City connects with Vancouver residents. Priority areas include enhancing how the City engages with citizens, particularly immigrants and youth,

improving the way the City consults with citizens on policy, increasing voter turnout, and enabling community connections at a neighbourhood level³⁵.

- ▶ *The Belonging Project* which introduces stories, struggles and strategies of six newly settled Vancouverites in fostering their sense of belonging, through a series of videos³⁶.
- ▶ Developed in response to the varied needs of newcomers arriving in Vancouver, *Growing Roots: A Newcomer's Guide to Vancouver* is a directory of available programs and services. An initiative of the Welcoming Communities Project, the guide is a valuable resource for improving immigrant settlement and integration; and
- ▶ *The Dialogues Project* between First Nations, Urban Aboriginal, and Immigrant Communities in Vancouver. The goal of the project is to build increased understanding and strengthened relations between Aboriginal and immigrant/non-Aboriginal communities³⁷.

34 <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/healthy-city-strategy-background.aspx>

35 <http://vancouver.ca/your-government/engaged-city-task-force.aspx>

36 <http://www.belongingproject.com/about-the-project.html>

37 <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/dialogues-project.aspx>

38 <http://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/-/australia-s-first-intercultural-standards-and-index>

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WHEN WE BROUGHT MEMBERS OF THE YEMENITE COMMUNITY TOGETHER, YOU COULD SEE AN IMMEDIATE BREAKDOWN OF BARRIERS THAT ORDINARILY WOULD HAVE BEEN PRESENT

Paul Jeffries, Director, Community Development, New York City Football Club

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6. SOCIAL INCLUSION

The power of sports, arts and culture programs to provide avenues for participation cannot be underestimated.

A holistic settlement framework that focuses on opportunities and programs to engage new arrivals and encourages social inclusion of communities will ultimately provide for good settlement outcomes.

Building Resilience Through the Arts

Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) is one of three main public partners in the Arts in Canada. Through its grants program, CCA works with a range of arts providers to leverage their own outreach, engage through brand recognition, and offer avenues for participation in city and regional areas. Engaging communities through the arts encourages civic participation, provides a platform for education and dispelling of negative narratives and collaborations across sectors that support communities.

CCA in partnership with Life Insurance Company Sunlife Financial Inc. and government organisations provides newly arrived refugees access to programs in all arts disciplines in a pilot which is the first of its kind in Canada.

Aime Dontigny, Director of Music and Programs at CCA said ‘the initiative started after I had a conversation with one of

our directors in the corridor. This would involve our corporate partner Sunlife doing philanthropy on social issues, which was a very big step outside the box for them. We asked would that be possible? We determined the private sector was in the right place at the right time looking to mobilize the goodwill from the Syrian Refugee Crisis and suddenly we were on’.

The program involved many organisations that covered the entire spectrum of Arts. It was either re-purposing existing programs with a youth focus for example, or empowering Syrian immigrants to blog about their experience through funding a media organization.

Mr Dontigny said ‘we couldn’t be completely prescriptive with how the program rolled out. We didn’t know what it looked like. We wanted to demonstrate the value of arts/ culture supporting the societal value of living together. Arts has a benefic aspect for communities’.

Art for Refugees in Transition (A.R.T) was established to help rebuild individual and community identity for refugees worldwide with programs that engage children and adults in visual, performing and creative arts drawn from their own indigenous cultures.

Through seed funding from Columbia University and partnerships with faith groups and NGOs that work with refugee

communities, A.R.T has enabled elders to teach young people cultural traditions, provide materials to facilitate cultural learnings and instilled a sense of identity, belonging and personal development amongst young people. Sara Green, A.R.T Founder and Executive Director said “the value of arts and culture is so often forgotten in the implementation of aid relief in humanitarian refugee re-settlement. This builds identity and traditions, a context from which to grow. Nobody seems to see the value. But these traditions are the basis for our identity. This is what makes you, you”.

The A.R.T model also ensures longevity and knowledge transfer of teachings within communities through self-sustaining curricular and training programs, utilizing a bottom up programming model to empower refugees to empower themselves.

The A.R.T program was first piloted in Oman, Jordan with a group of Syrian refugees in partnership with a Syrian NGO that provided education for women and children. *“It was the first time in a very long time that many of the participants were able to laugh and dance, a normal cultural tradition in the Syrian culture”* – Sara Green, A.R.T Founder and Executive Director.

A program such as this A.R.T addresses both the generational disconnect between young people and leaders in their communities

and the ability for young people to express themselves through the arts. It also provides tools to help refugee communities rebuild their communities and cope with the trauma, terror and dislocation of war and natural disaster.

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) works with all levels of society to build sustainable peace through dialogue, media and community. The group works with artists, children and youth, media professionals, military and police, political leaders, religious leaders and women on issues around conflict sensitivity, fair and responsible media, gender equality, interfaith cooperation, refuge and internal displacement issues and violent extremism. SFCG believes that the key to mitigating tensions is helping refugees become active citizens to positively contribute to the host community, and build intercultural relations.

SFCG recognizes the role of arts and culture in peacebuilding and the need to engage such approaches. SFCG engages the arts and culture in the vast majority of its programs and seeks to strengthen the community’s capacity to successfully advocate, implement, and evaluate a range of approaches at the nexus of peacebuilding.⁹⁹

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiatives are met with suspicion by minority communities and by nature are reactive



policies targeted at disengaged youth. In addition, many CVE organisations do not have long standing connections both with and within the communities they are trying to serve. SFCG when embarking on new initiatives around social cohesion (to prevent extremist and disengaged behaviours), use an investigative approach to focus on positive narratives and assessment teams drawn from the target stakeholder groups who have long standing relationships with communities. SFCG seeks community input from stakeholders they trust and from people within their communities that are making positive change. A sentiment supported by Quintan Wiktorowicz⁴⁰ who explained that surrounding yourself with people who provide different aspects and experiences often leads to novel solutions to fix problems that may exist.

Shamil Idriss⁴¹ also outlined the importance of listening to youth in any program response - *"Marilyn Manson was once asked when interviewed, what he would tell the two young men from Columbine the morning of their killing spree, his response - 'I would say nothing. I would just listen. That's what no one else did.'" - The more programs out there that*

⁴⁰ Co-founder and Managing Partner of Affinis Labs in Washington DC

⁴¹ President and CEO of SFCG

“
KIDS LOVE TO PLAY SOCCER. SOCCER IS INCLUSIVE OF ALL CULTURES AND GENDERS AND IS MORE SUBURBAN, IT'S NEVER BEEN AN INNER CITY SPORT TILL NOW
 ”

Paul Jeffries,
 Director, Community Development,
 New York City Football Club

listen to youth are on the right track to addressing disengagement, extremism and youth related crime.”

SFCG has created virtual exchanges that connect young people for two hours a week for eight weeks with American young people from the Muslim faith. The groups talk about what interest youth, for example, the role of women, religion and politics, Sharia Law etc. Young people feel respected and treated equally when they engage in opportunities to voice their opinions and talk about what interests them. Similarly, Mr Wiktorowicz ran a Hackathon program in Jordan to dispel negative sentiments of refugees by involving organisations from five different cities to focus on social entrepreneurship with Syrian refugees and Jordanians.

Mr Idriss pointed out that social cohesion initiatives should focus on the “hero journey”, which focuses on strengthening communities to enhance their resilience and encourage harmonious contributions to society. Achieving institutional buy in and change social norms takes time – “if you ask three people what they’re doing – one will

say breaking rocks, the other will say building a wall and the other will say building a cathedral - they’re all doing the same thing but the vision of what they’re trying to achieve is telling”.

Building Resilience through Sport

City in the Community (CITC) was launched in New York City in 2010 in partnership with Manchester City Football Club and the United Arab Emirates Embassy in the USA, with the creation of a rooftop soccer pitch built on East Harlem’s Lexington Academy. The first-of-its kind synthetic grass pitch has provided hundreds of young people a safe place to play soccer⁴². Following the launch of New York City Football Club (NYCFC) in 2013, CITC has served a further 30,000 young people across the five boroughs of New York, using the power of soccer to promote health, education and leadership development and create safe community spaces⁴³. In addition, the CITC program employs social workers, tutors and youth advocates to support young people in other areas of their development. Young people are also able to access the NYCFC offices to complete homework

or use as a safe leisure space. Through the creation of key strategic partnerships with public and private organisations and other community based organisations, 60% of all the young people engaged in CITC’s programs are on track to graduate from high school.

The next phase of the program, in partnership with NYCFC focuses on social enterprise programs led by the community to promote self-sufficiency and resilience, provide employment pathways and build safe places for young people. In addition, the New York City soccer initiative will seek to build 50 pitches in five years by converting parks to soccer pitches in high priority neighborhoods with low socio-economic outcomes, and providing place based resources and mentorships. This program has been made possible through public and private partners such as the New York Mayor’s office, Adidas, US Soccer Foundation and the Department of Education.

? WHERE TO FROM HERE

Connected Communities

- ▶ Develop community-based partnerships to provide stronger linkages and avenues for sports, arts and cultural programs for new arrivals to support their short and long-term settlement needs.
- ▶ Promote intercultural understanding and greater social participation through inclusive community events. Build on Resilient Melbourne Strategy to invite and promote migrant and refugee group participation.



42 <http://www.nycfc.com/community/new-york>
 43 <http://www.nycfc.com/community/new-york>

? WHERE TO FROM HERE

Measuring settlement outcomes

- ▶ Convene a suite of community consultations with newly arrived Syrian and Iraqi community groups, particularly young people to gain insight into their settlement experience, challenges and successes, as well as feedback and improvements to better support future groups of arrivals in their first year in Victoria.
- ▶ Convene a meeting of community leaders, private and settlement sectors to discuss the community consultation findings and develop recommendations on Victoria's settlement and welcoming strategy.

Multiyear planning and evaluation

- ▶ Ensure accountability through evaluation and measuring progress against Victoria's Settlement and Welcoming Strategy around the settlement and integration of new arrivals in Victoria. This includes a collaborative approach to data and information sharing with relevant agencies and all tiers of government. Conversations - Canada & USA

7. MEASURING OUTCOMES

Measuring the effectiveness of Victoria's settlement system will be key to ensuring that programs are designed so that all new arrivals to Victoria experience long-term positive settlement outcomes.

ISSofBC in partnership with The Fresh Voices Initiative of Vancouver Foundation hosted a Syrian Refugee Youth Consultation on 17 September 2016, at the ISSofBC Welcome Centre. Close to 60 Syrian young people within their first year of residing in Canada were brought together to share their thoughts, hopes, aspirations and settlement experiences. Their input informed a series of recommendations on improving settlement experiences which were later published in a report and presented to a Community Stakeholder Forum held on 6 October 2016 with representatives from private and public institutions. Participants at the Forum further discussed the needs, potential solutions and best practices in addressing each of the recommendations presented⁴⁴.

In addition, with the unprecedented arrival of Syrian Government Assisted

Refugees to British Columbia, ISSofBC took the opportunity to mark their first year in Canada by systematically probing some of their early settlement experiences and outcomes. This process was conducted through two separate consultation initiatives, one focused on young people (as outlined above), the other a survey of adult head of households⁴⁵. Their report explores the findings of both consultations, identifies key themes, and provides recommendations intended to better facilitate the ongoing settlement and integration of refugees in British Columbia, and Canada more broadly.

In each of the consultation initiatives, the key areas of focus included English language and education/training, employment, housing, health and family well-being and family reunification with the primary aim of:

- ▶ assessing initial settlement outcomes;
- ▶ documenting and better understanding issues facing newly arrived Syrians; and
- ▶ enabling Syrians to identify issues of concern to themselves.

Key findings from each report correlated with many of the lessons discussed with stakeholders on this trip, summarised below:

- ▶ "The first 'job' for any new arrival is learning English" as well as obtain further education and training in order to facilitate the integration process – many of the new arrivals had no or beginner level English so the provision of Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) was very important to their short and long term settlement outcomes.
- ▶ Securing employment and income security were important for positive settlement outcomes and the overall independence of arrivals to Canada. Manufacturing, construction, trades and food, retail and hospitality are the main labour market industries where Syrian arrivals found employment.
- ▶ High rental costs, small homes inadequate to cater for large Syrian families and dirty/old housing facilities were some of the negative feedback received on the housing provided for Government Assisted Refugees.

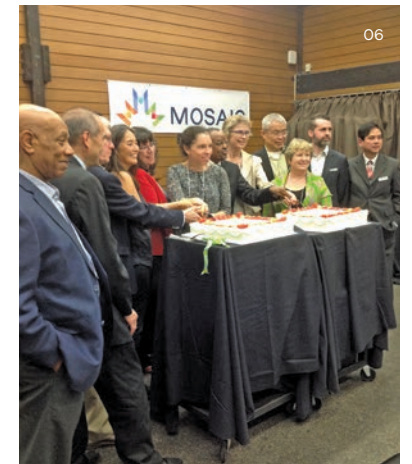
⁴⁴ <http://issbc.org/whoweare/>

⁴⁵ <http://issbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Syrian-Refugee-Operation-to-British-Columbia.pdf>

- ▶ Overall health and family reunification and concern for family members abroad were the main issues affecting overall integration and the mental health of new arrivals – *“integration in Canada takes place in the context of ongoing concerns about family abroad. Continued separation and – in some cases – need for assistance and support as clearly identified by many respondents”*⁴⁶.
- ▶ Ensuring long-term settlement support post the first 12 months of settlement when government funding and assistance ends.
- ▶ In addition to the consultation initiatives discussed above, ISSofBC will be undertaking a five year national longitudinal research project tracking 450 new arrivals over a 5 year period in British Columbia, on settlement of Syrian arrivals with the key focus of measuring settlement and health outcomes and defining success.

⁴⁶ <http://issbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Syrian-Refugee-Operation-to-British-Columbia.pdf>





PHOTOGRAPHS VANCOUVER

01 AMSSA Mission Statement, AMSSA Annual General Meeting, Vancouver

02 Meeting with Mr Baldwin Wong, Lead Multicultural Social Planner, City of Vancouver

03—06 MOSAIC Annual General Meeting, Vancouver

07—12 ISSofBC Welcome Centre, Vancouver

13 Patricia Woroch, CEO & Chris Friesen "Mr Syria", Director, ISSofBC, Vancouver





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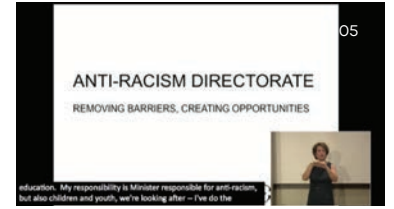
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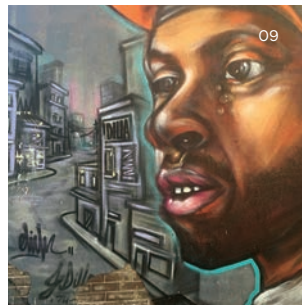
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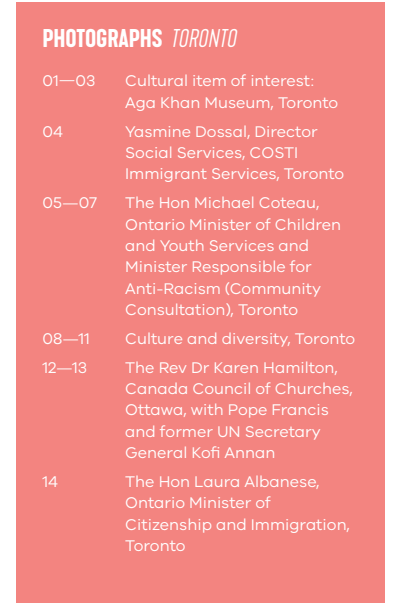
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PHOTOGRAPHS TORONTO

- 01—03 Cultural item of interest: Aga Khan Museum, Toronto
- 04 Yasmine Dossal, Director Social Services, COSTI Immigrant Services, Toronto
- 05—07 The Hon Michael Coteau, Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services and Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism (Community Consultation), Toronto
- 08—11 Culture and diversity, Toronto
- 12—13 The Rev Dr Karen Hamilton, Canada Council of Churches, Ottawa, with Pope Francis and former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan
- 14 The Hon Laura Albanese, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Toronto



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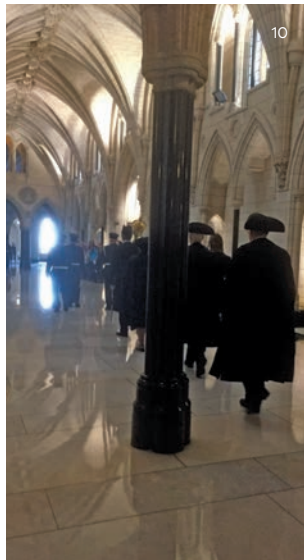
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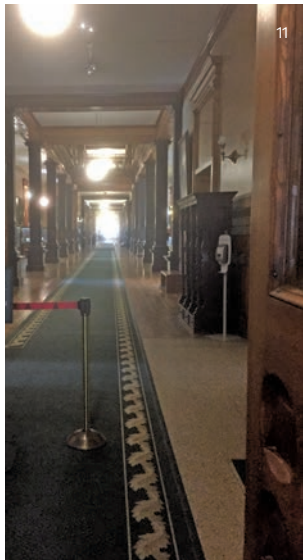
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PHOTOGRAPHS OTTAWA

01	Canada Council for the Arts
02—06	Traditional Persian dinner with Afsoon Donna Houshidari, Ottawa
07—12	Parliament of Canada, Parliament Hill, Ottawa, Ontario.
13	University of Ottawa, Ottawa

PHOTOGRAPHS WASHINGTON DC

- 01—07 Irreecha Ceremony (Thanksgiving Festival), Oromo Community, Washington
- 08 Eileen Shields-West, Chair, & Hans Hogrefe, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Refugees International, Washington
- 09 Shamil Idriss, CEO, Search for Common Ground (SCG), Washington





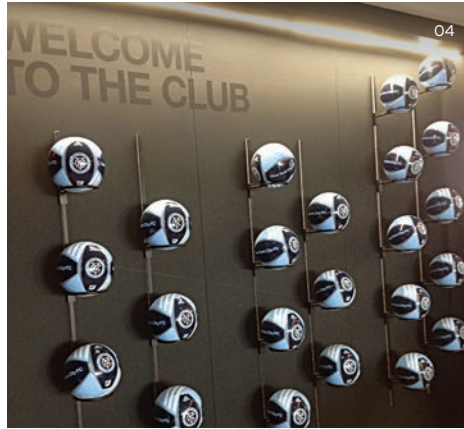
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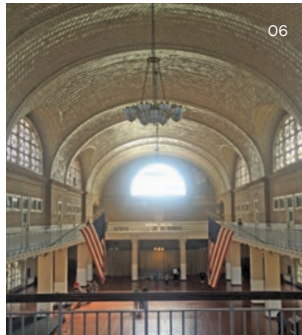
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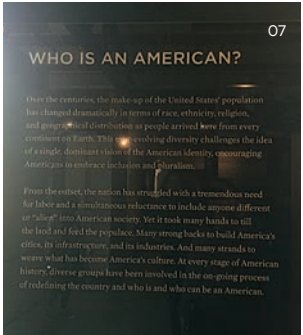
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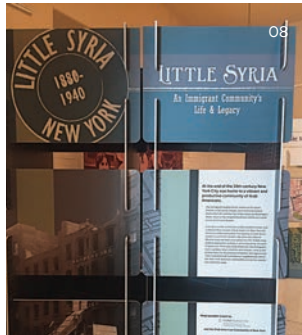
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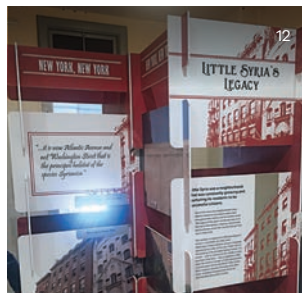
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PHOTOGRAPHS NEW YORK

- 01 Paul Jeffries, Director, Community Development, New York City Football Club, New York
- 02—04 New York City Football Club, New York
- 05—12 Ellis Island, New York, USA
- 13 Prof Bryan Turner, Director of the Graduate Centre's Committee for the Study of Religion, The City University of New York, New York

CONVERSATIONS (CANADA & USA)



WHO: Sabrina Ziegler,
Settlement Coordinator, Affiliation of
Multicultural Societies and Service
Agencies of BC (AMSSA), Vancouver

WHY: An umbrella organisation that offers capacity building, knowledge, and information services to support community agencies who work in the settlement, integration and diversity and inclusion sectors. Through cross-sector collaboration with a number of agencies, AMSSA provides services to support agencies to build more welcoming and inclusive communities⁴⁷.

WHAT: Out of all the organisations visited, AMSSA modeled closely the values and objectives of the VMC as governed by British Columbia's Multiculturalism Act [RSBC 1996, Chapter 321] which promotes cross-cultural understanding, the full and free participation of all individuals in society, and a society free from all forms of discrimination.



WHO: Eyob Naizghe,
Executive Director, & Sherman Chan,
Director, MOSAIC, Vancouver

WHY: MOSAIC delivers services and engages in community building and advocacy to facilitate meaningful participation of immigrants and refugees in Canadian society. Services are delivered from 32 client-accessible sites and include settlement assistance; English language training; employment programs; interpretations and translations; counselling services; and community outreach for families and individuals, including children, youth and seniors. MOSAIC also offers services for the LGBTQ and temporary foreign worker communities.

WHAT: MOSAIC is one of the largest settlement organisations in Canada. Provincially, MOSAIC provides more employment supports and programs than any other immigrant serving organisation in British Columbia. MOSAIC's expertise in employment services resulted in MOSAIC being the only immigrant serving organisation to be awarded a contract to deliver services through the British Columbia Government's Employment Program of British Columbia.



WHO: Patricia Woroch,
CEO, & Chris Friesen, Director,
Immigrant Services Society of British
Columbia (ISSofBC), Vancouver

WHY: ISSofBC is the first organization in Canada to provide support services for new arrivals with 20 locations across British Columbia. They are a not-for-profit immigrant-serving organisation established in 1972, providing a variety of support services for immigrants and refugees to help them get settled, find careers and learn all they need to know about starting their new lives in Canada.

WHAT: In early 2016, ISSofBC opened their new Welcome Centre which provides integrated housing and support services for newcomers destined for British Columbia. The Centre houses public, private and NGO agencies to provide and ensure a continuum of services – “we brought together anything a newcomer would need and put it under one roof” (Patricia Woroch, CEO, ISSofBC). This includes online banking services, medical clinic, torture NGO support, refugee legal counsel, temporary housing – 135 beds, communal kitchen, children's playground and much more. ISSofBC welcomed the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge along with

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Sophie Grégoire Trudeau as part of the royal tour to ISSofBC Welcome Centre Sunday, September 25, two days after my visit. At the time of my visit ISSofBC had settled 2000 of Canada's 25,000 government sponsored Syrian new arrivals. Settlement Services Director Chris Friesen is known as “Mr Syria” in Canada.



WHO: Mr Baldwin Wong,
Lead Multicultural Social Planner,
City of Vancouver, Vancouver

WHY: Vancouver has always welcomed newcomers. Since the 1980's, City Council has adopted policy, programs and initiatives to facilitate and enhance newcomer's integration, including funding for organisations serving immigrants and refugees.

WHAT: The Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP) brings together community groups and organisations to support immigrants as they settle in Vancouver. This program is designed to assist newcomers in integrating into city life. By supporting the sharing of community-based knowledge and local strategic planning, improving accessibility to services, and creating an

47 <http://www.amssa.org/programs/>

overall Vancouver Immigrant Settlement and Immigration Strategy, together with other initiatives such as the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces initiative, Vancouver Dialogues Project and the first Metro Vancouver Summit, VIP will help newcomers on their paths to becoming Vancouverites.



CULTURAL ITEM OF INTEREST:

Aga Khan Museum, Toronto

WHY: The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, Canada, offers visitors a window into worlds unknown or unfamiliar: the artistic, intellectual, and scientific heritage of Muslim civilizations across the centuries from the Iberian Peninsula to China. Its mission is to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the contribution that Muslim civilizations have made to world heritage. Through education, research, and collaboration, the Museum fosters dialogue and promotes tolerance and mutual understanding among people. The Aga Khan Museum is reflective of the gratitude the Ismaili community felt toward Canada for welcoming them after fleeing East Africa in the 1970s. It is the only museum of Islamic culture in North America⁴⁸.

WHAT: The Museum is a deeply reflective and peaceful space that, in addition to displaying the Museum's core collection from multiple perspectives, features several temporary exhibitions each year that respond to current scholarship, emerging themes, and new artistic developments⁴⁹.

⁴⁸ <https://www.agakhanmuseum.org/about/mission>

⁴⁹ <https://www.agakhanmuseum.org/exhibitions>



WHO: The Hon Laura Albanese, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Toronto

WHY: Minister Laura Albanese is the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for the riding of York South-Weston in the northwestern part of Toronto. The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration provides services for successful economic and social integration of newcomers, which maximizes the benefits of immigration, and promotes greater social inclusion, civic and community engagement and recognition among all Ontarians.

WHAT: Established a state-wide secretariat service to focus on education, employment and health to oversee the settlement of refugee new arrivals, Minister's table on employment and newcomer settlement program.



WHO: The Hon Michael Coteau, Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services and Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism (Community Consultation), Toronto

WHY: In early 2016, Premier Kathleen Wynne announced the establishment of an Anti-Racism Directorate to address and prevent systemic racism in government and its

institutions, policy, legislation, programs, services, in the community and corporate sector. Minister Coteau is responsible for the Directorate as Minister Responsible for Racism.

WHAT: 'We are all responsible' - There has been significant attention in the past 2 years on multiculturalism and anti-black racism in Toronto and Ontario. This has led to a marked increase in public discourse of systemic and overt racism and increased visibility for the Toronto chapter of Black Lives Matter. The Anti-Racism Directorate seeks to increase public education and awareness of racism and apply an anti-racism lens in developing, implementing and evaluating government policies, programs and services.



WHO: Yasmine Dossal, Director Social Services, COSTI Immigrant Services, Toronto

WHY: COSTI, founded by the Italian community to meet a shortage of services for immigrants in the post war era. It is Toronto's largest community-based multicultural agency providing employment, educational, settlement and social services to all immigrant communities, new Canadians and individuals in need of assistance.

WHAT: As a leader in community service, COSTI uses a client-focused, proactive and innovative approach in planning, developing,

and delivering services. COSTI has staff across 17 locations, staff speak 67 languages and serves approximately 2000 refugees. COSTI puts emphasis on promoting the success stories and positive narratives around immigration.



WHO: Professor Lori Beaman, Department of Classics and Religious Studies, University of Ottawa, Ottawa

WHY: Lori G. Beaman, Ph.D. is the Canada Research Chair in the Contextualization of Religion in a Diverse Canada, Professor in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa, and the Principal Investigator of the Religion and Diversity Project, a thirty-seven-member international research team whose focus is religion and diversity.

WHAT: As the Canada Research Chair in the Contextualization of Religion in a Diverse Canada, her research project explores the ways in which we as a society define religion and how these definitions are translated into interpretations of religious freedom.



WHO: Professor Patrick Imbert, University Research Chair in Socio-Cultural Changes in Canada, University of Ottawa, Ottawa

WHY: Professor Imbert's studies focus on understanding stereotypes to improve relations in a multicultural Canada. Professor Imbert's reputation far exceeds Canada's borders; he has succeeded in creating international relationships and collaborating with colleagues around the globe who share similar research interests.

WHAT: Professor Imbert's research raises interesting questions about social harmony in the context of a multicultural Canada and that respect and harmony among diverse ethnic groups is relatively new in Canada emerging around 50 years ago. At this time European racist theories were commonplace until Canada reinvented itself as a multicultural society.



WHO: The Rev Dr Karen Hamilton, Canada Council of Churches (CCC), Ottawa

WHY: The CCC was first established in 1944 and currently represents 25 member denominations or approximately 85% of Canada's Christian population. Rev Hamilton has been the General Secretary of the CCC since 2002. She is committed to speaking about and working for ecumenism, inter-faith dialogue, the use of the Bible in the church, and local and global justice. The CCC has an international profile and is a member of the Pacific Council of Churches with Australia and New Zealand.

WHAT: The CCC was concerned with new Syrian arrivals migrating to smaller communities. They worked with local service providers to ensure that there was more than one Syrian family in each new settled community. The CCC developed a Facebook page tailored to these smaller communities to support Syrian refugees.



WHO: Afsoon Donna Houshidari, Ottawa

WHY: Ms Houshidari is passionate about cross-cultural integration and migration issues, and has shared her story as a speaker and storyteller with audiences across the world, including at the UNHCR in Geneva and Settlement Council of Australia Conference in 2016. Ms Houshidari works as a lawyer for Canada's Department of Justice, where she specialises in refugee, immigration and human rights law. She is actively engaged in the field of human rights at both the grass-roots and international level.

WHAT: Ms Houshidari, through storytelling, recounted her migration to Canada as a Persian refugee – "I was so welcomed in Canada but my cousins in Australia had a very different experience; racism wasn't overt but it was there". She outlined that the next big task for new arrivals to Canada or any country for that matter was around countering refugee imagery and media portrayals about refugees – "we have a right to own and tell our own story".



WHO: Professor Jennifer Bond, Co-founder & Director, Refugee Hub, University of Ottawa, Ottawa

WHY: Professor Bond's primary research projects explore, respectively, models for directly engaging private actors in international refugee resettlement; the use of criminal law to deny refugee protection; and access to justice issues relating to the use of evidence in refugee status determination processes. Professor Bond has served as Special Advisor to Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship on Canada's Syrian Refugee Initiative. She has also provided strategic advice to Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR); completed research projects for the Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Women's Rights Project; and made submissions before the Supreme Court of Canada.

WHAT: Jennifer Bond spearheads a remarkable project called the Refugee Hub, which is teaching hundreds of volunteer lawyers about the process of private sponsorship, then linking them with groups seeking free legal help.



VISIT: Parliament of Canada, Parliament Hill, Ottawa

WHY: The Canadian Parliament was first formed in 1867 and today, houses 105 Senators and 338 Members in the House of Commons⁵⁰. Canada is a federal state: its ten provinces and three territories share a central government. Parliament passes laws that affect all Canadians, in areas like foreign policy and national defence. Each province makes its own laws in other domains, such as education and health care⁵¹.

WHAT: Canadians' values are influenced by events and issues at local, national and international levels. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's vision for Canada is a place where everyone has a shot at success because they have the confidence and leadership to invest in their fellow Canadians. As such, the Canadian Parliament is influenced by the views of Canadians, and as a result every Parliament creates new laws and alters existing ones⁵².

“
IN CANADA EVERYONE
IS AN EQUAL
”

Yasmine Dossal, COSTI Immigrant Services

⁵⁰ <https://lop.parl.ca/About/Parliament/Education/OurCountryOurParliament/section6-e.aspx>

⁵¹ <https://lop.parl.ca/About/Parliament/Publications/index-e.html>

⁵² <https://lop.parl.ca/About/Parliament/Education/OurCountryOurParliament/section6-e.aspx>



WHO: Aime Dontigny, Director of Music, Canada Council for the Arts, Ottawa

WHY: The Canada Council for the Arts is Canada's national public arts funder. They champion and invest in artistic excellence so that Canadians may enjoy and participate in a rich cultural life. In 2014-15, the Council allocated \$155.1 million towards artistic creation and innovation through grants, prizes and payments. They also conduct research, convene activities and work with partners to advance the sector and help embed the arts more deeply in communities across the country⁵³.

WHAT: The Canada Council for the Arts and Sun Life Financial announced a new arts initiative to support efforts to welcome Syrian and Iraqi refugees to Canada. Starting in April 2016, the Canada Council's initiative supports arts organizations that wish to provide free access to refugees to a performance, exhibition or art events in their communities.



WHO: Dr Quintan Wiktorowicz, Co-founder and Managing Partner, Affinis Labs, Washington DC

WHY: Quintan Wiktorowicz served as the White House's first Senior Director for Community Partnerships at the National

⁵³ <http://canadacouncil.ca/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/author/quintan-wiktorowicz>

⁵⁵ <https://advocacy4oromia.org/resource/irreecha-from-thanksgiving-ritual-to-strong-symbol-of-oromo-identity-republication/>

Security Council, focused on maximising the federal government's capacity to collaborate with communities, businesses, and the American public to address homeland security priorities. He developed the country's first national strategy for countering violent extremism and was responsible for U.S. Government partnerships with Muslim communities throughout the world in areas of mutual interest, including security, science and technology, education, health, and entrepreneurship. He has served as chair of the Interagency Intelligence Subcommittee on Radicalisation and was a senior analyst for the Intelligence Community, where he supported counterterrorism operations and helped build the U.S. Government's analytic capabilities for countering violent extremism⁵⁴.

WHAT: Affinis Labs work with social media organisations (such as Facebook and Google) to undertake Hackathons and provide seed funding and startup acceleration for innovative projects that are led by community. Affinis Labs focus on social media innovations to engage youth and promote social cohesion through virtual targeting.



COMMUNITY EVENT: Irreecha Ceremony (Thanksgiving Festival), Oromo Community, Washington DC

WHY: Traditionally, the Oromo practiced Irreecha ritual as a thanksgiving celebration twice a year (in autumn and spring) to praise Waaqa (God) for peace, health,

fertility and abundance they were given with regards to the people, livestock, harvest and the entire Oromo land. Irreecha is celebrated as a sign of reciprocating Waaqa in the form of providing praise for what they got in the past, and is also a forum of prayer for the future. In such rituals, the Oromo gather in places with symbolic meanings, such as hilltops, river side and shades of big sacred trees⁵⁵. This event was held at Lake Artemesia Natural Area in Maryland.

WHAT: Irreecha has undergone some transformations in accommodating non-religious aspects of the Oromo culture, and thus has played a significant role in building the Oromo identity and sense of unity, something very evident at this event; the community were so welcoming and blessed the Commission as part of their ceremonial rituals.



WHO: Shamil Idriss, CEO, Search for Common Ground (SCG), Washington DC

WHY: Search for Common Ground works with artists, children and youth, media professionals, military and police, political leaders, religious leaders and women on issues around conflict sensitivity, fair and responsible media, gender equality, interfaith cooperation, refuge and internal displacement issues and violent extremism.

WHAT: SCG works with a number of local and international partners to increase dialogue and understanding. They run

activities such as soccer games, joint recycling and waste management campaigns, intercultural forums and summer camps for teenagers to create a space to come together and build bonds that break down the tensions around scarce resources. Key to mitigating tensions is helping refugees become active citizens, positively contributing to the improvement of the host community, and re-humanizing them, turning them from a number to individuals with whom the host community members can relate.



WHO: Eileen Shields-West, Chair, & Hans Hogrefe, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Refugees International, Washington DC

WHY: Refugees International is a leading non-profit organization that advocates for refugees and the internally displaced; traveling to such places as Darfur, South Sudan, Rwanda, the Congo, Thailand and Cambodia to advocate on refugee issues.

WHAT: Refugees International is interested in migration movements across the globe and compares this to the US experience of migration. The US has a de-centralised governance approach to decision making. They decide on the overall number of immigrants for each region and then Congress determines and approves the overall number.

A.R.T.

WHO: Sara M Green, Founder & Executive Director, Art for Refugees In Transition (A.R.T), New York

WHY: A.R.T helps rebuild individual and community identity for refugees worldwide. Drawing upon the indigenous art forms of each community, A.R.T.'s programs are designed to enable the elders of a culture to educate and incorporate the younger generation in their cultural traditions.

WHAT: A.R.T. activities provide local and international relief institutions with tools to help refugee communities cope with the trauma, terror and dislocation of war and natural disaster. Ms Green, seeing the fear and hopelessness in the faces of children in refugee camps realized the potential of song and dance - "every child loves to sing and dance, to play and feel free". Ms Green's hope was that, by finding their childhood through their unique ethnic expression, these children could become more than lost refugees. A.R.T. acts merely as a facilitator, with the interests of the children as its primary focus.



CULTURAL ITEM OF INTEREST:
Ellis Island, New York

WHY: It has been estimated that nearly half of all Americans today can trace their family history to at least one person who passed through the Port of New York at Ellis Island.

Irish, Italian, Jewish, Polish, Lithuanian, there were hundreds of immigrant groups that contributed to the building and expansion of America throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. As word of new opportunities in America reached foreign shores, some entire villages relocated to the Land of Opportunity, bringing their customs, culture and cuisine with them⁵⁶.

WHAT: One such village is 'Little Syria' which has been beautifully depicted in an exhibition at the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration marking Syrian settlement to America between 1880 to 1940. The Museum also consists of moving tales of the 12 million immigrants who entered America through the golden door of Ellis Island⁵⁷.



WHO: Nisha Agarwal, Commissioner, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, New York

WHY: The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) supports and leads a range of programs that enhance the economic, civic, and social integration of immigrant New Yorkers. The Office connects, supports and celebrates immigrants in the five boroughs of New York City. It has created a set of open-source Blueprints for Immigrant Integration. The shared innovative strategies can be employed by local governments to foster economic, civic and cultural vibrancy by promoting the well-being and integration of immigrants.

WHAT: The Office advocates for all city organisations to include immigrant participation and inclusion in their organisational visions. The Office also seeks to advocate for immigrants by coming together with their city counterparts to share knowledge and support the immigrant system. Their focus centers on grassroots messaging reflective of the New York City demographic.



WHO: Prof Bryan Turner, Director of the Graduate Centre's Committee for the Study of Religion, The City University of New York, New York

WHY: Professor Bryan Turner is the Director of the Religion and Society Research Centre and Presidential Professor of Sociology at The Graduate Center at the City University of New York, USA. His areas of expertise are on the sociology of religion, citizenship and human rights, and social and political theory. Professor Turner is one of the world's leading sociologists of religion. His research interests include globalisation and religion, religious conflict and the modern state, and human rights and religion.

WHAT: In the past ten years, Professor Turner's research has fallen into three broad areas: comparative and historical study of citizenship; the globalisation of modern societies; and social and political theory within the context of citizenship and human rights. Professor Turner's discussions provided a refreshing realism on issues of

racism, European migration and settlement and citizenship. His somewhat contentious observations on the Victorian Government centered on Victoria's historic labor market and the move to tout itself as an education state - "the separation of religion and state has helped the country survive and Victoria's legal system has shaped the country more than politics".



WHO: Paul Jeffries, Director, Community Development, New York City Football Club, New York

WHY: City in the Community is a foundation supported by New York City Football Club (NYCFC) which was launched in New York City in 2010 with the creation of a rooftop soccer pitch built on top of PS 72 (east Harlem's Lexington Academy) before the club itself even existed, since then, the first-of-its-kind, synthetic grass pitch has provided hundreds of young people a safe place to play soccer.

WHAT: In 2013, NYC FC was officially launched on the same pitch, with the support of fans, CIRC has proudly served over 30,000 young people using the power of soccer to promote health, education and leadership development and create safe community spaces and where programming is free of charge. NYCFC is striving to build a soccer culture that leads to a communities inclusion, diversity and values approach.

⁵⁶ <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/about-the-ellis-island>

⁵⁷ <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/immigration-museum>

APPENDIX A

AMSSA Annual General meeting, 23 September 2016

Summary of Key Note Address – Catherine Dauvergne, Trudeau Fellow, Professor of Law, Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia

Ms Dauvergne researches in the areas of immigration, refugee and citizenship law. She is currently working on a manuscript called *The End of Settler Societies and the New Politics of Immigration* that examines large scale shifts in the politics and regulation of migration at the outset of the twenty-first century. She is also co-directing an international comparative project evaluating refugee claims based on gender. Catherine has been involved in test case litigation before the Supreme Court of Canada regarding the criminalization of refugee claimants in 2013 and 2014. In 2012 she was named a Fellow of Canada's Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation⁵⁸.

- ▶ Gap between settler and non-settler society is fairly non-existent. She refers to this as settler societies and old world nations.
- ▶ Immigration policy now focuses on national economic policies (national economy). Nation building – 'this is in the past now'.
- ▶ Priority should be given to temporary migrants in order to support their early settlement.
- ▶ Temporary migration and permanent migration is prioritized for people who enter a country temporarily.
- ▶ Rich human experiences means not fitting people into a box. Policies often focus on a one size fits all model - 'the problem on focusing on temporary workers is that

we find that they are after all, human beings. They fall in love, change their minds, change jobs...all of these factors are part of the rich human experience which prevent them from neatly fitting into a particular category or box'.

- ▶ New form of fear – Islamophobia – no matter how well informed we are about the facts, the fear doesn't dissipate. She argues 'we are resistant to factual dispersion, that it's existential... no matter how much evidence we put forward, things we throw at it, educative dialogue doesn't help'.
- ▶ Immigration landscape gives rise to human rights arguments.
- ▶ Canada has seen a few victories within its immigration policies but not nearly enough.
- ▶ What would happen if there was a world without borders?
- ▶ 3% of the world's population live outside the country they were born – most people don't move. But what if they could?
 - The latest data from a study that was completed in 2013 showed that out of 630 million adults surveyed, 14% answered 'yes' when asked if they would live outside their country of birth if they could.
 - Could this be a new factor in policy development?
- ▶ Immigration is now on the political landscape – immigration is always an electoral voting issue in western democracies.
- ▶ Immigrants who are arriving often disappoint the whole because they don't live up to the myth of expectation created around them.
- ▶ General policy settings often leave out refugee arrivals. Policies are tailored to the mainstream, we then often wonder why new settlers have negative settlement experiences.
- ▶ Global intertwining of immigration policy and global crisis.
- ▶ As newcomers refugees and migrants are all newcomers, do we need to distinguish between the two? All are newcomers. All have the same potential to offer, in terms of diversity, in terms of what they have to offer the world.
- ▶ What difference might a new government make?
- ▶ There have been three big policy shifts in the Canadian immigration landscape. Previous policies have either been draconian or limiting policies.
- ▶ The Canadian government has developed policy in line with global trends but have exceeded and been much more forward than global trends.
- ▶ Support of Syrian refugees
 - Government resources were injected into the system to support this.

⁵⁸ <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/people/catherine-dauvergne>

APPENDIX B

Community Consultation, 27 September 2016

Notes from observation of a community consultation - Anti-racism directorate (The Hon Michael Coteau, Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services and Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism, MPP (Don Valley East))

SYSTEMIC/INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

The need to address systemic racism in Government and its institutions, in the community and corporate sector should be the responsibility of everybody – Islamophobia, Black, Indigenous racism – publicly funded institutions need to be more accountable to the people they serve to stop or reduce systemic racism.

ANTI-RACISM DIRECTORATE

The Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism is establishing an Anti-Racism directorate that seeks to:

- ▶ Decrease systemic racism in institutions governed or regulated by the Ontario government;
- ▶ Increase awareness and understanding of systemic racism among the public;
- ▶ Promote fair practices and policies that lead to racial equity; and
- ▶ Collaborate with the community, business sector, organisations, government and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

The Directorate's focus will include:

- ▶ Policy, research and evaluation – evidence-based approach to government decision making including legislation, policies, programs and services to identify,

monitor and prevent systemic racism in Ontario. The Directorate is seeking to develop:

- an Anti-Racism Strategy to address anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism and Islamophobia; and
 - a race-based data collection framework to build an evidence base to ensure accurate and measurable data not gathered in the past.
- ▶ Public education and awareness – increase public education and awareness of systemic racism Province wide.
 - ▶ Community collaboration – build relationships between government and racialized and Indigenous communities to better address issues of racism.
 - ▶ Development of a strategy that rights racism.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

- ▶ Racism directorate
 - The budget for the anti-racism directorate is modest – Government needs to adequately fund this initiative so that its mandate will last each year.
 - Legislate racial justice and equality – if it's not mandated then it means nothing – you won't have enshrined change in two years.
 - Those that are affected the most by systemic racism need to have a greater seat at the table so they can frame the policies that will support them.
 - Community consultations should be accessible to all members of the community – so they can inform the decisions that are about their lives. This ensures fair racial participation by all groups. Recommend that other consultations occur in urban hubs.

- Who will ultimately collect the data and evidence of systemic racism – handling of data and the construction of race can be used negatively depending on who has access to it and how it will be used.
- Collect data according to intersectionality – not based on race.
- Intersection of gender identity – transgender for example.
- We need to create a black strategy.
- "I am frustrated with this dialogue, where do we go from here; these discussions are a revolving door that does not have an exit".
- What does success look like? When we no longer require conversations and consultations that discuss racism and discrimination.
- Policy, research and evaluation - "seems like a rabbit hole".
- Will there be a score card for this directorate?
- Empower communities to collect data, review case law, commit to working on outcomes of youth violence for example and seeing them through.
- Area of focus - education, child welfare and police.
- Mandate collection of disaggregated data across all sectors.
- Transparency and measurement of accountability is important.
- "Who are we going to hold accountable for this initiative?"
- "No organization wants to do what needs to be done to make systemic change".

- “Systemic racism is David vs Goliath because they’ve got the lawyers. We need to come to the table as equals”.
 - There are no major institutional representatives at this community consultation. That is what tackling systematic racism is.
 - Where are the youth at this community consultation?
 - Nothing changes unless it changes from the top.
- ▶ Discrimination
- “Systemic racism is a business”.
 - Somali youth are suffering - Dickson for example - area deprived from good education, surrounded by gun violence, Islamophobia, we need jobs, “our community is crying for help” “our community centers are closing because the government don’t want”.
 - The right to life is the most important right.
 - “As a black father and a black person – we need to do more to protect black people”.
 - There is zero tolerance in society, schools and workplaces - who is holding businesses/corporate to account.
 - “Discrimination against one Sikh person, is discrimination of all Sikh people”.
 - “I am a Sikh and when I was living in America they asked me if I knew where Osama Bin Laden was”.
 - Intersectionality - Islamophobia - “citizens of Canada believe that Islam perpetuates violence” - what is government doing to support Muslim communities?
 - “Islamophobia did not leave when Harper left the building”.
- ▶ Youth
- “Our young people are struggling”.
 - “We have not done enough for our children”.
 - “We have a lot of kids with ideas – provide guarantors that support youth and communities to receive funding to actualize great ideas”.
- ▶ Government
- Address discrimination in government.
 - Requires inter-ministerial and party cooperation.
 - Bi-partisan support is required for this initiative to succeed.
 - Ensure the fair procurement of government contracts.
 - Within the Ontario public service, create an internal investigations office for employees that experience discrimination.
 - Ensure to undertake public service surveys that ask questions about experience being an ethnic minority.
- ▶ Education
- Teaching on racial education should be mandatory in all schools.
- ▶ Employment
- “We need to start by employing people like us”.
 - “Focus on jobs - stop looking after your own”.
- ▶ Justice
- Mass incarceration - African Canadians in federal prisons increased by 69% and incarceration of Indigenous women increased by 50% in 2014/15 - “so what will happen is, prisons will get larger so you can incarcerate more people”.
- Those waiting to be deported are held in provincial cells.
 - “Lack of status in Canada does not make someone a danger to the public”.
 - We need better accountability of Police and the Police force needs to better reflect the diversity of the community it serves.
 - There needs to be updated and better tailored training programs for Police Officers stuck in the 1950s.
 - Mandate the collection of data across government, address the number of black youth in prison and detention, address issues of carding by Police.
 - Asian equality is tied in with the outcomes and focus of the Black Lives Matter Movement.
- ▶ Services
- “I am not black, don’t fall into a faith based category and I’m not an immigrant – there are no services that are appropriate for me. Services that are faith based that I attended did not like me speaking up”.
 - “Intersectionality and funding is creating racism by making us compete for limited funding”.
 - “The education system, the criminal justice system the employment system - they are all intertwined”.

