

Increase the Attraction and Retention of Immigrants to Mid-Sized and Smaller Urban Centres

Small Canadian communities are confronted with a pending economic crisis. Populations are aging, birthrates have witnessed significant decline, young workers are increasingly mobile and community sustainability is reliant on the productivity of a depleting workforce.

In an effort to ensure the continued viability of census agglomeration communities, those between 10,000 and 100,000 persons, aggressive immigration policies are required. Immigration endorsement is perhaps the most effective option to offset the impacts of shifting demographics in these smaller communities. Without coordinated action many communities will experience an accelerated decline in economic prosperity while being challenged to support the services required of the shrinking population.

Immigration must be encouraged outside Canadian Census Metropolitan Areas, larger urban cities with populations over 100,000 persons. Comprehensive immigration policies must be adapted to include the attraction of knowledge capital, human capital and investment capital; while ensuring newcomers remain within the community which welcomed them.

Recommendations

That the federal government:

1. Address the unique needs of smaller urban centers through its immigration and settlement integration policies.
2. Through Citizenship and Immigration, to work aggressively with smaller urban centers to encourage immigration that meets the business and economic needs of the community.
3. Collaborate between the federal government, provinces and smaller urban centers to develop innovative integration strategies, which equitably benefit all regions.
4. Reduce the minimum investment required by the investor-class applicant under the Provincial Nominee Programs.