

Western Region Working Group Environmental Scan Report

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1 Project Introduction

The Western Region Working Group (WRWG) is a collective of the four provincial (BC, AB, SK, and MB) umbrella and one territorial (YK) settlement organizations that function within Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) Western Region as defined in 2013. Newly formed in October 2013, the WRWG was established for these five partners to work together collaboratively to rationally influence best practices in the settlement sector. The group is currently undertaking an environmental scan and strategic plan to establish a common knowledge base and focus for its initial activities.

The WRWG has pursued completion of an environmental scan in advance of strategic plan development. As a point-in-time snapshot, an environmental scan is intended to explore and capture current trends, successes and challenges at the immigrant sector's system level, generate a coherent narrative supported by facts, and set the foundation for dialogue, strategic planning, and stakeholder influence.

The following strategic question sets the stage for this work:

What facts, trends and experiences describe and differentiate the Western Region immigration and settlement sector from Canada as a whole?

The content and findings in the report represent a combination of literature review, data from CIC and Statistic Canada, and interviews with WRWG and CIC representatives. The main report is supported and supplemented by data and information in its six appendices.

2 National Trends

While broad Canadian trends, issues or risks are not specific to the Western Region per se, a brief section is included here recognizing the importance of national direction and for the purposes of providing an overview to set the context for immigration settlement and integration.

POLITICAL

In 2008, then Immigration Minister Jason Kenney declared that the immigration system was broken. Recent reports also indicate that the Government of Canada (GC) is unhappy with immigration system performance and has undertaken action to reform the system. The evidence for dissatisfaction is seen in poor immigrant economic outcomes including low incomes and poverty, as well as social outcomes such as inability to achieve long-term integration and impact on social cohesion (Burstein, 2010).

Critics (Bissett, 2013) of Canada's immigration program cite the following issues:

- Bias toward formal education instead of skills in immigrant selection.
- Temporary workers program without follow-up or control over movement.
- Overly generous agreements with provinces, particularly Quebec.

- Lack of control over the immigrants selected due to relatively large numbers of family members accompanying or chosen for immigration by relatives already in Canada.
- Questionable economic contributions as shown in one study where immigrants who arrived between 1987 and 2004 were determined to have received services and benefits which exceeded taxes paid by \$16.3-\$23.6 billion in the 2006 fiscal year.
- Security issues resulting from paper review of application qualifications.

The GC continues efforts to improve the system both from policy development and internal delivery perspectives. In recent years reforms have been introduced to the immigration program and these are discussed in section 4.

It is anticipated that 2017, the 150th anniversary of Canada could provide an opportunity for nonprofit organizations to celebrate and possible advance agendas.

ECONOMIC

Presently the resource sector is the main driver of the economy in Canada whereas previously manufacturing was also important. This shift in focus has created increased interprovincial migration and also immigration to the West as will be discussed later.

The economy is the priority for the Government of Canada (GOC) and this is demonstrated through its immigration policy messaging in which immigration is anticipated to play a key role in meeting current and future labour needs such as labour shortages (2013 CIC Annual Report to Parliament). Further reforms have been aimed at attracting 'employment-ready' newcomers who are able to contribute to the economy.

CIC forecasts that "Immigrants are expected to account for all net labour force growth by 2011, and for all net population growth by 2031". Further data hint at the challenges that await (Burstein, 2010):

- By 2017, for the non-immigrant population, there will be only 75 potential labour market entries for every 100 potential exits; for the visible minority population, there will be 142 potential entrants for every 100 potential exits.
- 75-80% of all newcomers fall into the visible minority category. Only 4 percent of visible minorities are choosing to settle in non-metropolitan regions (urban agglomerations smaller than 100,000 people).
- Some 79% new entrants will be living in Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver by 2031.

In its Message from the Minister, the 2013 CIC Annual Report further noted that "reforms to our economic immigration system will accelerate the arrival of highly skilled immigrants who can fill acute labour market shortages, integrate more quickly into our work force and immediately begin making contributions to our economy". Clearly the interest of the GC is to employ immigration as a primary vehicle to support Canadian growth and development with successful integration and public support being essential ingredients to this aim.

Friesen (2012) argues for a long-term view of immigration that sees levels significantly higher at 1% of population, or approximately 347,000 as opposed to the previous 10-year annual average of 250,000. This would address concerns about population growth, a shrinking tax base and labour shortages, maintain economic growth and also create innovation. He further identifies the following as needed philosophy and policy changes in Canada’s immigration:

- A more effective selection system.
- Tax incentives for settlement outside big cities.
- An immigrants' retention plan.
- Change our philosophy to a ‘build the country’ and truly welcome and integrate.
- More permanent immigration.

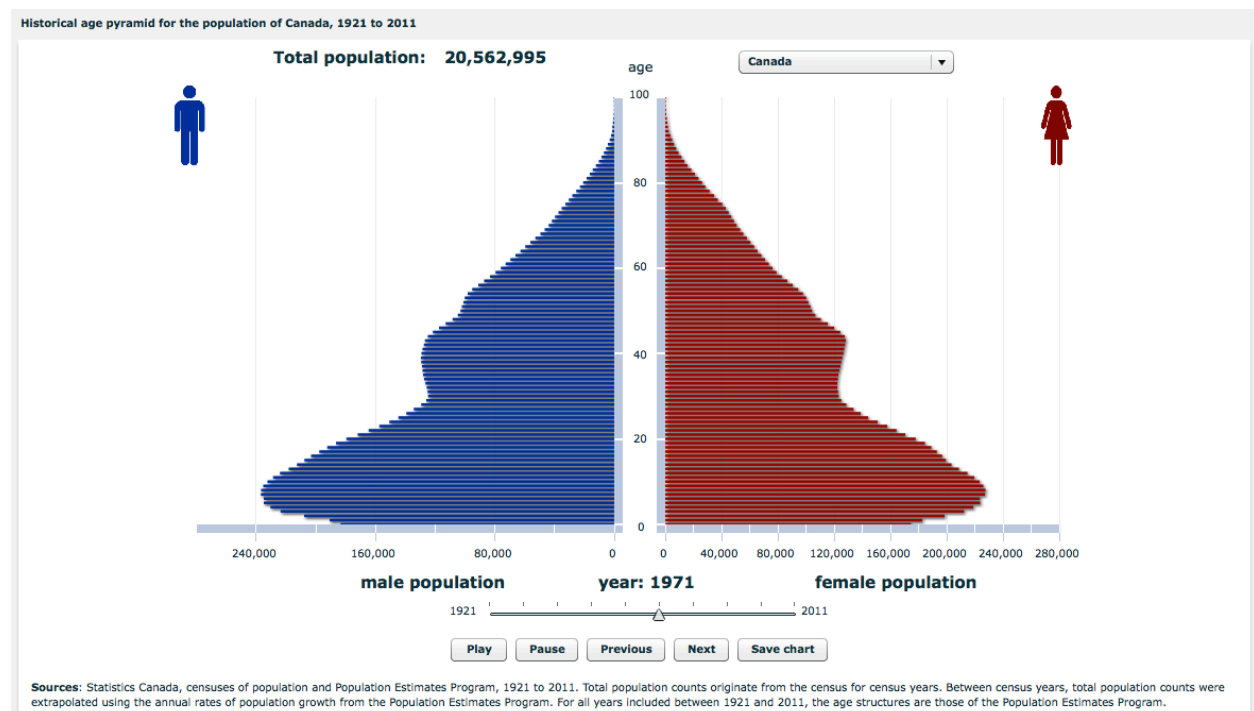
Despite or perhaps because of the GC’s efforts to implement an economic agenda, recent difficulties have arisen in the use and allegations of abuse of the temporary foreign workers program. These are discussed further in Section 4.

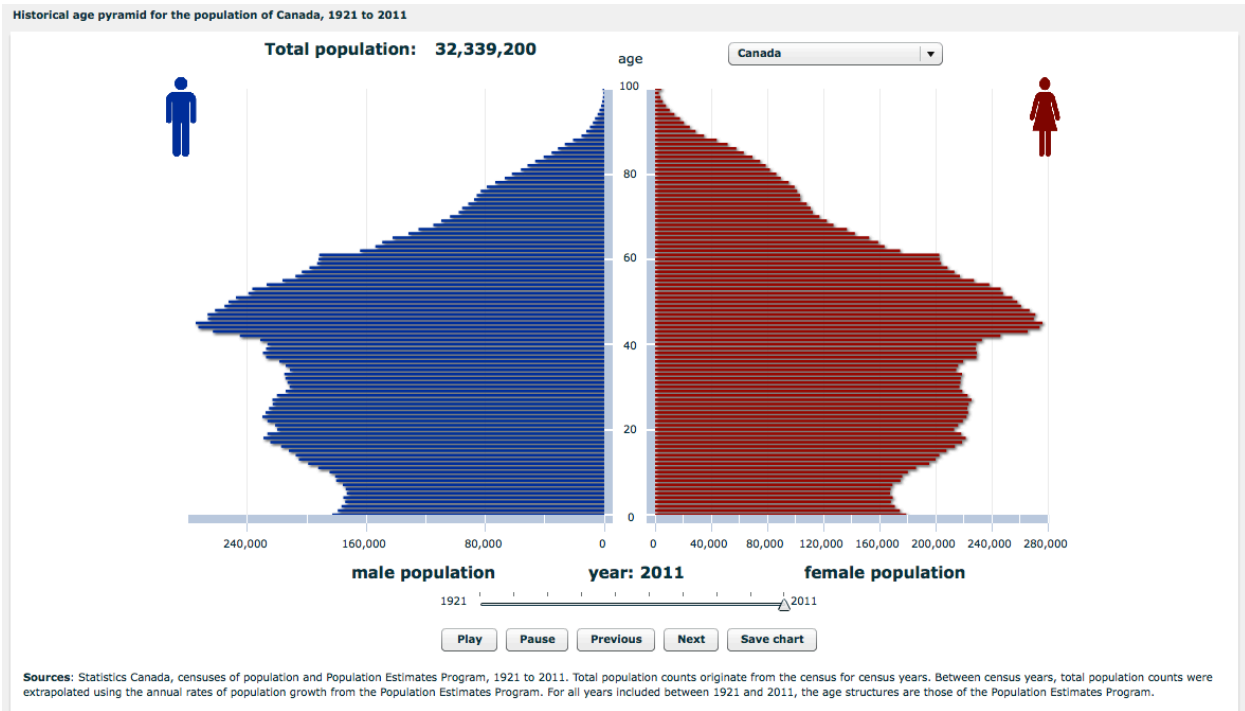
SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC

Population

According to the Statistics Canada (Stats Can) 2011 census, population growth due to natural increase has been declining since the 1960s and since 2001 has accounted for only 1/3rd of growth. Two reasons underlie this phenomenon: a decrease in fertility to the current range of 1.5-1.7 children per woman and a rise in number of deaths due to aging population and population grown. An illustration of the aging population is provided in the graphs below, the first from 1971 and the second 2011.

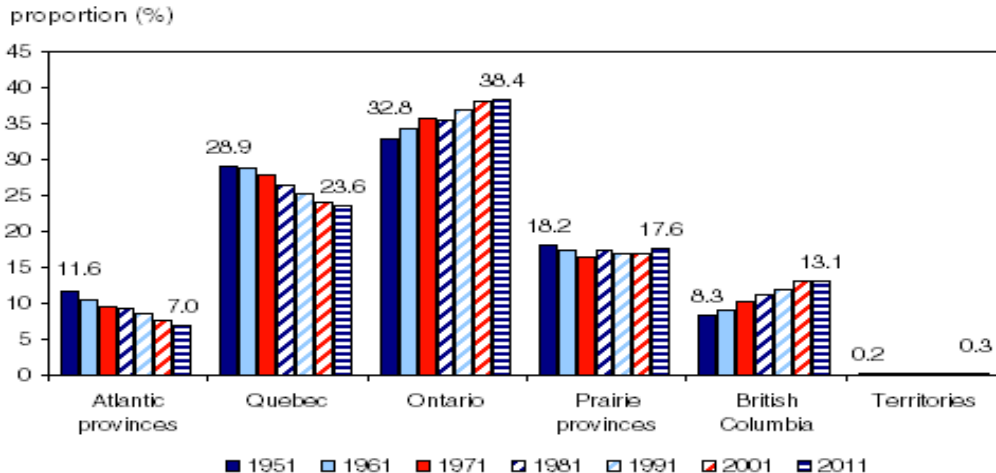
❖ Figures 1 & 2: 1971 and 2011 Age Pyramids for Population of Canada





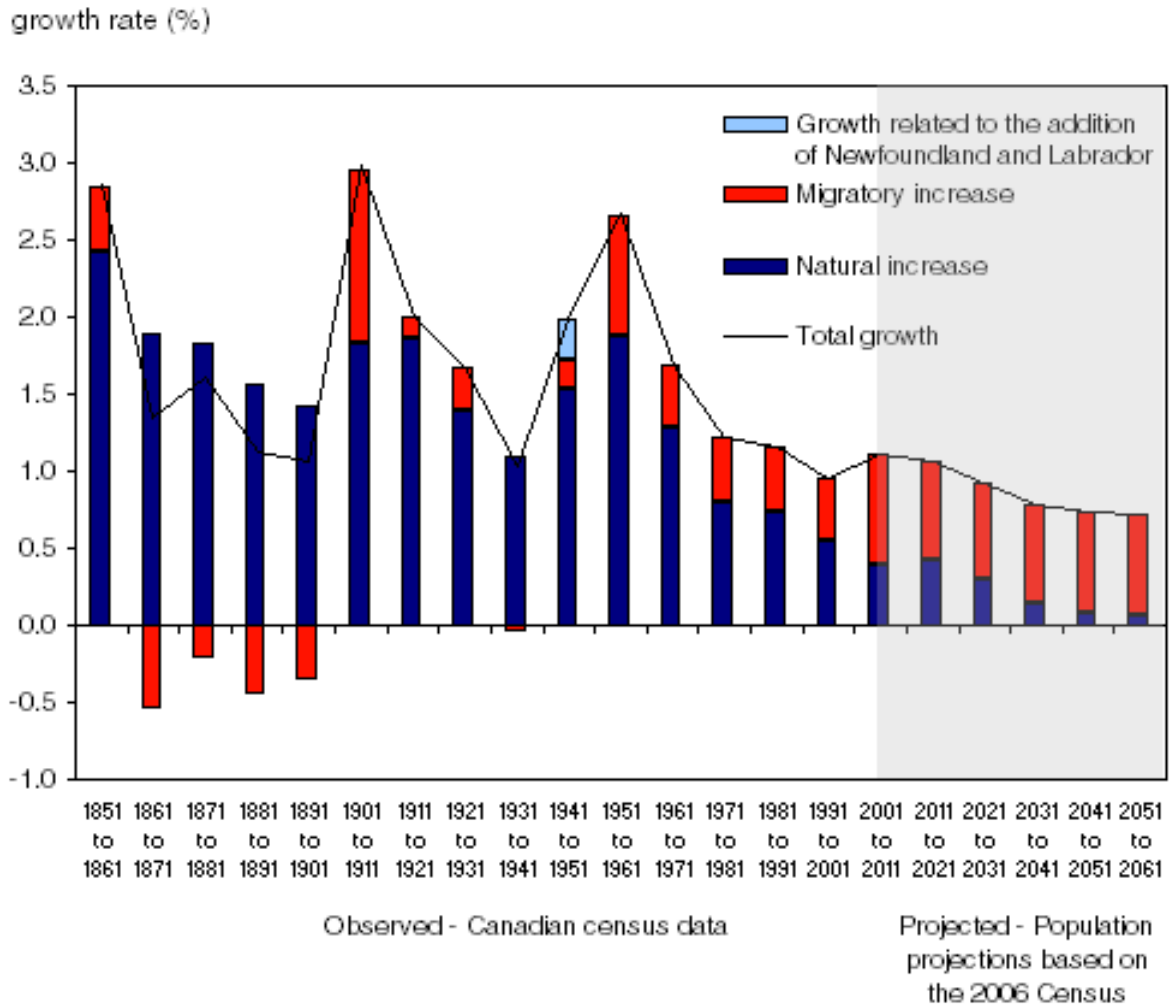
As a result of the births and deaths convergence, migratory increase has taken on an increasingly important role in recent population growth in Canada. In fact, Stats Can scenarios project that the number of deaths will increase significantly with accelerating population aging (boomers reaching age 65 between 2011-2031; and age of 80 in 2026), so natural increase will decline further. As seen in Appendix A, the Western Region, in particular Alberta and to a lesser extent Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Yukon, were the only provinces/territory to experience net positive interprovincial migration in 2011.

❖ Figure 3: Population Share of Canada’s regions, Statistics Canada, 1951-2011



In effect, as shown in the graph below, population growth could result almost entirely from migratory as opposed to natural increase. One Stats Can scenario indicates that starting in 2031, migratory increase could account for more than 80% of Canada's population growth, compared to the current 67%.

❖ Figure 4: Observed and Project Annual Average Growth Rate, Natural Increase and Migratory Increase



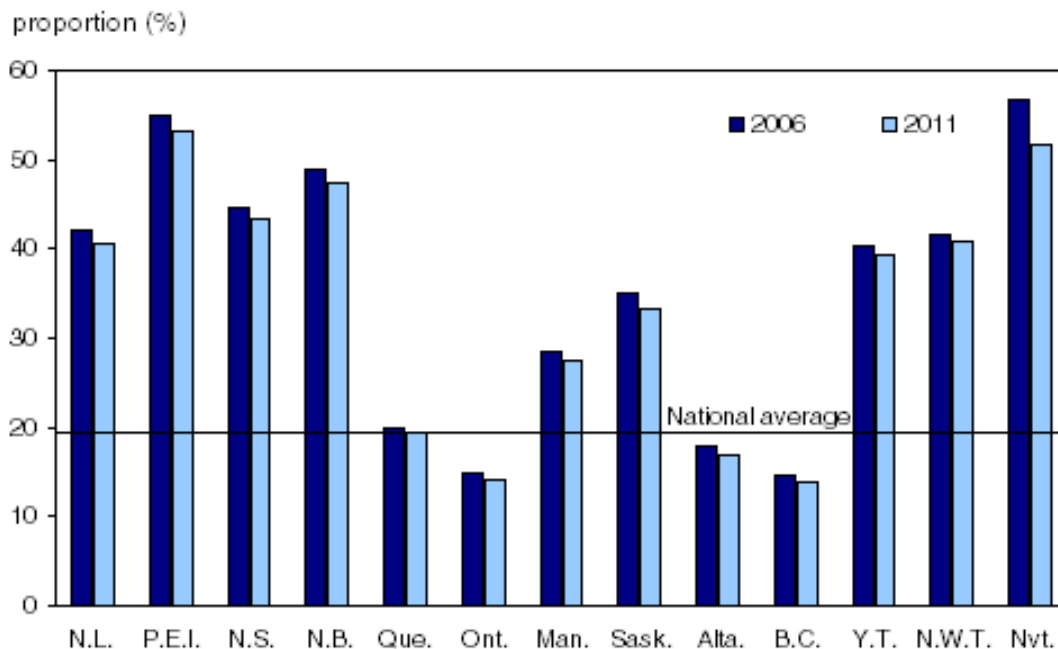
Without a sustained level of immigration or a substantial increase in fertility, Canada's population growth could, within 20 years, be close to zero.

Urbanization

A rural area is defined as those areas with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants and a population density below 400 people per square kilometer (Stats Can). Canada has experienced steady declines in the proportion of people living in rural areas from nearly 90% (1851) to 18.9% (2011) or below 1 in 5 Canadians. Essentially, since 1991, the number of people living in rural areas has been relatively stable while those living in urban areas has been steadily rising.

Of the WR population, only Alberta and British Columbia sit below the national average of rural population as seen below. This might indicate an expertise and practices for programming for provinces with significant rural populations.

❖ Figure 5: Proportion of population living in rural areas of provinces and territories, 2006, 2011, Statistics Canada.



Immigration is seen to hold a potential for revitalization of smaller centres by contributing to the tax base, and creating economic development through spending on consumer goods and housing (Friesen, 2012). An example of this potential is cited by Friesen (2012) in the case of Steinbach, MB which since the 1990s has grown by 60%, welcoming 900 immigrants from 40 countries into a diverse range of industries.

TECHNOLOGICAL

Technology trends and advancements and their increasing uptake in the nonprofit sector have implications for increasing service effectiveness and improved work processes. Cloud computing, social media and mobile technology can increase the number of clients served and also improve service quality (Boles, 2013). Further, another trend focused on what is delivered

through technology as opposed to mechanisms for delivery, is a growing demand for dynamic data. This type of data or reporting is distinguished from static data in that users can really explore and work with the data by watching, clicking and sharing. In turn, the data/site owner can collect valuable user information and statistics. (Hsu)

Hsu identified 3 best practices which are critical to nonprofit success in technology use:

1. Content Marketing and Curation: with the volume and constant connectedness to information, marketing and curation enables the development of brand loyalty and engagement that can distinguish a nonprofit by the content it produces.
2. Targeted Communications: segmenting their base of supporters and using the delivery channels that the segment prefers is a good way to develop relationships and loyalty. Some considerations to be aware of include a segment’s history or affiliation with the nonprofit and their particular interests.
3. Data Informed Decisions: decisions that are made on relevant and reliable data enable better marketing, operations and overall performance.

NATIONAL TRENDS - OPPORTUNITIES

<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Description</i>
National agenda	Develop a deep familiarity with GC’s agenda and define ways (programs/services) by which WRWG could be clearly responding
Technology	Advance a case for technology and its use to increase sector effectiveness and efficiency
Information Access	Differentiate the data and information offerings of umbrella organizations from that of government websites in a way that provides greater value.
Technological Competency	Provide support to member organizations to increase their technological effectiveness as related to service delivery and organizational effectiveness
Increasing immigration	Prepare for increased future immigration

3 Sector Trends

CIC GOVERNANCE

With the repatriation of British Columbia in 2014 and Manitoba in 2013, settlement policy and funding for all provinces and territories (with the exception of Quebec) is within CIC responsibility. Repatriation, along with apparent federal government dissatisfaction with the immigrant system's performance and outcomes, has set the stage for system reform (Burstein, 2010).

Joint jurisdiction arrangements exist to a greater or lesser extent as prescribed by the Constitution, and therefore Federal-Provincial partnerships are essential. To further these partnerships, the federal and provincial/territorial governments are working on a joint vision for immigration (*Federal-Provincial-Territorial Vision Action Plan for Immigration*) that includes a work plan to improve coordination and streamlining of settlement service delivery, as well as a pan-Canadian framework for settlement outcomes.

CIC interest in a centralized governance model, is seen through some of its key directions:

- Regionalization of CIC offices, with a move from each province being its own 'region' to 3 consolidated regions across Canada – Western, Ontario and Eastern.
- Attempt to equalize regions in terms of level of activity, consistency of approach with other GC departments, and efficiency.
- Involvement in direct delivery of programs such as a newcomer information website and the Canadian Immigration Integration Program.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CHANGES

Beginning with the 2008 amendments to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, a series of changes have been made over the subsequent years, with many significant ones occurring in 2012 (Maytree 2012).

- Priority for economic immigrants to address Canada's labour shortages.
- Establishment of 'expression of interest' process for potential immigrants.
- Development of a points system to reinforce the economic priority. This new system reflects the importance of age, Canadian work experience, minimum thresholds of official language skills, and foreign educational credentials that have been assessed for Canadian equivalency.
- Changes to family class immigration.
- Restrictions for refugee claimants, including elimination of health benefits.
- Improvement in process times and reduction of backlogs.
- Implementation of a Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Credentials

As can be seen, changes have been broad in scope and effected relatively quickly.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL COLLABORATION

Provincial and municipal governments have a role in immigration and a clear stake in its success. As well, industry, service providers and mainstream organizations (e.g., health, education, law enforcement) have interests in immigration and important contributions to make to its success at the local level. The settlement sector has a natural place in facilitating conversation and strategies.

Provincial and Municipal Governments

The provinces' role is conferred on them constitutionally and each exercises its mandate uniquely. Provinces have Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP) which authorize provinces and territories to nominate for permanent residence those individuals who will meet specific local labour market needs (<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/hire/provincial.asp>). MB was the first province (2006) to use a PNP as part of its economic strategy. While the provincial roles in each of BC and MB are in transition as CIC repatriation is fully implemented, the importance of provinces having an ongoing role was highlighted during interviews with WRWG members. Alberta's federal/provincial co-management model was often noted during interviews as a successful approach to formally engaging both governments in planning, system development and resourcing.

Municipal governments also play a key role in newcomers' successful settlement and integration. "Whether the responsibility is *explicit* and mandated (such as providing housing in Ontario) or *implicit* (such as supporting community organizations), local governments across Canada are active in attracting, integrating and retaining immigrants" (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2011). Municipally based services are at the forefront of immigrants' needs. Furthermore, when immigrants don't succeed, local services such as shelters, food banks, etc. figure prominently. The report makes several suggestions to more fully engage and involve municipalities.

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs)

In recognition of the importance of engagement at the local level as well as the central role which municipalities play in immigration, in the mid 1990's CIC began encouraging the involvement of other jurisdictions through the creation of LIPs. LIPs were initially and significantly developed in ON (~40). The model is noted to be a national priority (CIC personal interviews) and has begun developing in the Western Region, with Calgary creating the first LIP in the region (Calgary Local Immigration Partnership - CLIP) and Winnipeg has had a LIP (LIPW) funded which has recently started and is hosted by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg with MIRSSA as a major partner.

BC is being challenged to modify its previous Welcoming Communities approach in favour of the LIP model. This will likely require changes and possibly redevelopment to initiatives such as Victoria's 120-organization collaborative which focuses on newcomer education. (WRWG personal interview) Nonetheless, the LIP model is seen by many to be an excellent opportunity (i.e., a "shining star") to bring other governments, authorities, mainstream organizations and

sector service providers together to jointly plan, share and leverage resources and collectively influence settlement and integration.

Settlement Sector Role

Service provider organizations (SPO's) and umbrella organizations have both a role and ability to bring multiple jurisdictions together. They can facilitate communications among jurisdictions and between governments and the sector by identifying cross-cutting issues; convening discussions about settlement integration issues; informing strategy and enabling collaborative responses. Burstein further maintains that the settlement sector is well positioned to lead multi sector involvement, developing bridging strategies between mainstream and newcomer communities and essentially becoming a 'band leader'. (Burstein 2012)

SPO's also have a role specific to labour market development. Multi-stakeholder partnerships between immigrant-serving organizations and all levels of government have become an integral part of Canada's system of delivering labour market information and providing services to newcomers to Canada. (Labour Market Information for Employers and Economic Immigrants 2013)

OUTCOMES

There has historically been a lack of solid information on client needs and outcomes. Burstein notes that "agency information is not comparable and cannot be aggregated" (Burstein 2012). However, the issue is larger than the difficulties of defining and correlating service information. It extends to all aspects of the immigration system and therefore system-level developments are likely necessary to address it. CIC is focusing attention on outcomes achievement from several perspectives.

Federal-Provincial-Territorial Vision Action Plan for Immigration

As noted previously, the federal and provincial/territorial governments are working on a joint vision for immigration. This process is intended to develop a cohesive, national approach for defining and measuring settlement outcomes and to establish the evidence base for better accountability and policy decisions. It has the potential focus and scope to facilitate the necessary comprehensive approach and systemic change.

CIC Modernization Approach

In addition to influencing the government's approach to immigrant recruitment and selection criteria, the Modernized Approach has led to changes in CIC's settlement program contracting system and processes with an increased focus on outcomes. CIC has adopted a national approach to programmatic development and contracting as demonstrated by the launch of its first national Call for Proposals (CFP) in 2012. Previously, each region and program had a separate CFP. A centrally coordinated national CFP requires proposals which are broader in scope and which address multiple communities. This allows for a standard assessment of each proposal, facilitates national consistency and replaces some 20 individual CFPs (CIC Annual Report 2013). A full 90% of the CFP allocation goes to direct services to newcomers, a standard which reinforces CIC's attention to program outcomes.

CIC has established outcomes to be achieved through its funded settlement service system. These were reflected in its 2012 CFP and in particular, focused on 1 and 4:

1. **Information & Orientation**—Newcomers make informed decisions about their settlement and understand life in Canada
2. **Language/Skills**—Newcomers have language/skills needed to function in Canada
3. **Labour Market Access**—Newcomers obtain the required assistance to find employment commensurate with their skills and education
4. **Community Connections**—Newcomers receive help to establish social and professional networks so they are engaged and feel welcomed in their communities
5. **Policy and Program Development**—To ensure effective delivery and achieve comparable settlement outcomes across Canada.

In recognition that there are a variety of services and providers that can facilitate positive immigration outcomes, CIC expanded the range for its contracted providers with the 2012 CFP. Applicants can now include a full range of governmental, educational and other public, non-profit, community/umbrella organizations; businesses; individuals and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (CIC 2012, CFP and National CFP Guide to Applicants).

In understanding the importance of local stakeholders in achieving positive settlement and integration outcomes, CIC (as noted previously) is supporting and resourcing the development of LIPs. These local tables facilitate community-level planning and coordination as well as to engage a variety of stakeholders municipal representatives, local nonprofit and for profit organizations in the integration process and are positioned to spur change and influence integration results. Funding priority for LIPs appeared in 3 of the WR provinces/territories within the CFP.

Settlement Sector Role

The settlement sector has both challenges and strategic opportunity to improve outcomes. From a clinical perspective, it is positioned to holistically help clients put together a 'complex array of services/programs' to foster short term settlement and long term integration. Its focus on families, place-based service organization and brokering needed services is fundamental to success (Burstein 2010). From a systems perspective, it has the knowledge of other service sectors, other funders and policy makers; it has the understanding of how the system must 'fit' together; and, it has a relationship with other jurisdictions to enable it to facilitate cross-jurisdictional conversations and multi-stakeholder strategies. Together this means that the sector has the foundational knowledge and opportunity with which to inform and influence outcomes.

IMMIGRANT AND NEWCOMER CHALLENGES

Even though Canada's economic future is directly tied to its ability to successfully attract and retain new immigrants, newcomers face immense barriers to success and are falling behind their Canadian counterparts (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2011) and their predecessors (Community Foundations of Canada and the Law Commission of Canada, 2006). They are underemployed, struggle to find affordable housing, more likely to be on social

assistance and in many instances are not successfully integrating into Canadian society; all which is leading to social exclusion for many immigrants (Federation of Canadian Municipalities 2011, Metropolis British Columbia 2011). To illustrate this from an economic perspective, the Toronto Board of Trade estimates it costs Canada \$2.25 Billion in lost economic activity when we fail to better integrate immigrants into the economy (Federation of Canadian Municipalities).

Settlement is very complicated. It frequently takes longer than the three years of federally funded settlement services and often takes 5-10 years. It needs a more comprehensive and rigorous approach (Federation of Canadian Municipalities) and has multiple stages and policy implications (Community Foundations of Canada and the Law Commission of Canada 2006). Further, it needs to explicitly involve municipalities as key partners. "Where the participation of municipalities is formally recognized, the intergovernmental partnerships are paying off", with Toronto's trilateral immigration agreement highlighted as a model for such formal recognition (Federation of Canadian Municipalities).

Conventional economic wisdom suggests that while immigrants will face initial disadvantages, these should erode over time and eventually disappear. However, there is increasing evidence that many face stubbornly persistent labour market barriers which threaten their full integration. Labour market progression is neither smooth nor predictable for many, with numerous transitions and employment states, as well as differences between men and women in regards to labour market participation and undervaluing of family care (Metropolis British Columbia 2011).

Labour market marginalization is associated with poorer overall integration outcomes and similar to overall settlement issues, solutions to labour market concerns need to involve multiple stakeholders (Community Foundations of Canada and the Law Commission of Canada, 2006). Labour market success is key to all areas of integration and to significant degree is impacted by English and/or French language ability: Language readiness and education is critical to success, although the relationship between language proficiency and labour market outcomes is not as straight forward as it might initially appear (Metropolis British Columbia 2011). Nonetheless, newcomers lacking official language proficiency face a greater risk of falling through the cracks in the labour market and society at large (International Settlement Canada Spring 2012).

In addition to its association with inferior integration outcomes, poor labour market outcomes for newcomers often result in them making insufficient income, being in less desirable work situations and exploitation of their labour rights. This, while in no way desirable, can also lead to a creative and resilient response whereby newcomers engage in informal work activities (Wesley Institute 2013). Close to 70% report some involvement in informal economy (purchase or earnings) with 46% reporting income from it.

BEST PRACTICES AND INNOVATION

House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration: Best Practices

In 2010, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration prepared a report on Best Practices in Settlement Services, which identifies best practices in program delivery and in support to settlement organizations that advance immigrant settlement and adaptation to life in Canada. (Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2010)

Noting CIC's Modernized Approach to Settlement Programming as a foundation (including its six programmatic themes and five intended outcomes), the Committee highlighted the following six strategic recommendations. The first three are aimed at furthering information sharing and collaboration to improve immigrant settlement and the latter three relate to gaps in settlement programming.

1. the creation of an interactive website to facilitate sharing best practices across the country;
2. explicit encouragement of service provider collaboration in the funding application process of CIC;
3. continued support for and expansion of LIPs as a way of convening a broad group of community stakeholders and improving coordination;
4. greater flexibility to include activities such as business and self-employment support as well as mental health and family counseling, subject to provincial jurisdiction, in CIC's Modernized Approach to Settlement Programming;
5. greater flexibility in determining eligibility for settlement services as a compromise solution given that some newcomers have ongoing settlement needs;
6. federal government provision of school support and trauma counseling to resettled refugees for the initial settlement period. This is subject to provincial jurisdiction and acknowledges that refugees have more acute settlement needs and that the burden of responding to these needs falls disproportionately on provincial governments.

Innovative and Promising Practices

A 2012 study sponsored by CISSA-ACSEI identified and conducted a detailed analysis of 19 case studies of settlement initiatives from across Canada (Burstein & Esses, 2012). The aim was to identify excellent practices and a process for replicating them. The study identified a number of pervasive themes that were repeatedly found at the core of innovative cases. These themes can be characterized as:

1. Developing and benefitting from social capital.
2. Forming effective partnerships.
3. Developing spin-offs based on experience and experimentation, building on strengths.
4. Integrated, seamless delivery of services.
5. Combining and repurposing programs.
6. Creating flexibility through relations with multiple funders.
7. Developing new institutional markets for settlement services.
8. Investing in Initial research and planning.

The study concluded that innovation is possible through the creativity, dedication and entrepreneurship already resident in settlement sector; CIC needs to contribute to conditions that encourage innovation such as altering accountability including new ways of assembling services, incentive for partnering with mainstream orgs, support for professional development training, to name a few.

Industry Support

Small and medium sized employers (SMEs) need non-traditional methods of recruiting immigrant talent including advertising in ethnic media and seeking referrals from immigrant-serving organizations. In recent years, immigrant-serving organizations (SPO's) have developed a large number of programs across Canada to facilitate hiring of immigrants by SMEs. Experience is showing that SMEs have more success in recruiting immigrants through agencies and networks of immigrant-serving organizations than through traditional recruiting practices. (Canadian Labour Market and Skills Researcher Network, Nov 2012).

Along with highlighting the Toronto Regional Immigration Employment Council (TRIEC), and Ontario Labour Market Agreement as effective approaches, a 2013 report identified the following five best practices for facilitating labour market information for immigrants and employers. (Centre for the Study of Living Standards, May 2013)

1. Create a national organization to more effectively provide information to immigrants about the steps necessary to work in regulated occupations;
2. Maximize the number of single points of contact in Canada (i.e., “one stop shops”) for services to immigrants and employers;
3. Provide pre-departure orientation and training to immigrants on local labour market information, the legal requirements of immigrating to and working in Canada and English and French language skills;
4. Involve local stakeholders in delivery of service, particularly those with an interest in serving immigrant communities;
5. Maintain policy flexibility in regards to immigration composition by devolving some responsibility to provincial governments and using demand-based levels not targets and make targets more easily changed.

SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES

<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Description</i>
Sector leadership in multi-stakeholder strategies	The sector (and umbrella organizations) can become a "band leader" in bringing stakeholders to the table, facilitating cross-jurisdictional discussions, helping to create comprehensive strategies and leveraging existing experience and expertise and resources to bring all parts of sector together including new SPOs.
Change Imperative	Settlement and integration is not having the intended positive results for many newcomers. Canadian society generally, as well as the economy particularly, is impacted. At the same time, Canada desperately needs immigrants to augment its labour force and support the economy and it needs them to be successful in their employment achievements as well as their overall integration into society.
System fluidity	The political, economic and social urgency for system reform could set the stage for greater openness to creativity and for involvement of the sector in new roles. For example, the sector could seek involvement in the federal-provincial vision process and influence system reform and outcomes determination.
CIC leadership	CIC could play a lead role on behalf of the federal government in bringing other ministries to cross-jurisdictional tables. It could do this locally and for the Western Region. As Burstein recommended, CIC needs to create enabling structures to facilitate policy discussions on crosscutting issues involving settlement agencies and other government ministries (e.g., policy tables with ministries responsible for health, education and housing - policy areas which are frequently engaged by settlement organizations in creating integrated solutions for families/communities. (Burstein 2012)
Federal Immigration Policy	How new federal directions will change the characteristics and needs of newcomers, dynamics of settlement and impact on services was identified as an area about which to learn more and to innovate responsive services.

4 Western Region Trends

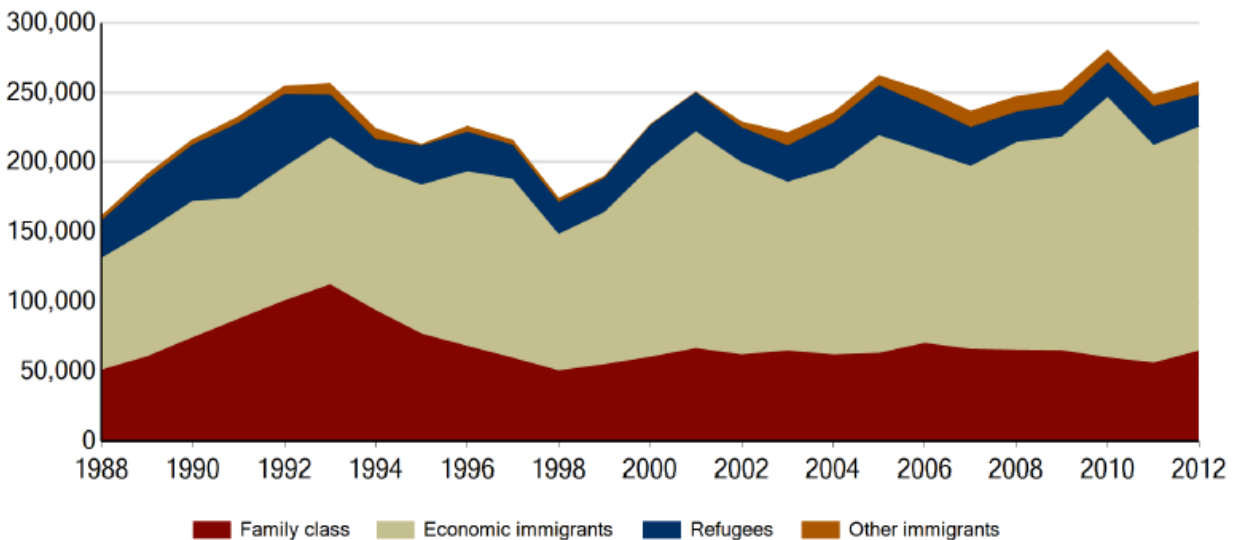
Along with the Eastern Region (ER) and Ontario Region (OR), the Western Region (WR) is one of three Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) regions in Canada. The WR includes British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon Territories, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The previous sections have addressed relevant trends, challenges and opportunities at the national level and within the settlement and integration sector. Now we turn our attention to a discussion of the demographics, patterns, drivers and practices which make the Western Region unique & distinct.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND IMMIGRATION PATTERNS

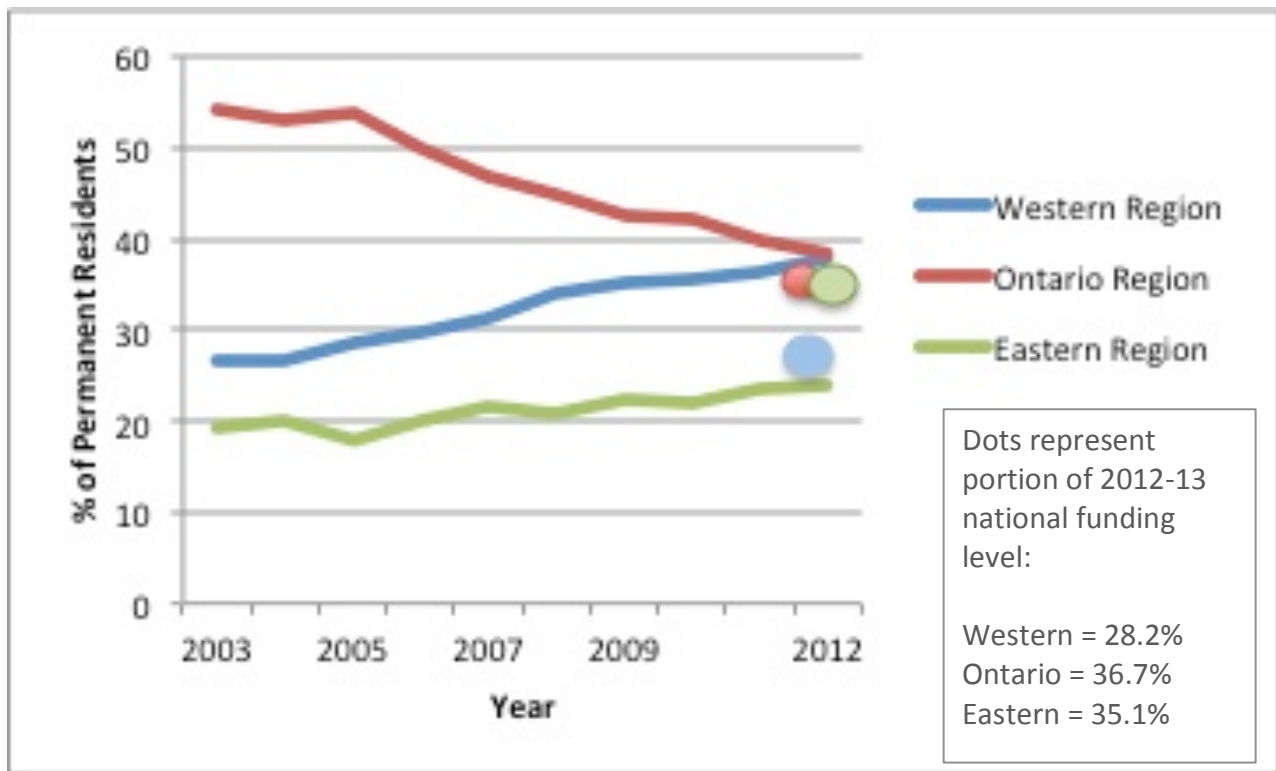
As was seen in section 3, it is projected that migratory increase will account for the majority of Canada's population growth. Canada has an anticipated overall immigrant admissions range of 240,000 to 265,000 in 2014 (CIC, 2013 Annual Report to Parliament). When comparing 2012 to 2003, the WR has seen large increases in the numbers of family class (19.5%), economic immigrants (102%) and temporary foreign workers (186%). This compares to the OR where both the family class and economic immigrant categories saw declines and the ER where increases were much more moderate (see Appendix B). The figure below shows trending in terms of immigration categories.

❖ Figure 6: Permanent Residents by Category, 1988-2012 (CIC Facts 2012)



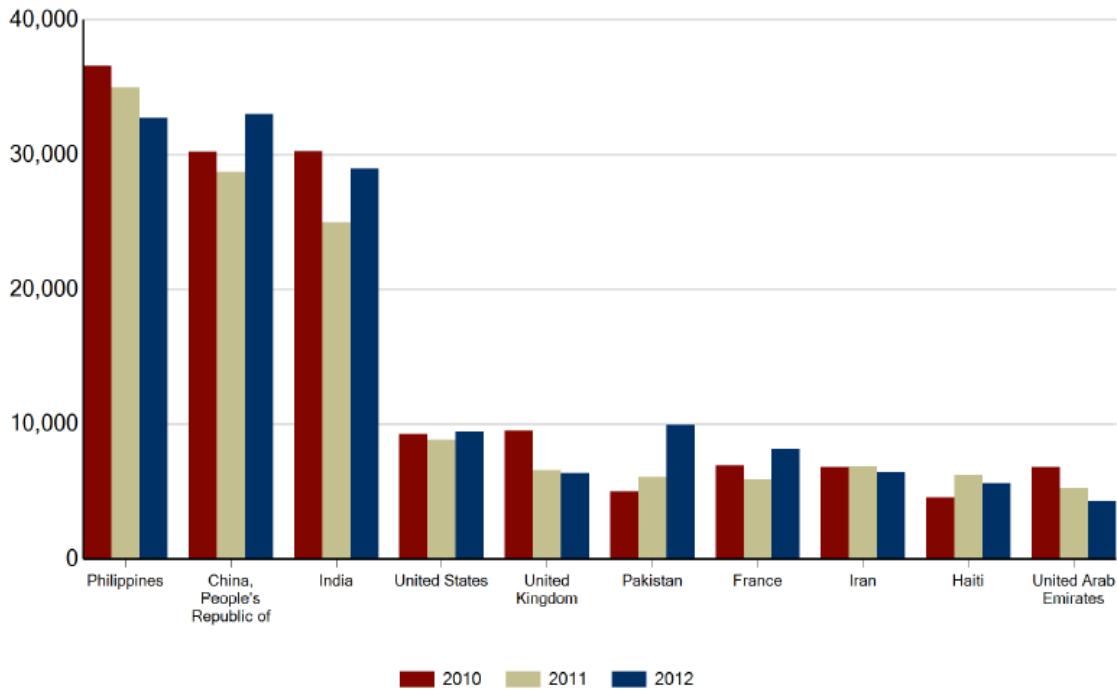
While the OR exceeded each of the other two regions for immigration in 2012, it has been trending down over the past 10 years while the WR is trending higher as can be seen in the figure below.

❖ Figure 7: Percentage of Permanent Residents by Year & Region against Funding Portion (AMSSA Info Sheet, CIC Facts 2012)



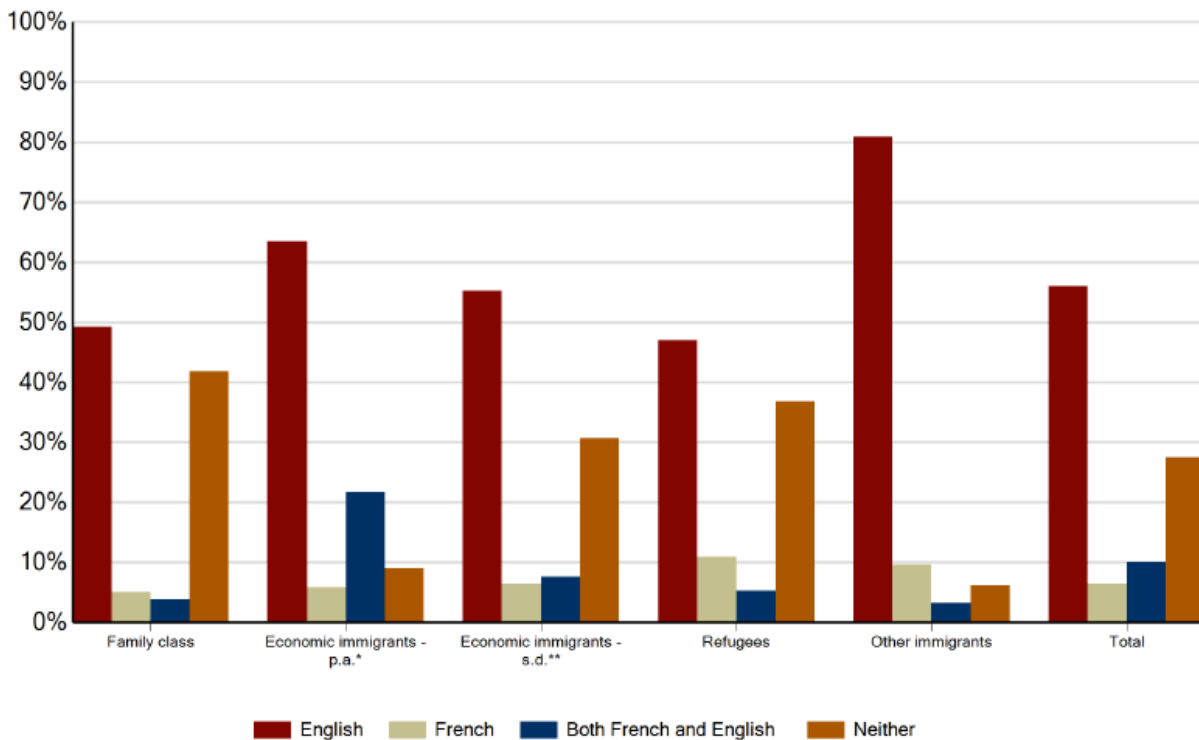
The two graphs below (CIC Facts, 2012) relate information about the 2012 permanent residents. First of all, the top 3 source areas for WR permanent residents are Asia & Pacific, followed by Europe and the United Kingdom and Africa and the Middle East. The three-year trend in terms of source countries and number of permanent residents is shown below.

❖ Figure 8: Canada – Permanent Residents by top source countries, 2010-12 (CIC Facts 2012)



While the majority of permanent residents had English and/or French language ability, in 2012 nearly 30% had neither.

❖ Figure 9: Permanent residents by category and language ability, 2012 (CIC Facts 2012)



*p.a. – principal applicants

**s.d. – spouses and dependents

ECONOMIC DRIVERS

There is diverse economic performance found between Canada's provinces. Notably, only four out of ten provinces/territories in Canada have had above-average GDP growth: Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador which have significant oil wealth; and British Columbia and Saskatchewan largely due to growth in natural resource sectors (Centre for Study of Living Standards May 2013).

The West is forecasting job growth and labour shortages and will rely increasingly on migrants to fill them. Labour shortages could limit the economy's ability to sustain and grow, and ultimately affect the standard of living for its citizens. Some details include:

- 2010 – 2020 BC is predicting 1 million job openings and 61,500 worker shortages (British Columbia Labour Market Outlook 2010 - 2020).
- 2011 – 2021 AB is predicting labour shortages of 96,000 (Alberta's Occupational Demand and Supply Outlook 2011 - 2021 and Update, January 2014).
- Saskatchewan is at an economic tipping point. By 2020, it will need an additional 120,000 workers (Saskatchewan's Labour Market Strategy, May 2009).
- By 2020, MB predicts labour shortage of over 20,000 skilled workers. It is increasing its international immigration with over 16,000 immigrants arriving in 2011. A major factor in this is the MB Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) which facilitates immigration applications by foreign workers with the skills, education and work experience needed to make an immediate economic contribution and to establish themselves successfully as permanent residents in Canada (Canada-Manitoba Labour Market Agreement (LMA) 2012/13 Annual Plan)
- While the YK does not appear to predict specific size of labour shortages, it does note that the skills shortages that the territory is facing are predicted to increase with anticipated economic growth and an aging population. (The Labour Market Framework for the Yukon, Immigration Strategy).
- In 2007, the Conference Board of Canada predicted that ONT could face shortfall of 364,000 workers by 2025. However, its present unemployment rate of 7.4% is higher than Canada's overall (6.9%) and the West's in particular (5.2%). (Statistics Canada Labour force characteristics, seasonally adjusted, by province [monthly] April 2014). Furthermore, manufacturing jobs are declining, and these represent an entry point for many newcomers which could make it difficult for Ontario to absorb immigrants (Burstein, 2010).

REGIONAL CHALLENGES

General research and also Interviews with WRWG representatives identified several challenges and issues being experienced by some or all of the five provinces/territory.

Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW):

Because of labour market pressures, the West is a growing user of the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program. Between 2003 and 2012, the West's proportion of Canada's TFW's grew from 32% to over 44% and actual numbers increased from 33,000 to over 94,000. (CIC Facts, 2012)

As is apparent, this group is growing in numbers, but is somewhat 'under the radar' from a settlement perspective. This is because TFW's are not generally eligible for settlement services, which affects their ability to integrate successfully even for short-term work. The group presents many issues; however, neither federal nor provincial governments appear to be addressing problems of service needs, ineligibility for services, establish explicit expectations for employer support or enforcement of labour standards. This situation also puts additional pressure on the service provider organizations which either need to find ways to accommodate service requests or deny client services: Neither is a satisfactory approach to such a critical issue and both put the sector and its providers at the crux of a problem which is neither its responsibility nor its creation.

Recently, there has been considerable public attention and media interest directed at variously the alleged displacement of temporary foreign workers (TFW) taking jobs or hours away from Canadian workers, a link of TFW to higher unemployment and also alleged program abuse by employers. These criticisms have led to an "immediate moratorium on the food services sector's access to the temporary foreign worker program" which remains in effect pending a review of the TFW program (April 24, 2014, Jason Kenney, Federal Minister of Employment). The general public isn't aware of the issues facing TFW's; however if it is not managed pro-actively, this issue could also feed into a public backlash against immigrants more generally.

Growth In Immigration Numbers

Alberta highlighted its significant growth in newcomers over the past decade from 20,000 in 2006 to 36,000 in 2012. This has brought additional funding for newcomer services and lead to new players in the sector as well as significant growth in settlement and integration agencies (tremendous increase in staff; client numbers have more than doubled) and client demand. The Yukon also reports that it is experiencing a growth in its immigrant population with about 9.9% of its population coming from outside Canada (Yukon Government, Yukon Economic Development Feb 2014).

Entry of New Service Providers

All provinces are experiencing the entry into settlement services of new organizations including education (colleges), employers and for-profit service providers. These organizations are variably involved with settlement UO – in some cases welcomed as members, however in most cases excluded. While some of these organizations have a role in recruitment, they typically

don't have a sufficiently broad perspective about overall settlement aside from their particular service delivery focus. As well, the separation of language programs and their umbrella organizations (ELSanet (BC), and EAL (MB)) from the settlement section is creating some disjointedness and tension. The potential impact of college (public sector union) salaries on the sector was also noted.

It is also noted that new service providers represent a significant opportunity for UOs. Specifically three identified opportunities: "Value Proposition" on page 24, and "Service Provider Organizations" and "Convenor role" on page 30 provide some initial possibilities for action.

Changes To Funded Services

In addition to TFW's, services such as those previously funded by BC and MB provinces are no longer supported but still needed. In some cases, (BC) the province has filled gap by funding services/clients which CIC doesn't fund. Support for BC's Welcoming Communities strategy will not likely continue, requiring change to a LIP model. As well, some groups (e.g. refugees) are no longer receiving health coverage. The 2012 CFP stipulated priorities for certain WR provinces/territories and these are provided in Appendix C.

Developing and/or Retaining Provincial Involvement

With the transition to CIC funding in BC and MB, it is less apparent what the role for the provinces can be in immigration, how to engage them in strategy development and encourage some funding for non-CIC eligible services/clients. AMSSA is promoting the creation of a provincial immigration strategy for BC. AAISA endorses its co-Management model. Gateways programs (SK) have some joint funding and provincial funding also allows services to be extended to TFW's and employment. The province of MB is not funding much in settlement services although it was the first province to develop a Provincial Nominee Program.

Rural and Remote Settlement

The WR is less urbanized than Canada overall and OR in particular (60%/81%/86%). Rural settlement needs are significant for both SK and MB; each which has seen rural settlement peak at 27%. Northern BC is also promoting and experiencing rural settlement. Smaller centres have challenges attracting/retaining newcomers:

- Often don't have the host communities and lack services.
- Mainstream will need to step in possibly in combination with electronic forms of service.
- SPO's will need to take lead roles in 2nd and 3rd tier cities.
- LIPS are being piloted as ways to mitigate these challenges (Burstein, 2010).

Services and systems have not been in place and efforts are needed to develop service networks across each province to enhance supports. Resourcing small and isolated communities is important to consider and address as it benefits both the individual immigrant as well as those rural areas that are being revived through development (e.g. northern BC, SK) and with newcomers. SK has developed Gateway programs in 11 communities and MB has 20-22 coordinated system entry points in various communities through rural areas.

Promoting Benefits of Immigration

Beyond obvious economic gains resulting from immigration, there are also social and cultural benefits. We need to do more to promote these benefits to the general public.

Service Usage

Of the one-third of newcomers who use settlement services, 60-75% (depending on province) use services of immigrant-serving agencies. Government websites and family and friends were however identified as the most common sources of settlement information access (Western Settlement Outcomes Survey (2013)). Of the different immigrant classes, refugees are much more likely to use settlement services.

The current situation noted with respect to information access by immigrants indicate the following:

- A high portion of settlement information access through technological means before arrival in Canada (>50%); with a majority looking to government websites.
- The portion accessing settlement services is <50%; most indicate they don't require them.
- Those who access services are getting them from immigrant-serving agencies (75%).
- Lack of awareness and confusion were top reasons for difficulties in accessing services.

Informal sources of information such as family and friends also very high – on par with government websites.

WESTERN REGION OPPORTUNITIES

<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Description</i>
Establish strong regional presence	Strength in maintaining separate provincial UOs to address unique/provincial issues, but very beneficial to have a strong regional presence. Can lead to creation of a strong and collective Western voice to have influence with CIC and create a different conversation. A regional approach is the West's best chance to successfully compete with the strength and presence of the OR.
Strategic Approach	Define strategic goals and priorities
Competitive Advantage	As part of strategic planning, analyze and define the competitive advantage of the WRWG entity as a whole. Consider what can be accomplished as a whole that the separate parts cannot achieve.
Value Proposition	Consider what value can be extended to stakeholders such as funders and also members. For example, could WRWG be a leader in building connections and capacity of the sector across the country or in developing evidence-based practices and an outcome framework.
WRWG partnership	Even with the range in UOs among WRWG, appreciation was noted for respect accorded the smaller organizations and reinforces the need to see one another as partners; foster communication and partnership. Increased connections among five partners are important - shared

Opportunity	Description
	knowledge about best/promising practices. This could also include creating synergies around common or joint proposals.
CIC Partnership	As with any partnership, it is important to understand the cares of the partner. CIC has a high interest and priority in LIPs, and very few currently exist within the WR. Could the WRWG advance the LIP model? How can it build connections and capacity of the sector across the country?
Rural interest	With a higher portion of rural populations in the WR, there is an opportunity to share expertise and develop innovative solutions to attracting and retaining newcomers to rural areas.
Increasing numbers and portions of newcomers into the WR	Develop and advance a case for a unique WR Immigration Strategy, including resources, given the trend in increased numbers. This could include an analysis of funding over time to determine whether funding is being sustained with growth.
Temporary Foreign Workers	With the negative public opinion about the TFW program, there may be ways to remove some of the GC pain, perhaps, for example, through community-based program/employer oversight.

5 Umbrella Organizations

There is great potential for provincial newcomer umbrella groups to have a greater role and influence in advancing Canada's approach to immigration. Each of the five organizations of the WRWG characterized its role as that of convener, provincial leader and voice for settlement sector as well as overall newcomer issues in their province/territory. This multi-faceted role includes bringing member agencies and other stakeholders together for service and strategic planning as well as member education and professional development; undertaking cross sector initiatives (e.g. LIPs) as well as interfacing with government.

GENERAL

As noted in *The Role of Immigrant and Refugee Serving Agency Umbrella Organizations in Settlement and Integration (SN management, 2014)*, umbrella organizations (UO) have existed in the immigrant and refugee sector since about the 1970s with all provinces having an entity by 2007. UOs are generally associations of related organizations, specific to an industry or sector who come together to pursue shared interests.

As the report goes on to describe and as supported by research, there is variability among UO in terms of:

- History
- Size – staff, budget
- Member criteria and fee structure

- Governance – board size and model
- Funding sources
- Mission/mandate and
- Activities and projects

A high level summary of UOs is provided in Appendix D.

In addition, all participants of WRWG and the Atlantic Region provincial umbrella organization belong to CISSA-ACSEI (Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance- Alliance canadienne du secteur de l'établissement des immigrants). This is a national organization that was formed in 2005 *to harness the expertise of the immigrant settlement sector and to act as the sector's national voice to help build a Canadian society in which all immigrants and refugees are able to participate fully.* These organizations and many of their members would also belong to Canadian Council for Refugees, also a national umbrella organization which is *committed to the rights and protection of refugees and other vulnerable migrants in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees and immigrants in Canada.*

The report goes on to identify UOs benefits and opportunities and, in summary, recommends that CIC:

- enter into discussions with UOs using approach recommended by Blue Ribbon Panel
- enter into funding agreements with UOs to carry out activities to advance national settlement goals. (see also Appendix E for a summary of the benefits, opportunities and recommendations of the

WRWG BEST AND PROMISING PRACTICES

Interviews with the five representatives of WRWG and two CIC Regional Directors identified several best and promising practices within the individual umbrella organizations, member province/territory or in other parts of Canada.

Category	Examples
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · AAISA's Settlement Practitioner Training and Accreditation (SPTA) model -mentioned often as a good model which could be shared and adopted · AMSSA's e-symposia and webinars - use to build sector capacity · SAISA's learning events and workshops · AMSSA's journal for practitioners and competency training
System Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Human Resource (HR) System development, noting AASIA HR system advances which include common job descriptions and compensation model · AMSSA's Information Bulletins to members · Promotion of diversity generally, noting BC's Safe Harbour Initiative

Category	Examples
Cross-Jurisdictional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · BC Health Fairs · The Alberta co-funding model between the federal and provincial governments · Community consultation and regional planning · BC's experience with and AMSSA's role during the transition was highlighted
Coordination of Rural Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Manitoba's approach to rural settlement and newcomer orientation · Saskatchewan's Gateway Projects were noted as effective and coordinated practices.
Intersector Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Collaboration between the immigrant and other sectors, noting SK's two initiatives to encourage newcomers and Aboriginal populations to identify common issues and work together on behalf of both populations
Provincial Settlement Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · While the three Prairie Provinces each have their own conferences, Alberta's also draws from both SK and MB. There is potential that individual conferences could be coordinated and scaled up

CIC RELATIONSHIP & REGIONALIZATION

Comments were generally quite positive about the relationship between the UOs and CIC and some joint interests and issues were identified. There was general agreement among UOs and CIC that an optimal relationship would be mutual and partnership-oriented. Both also saw the opportunity to create better understanding of the particular challenges and best practices of the Western Region. This could include pressures the West is under regarding increasing service demand and unique challenges related to TWF's and rural settlement, including ancillary client needs such as transportation, trained interpreters and housing. Lastly, they also agreed on the importance of a broader focus, beyond members in the case of UOs and beyond current approaches in the case of CIC.

Some of the challenges appear to be transitional issues that stem from regionalization and/or recent program repatriation in BC and MB while others are more directional in nature. Regionalization was meant to equalize regions as to activity, consistency and cost savings. The creation of the WR means that there are now 7 jurisdictions under one management structure. This compares to OR which has one jurisdiction. Also the CIC integration portfolio includes settlement, resettlement and multiculturalism.

In terms of CIC, UOs noted or implied:

- Positive and productive relationships with their CIC Settlement Program Officer.
- Concerns regarding transition issues and related communication; inconsistencies in and "prescriptiveness" (also noted by AB) of federal contractual expectations. Structures, processes and roles are in transition and there are many unknowns.
- The importance of CIC taking a broader, more flexible and less prescriptive approach in working with the Western Region.
- Staff turnover, new staff who are not fully conversant in new roles as project officers and/or staff not fully informed about CIC changes have caused challenges.
- Optimal relationships which would focus on reciprocal communication between CIC, the Region as well as with individual UOs.
- Promotion of a 'bottom-up' approach to policy and program development. Regionalization can add to the other challenge of funding repatriation in BC and MAN.
- Apparent changes in eligible funding items (e.g., AB settlement conference is no longer funded by CIC).
- Potential difficulty of building relationships when CIC contact is not locally based. This results in less contact, personal connections, knowledge and understanding.

In terms of UOs, CIC noted:

- Appreciation of UOs ability to convene the sector, conduct consultation and communicate perspectives to CIC.
- The importance of one united voice (settlement and language, and among settlement and integration agencies) for the WR in order to garner influence at the national level.
- CIC has undergone a significant amount of change in a short period of time.
- The importance of mutual goals and appreciation of each others' interests.
- Seats on the National Settlement Council are determined by a formula based on landing numbers which may no longer be reflective of current numbers.
- A strong interest in creation of consistent services and competencies across Canada within a system that is flexible and adaptable.

Of interest is the fact that CIC does not report in an aggregate way on the number of programs and contribution agreements in each region, province or territory.

CHALLENGES: CAPACITY, RESOURCES AND COMPETITORS

The five UOs are at different points in their evolution, with AMSSA, AAISA and SAISIA having operated for 37 and 34 and 27 years respectively and MIRSSA and MCY more recently developing over the past seven years. Each is addressing relevant issues arising in their provinces and/or priorities of their members, such as transition support in the cases of MIRSSA and AMSSA.

In total, the UOs represent a total of 106 full and 37 associate member organizations at the time of writing. Several of the WRWG UOs – AMSSA, AAISA and SAISIA – noted that they are

considering establishment of more inclusive membership policies or categories. The importance of this direction was identified and supported by CIC also.

Additional areas of success and value to members are summarized below.

	Current activities	Recent Successes
AMSSA	<p>Supporting BC's transition to CIC funding. It is supporting its members in this process generally, as well as by determining national CFP requirements and facilitating both regional meetings and issue-specific committees.</p> <p>It is also addressing impact of non-eligible CIC programs (Health, Safe Harbour, Welcoming Communities).</p>	<p>Safe Harbour Program → awards.</p> <p>Health Fair Model.</p> <p>Immigration & Integration Coordinating Committee - strategic service planning with regional & prov. groups</p> <p>Board is mission aligned and focused on member priorities.</p>
AAISA	<p>Facilitating development of a sector approach to settlement and taking steps to further professionalize the sector (e.g., module accreditation).</p> <p>Reviewing its board structure to make it more 'workable', noting that it is challenging to meaningfully engage large group of 19 board members. Small staff numbers limit capacity for creative strategies.</p>	<p>Settlement Practitioner Training Program</p> <p>Job classification + salary increases → sector moving to be employer of choice.</p> <p>Management training program → available to other provinces.</p> <p>Corporate support for recent biennial conference.</p>
SAISIA	<p>Providing learning events.</p> <p>Planning a settlement summit addressing.</p> <p>Professional development.</p>	<p>An organizational review in 2011 which lead to the creation of an office, staffing and action plan</p> <p>Community level sector planning.</p> <p>Cross-sector planning and collaboration (e.g., between newcomer/AB populations.</p> <p>2011 conference.</p>
MIRSSA	<p>Focusing on service provision including building capacity in organizations through training and development.</p> <p>Performing an ongoing liaison function with CIC regarding the transition.</p>	<p>Provincial transition to CIC funding in 2013.</p> <p>2012 was first MB settlement conference → promoted + service planning, networks development; may lead to biennial conference.</p>
Yukon	<p>Primarily focusing support for economic newcomers</p>	<p>Created in 2010 as a subdivision (nonprofit) under Yukon Tourism Education Council.</p> <p>Creating and operating new division.</p> <p>Expert at the table and close relationship with territorial government which sees it being sought out by Ministers.</p>

UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS OPPORTUNITIES

<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Description</i>
Organizational experience and expertise	All of the WRWG UOs are community-based board-governed organizations, each with experience establishing programs, developing funding, community engagement/consultation and with responding to sector change (regionalization, repatriation). This expertise represents a considerable resource to the sector.
Best practices	A variety of best practices exist – program support and sector capacity building. Sharing and advancing selected practices at the national level could be possible as well as innovation of new best practices that address the rapidly changing immigration landscape.
Service providers organizations	Develop offers to attract the full range of sector SPOs to existing UOs and in this, to be seen to be speaking on behalf of the region. This can also generate revenue for UOs.
Convener role	Create value to CIC by demonstrating an ability to bring together the growing range of service providers.
Leverage membership & stakeholders support	UOs have the opportunity to advance policy and program agendas through clear demonstrations of support by members and also through focused campaigns.
Create a picture	Track number of programs and contribution agreements in order to create and understand the full picture.
Co-management model	Define Alberta co-management model more specifically and determine broader applicability

6 Synthesis

In each of the sections above, opportunities arising from key trends have been identified at the national level, and within the immigration sector, the Western Region and umbrella organizations themselves. Key findings emerge for the WRWG to consider as it prepares its inaugural strategic plan.

Nationally, economic growth and tax base are reliant on immigrant and refugee newcomers because of low natural increase and an aging population. Immigrants are also seen as a potential solution for revitalization of rural areas. Such an interest will likely create competition among regions to attract and retain immigrants. It will be important to create compelling offers, supported by reality and which are marketed to potential immigrants. Technological advancements offer opportunities for engaging and supporting newcomers

The watchwords of the immigration sector can be identified as change, collaboration and outcomes. The GC's dissatisfaction with poor immigrant outcomes has created broad system change and reform as seen in recent years. Growing poverty among newcomers could erode Canadian support for immigration and threaten the entire system. There is a growing

understanding that cross-jurisdictional, multi-stakeholder strategies are the only way to improve the settlement process and longer-term integration outcomes.

With over 900 contribution agreements resulting from CIC's 2012 CFP, the number of service providers in the sector has increased. Over 90% of the CFP funds were dedicated to provision of direct services to achieve outcomes. SPO's must develop strategies and forge relationships with municipalities and local mainstream organizations. Collaboration between the settlement sector, mainstream organizations and government is foundational and the settlement sector must engage governments as a full partner (Burststein 2010).

For the WRWG, these national and sector trends create opportunity. As one of only 3 CIC regions, and the one where the greatest numbers of immigrant and refugees are arriving, the WRWG can influence the national conversation and agenda. The strategies and mechanisms to develop a strong regional presence are many and reside primarily in adopting parallel internal organizational and external sector/stakeholder foci.

With the scope and magnitude of sector change that has accompanied the recent establishment of WRWG, defined purpose would benefit WRWG and with CIC to establish parameters of their partnership and purpose and focus alignment. Limited interviews with CIC staff indicate interest in WRWG advancing the CIC agenda as a sector convener and in developing the ability and credibility to speak on behalf of sector. The idea of a cohesive entity with one voice/story was of particular interest.

There may also be conflicts to surface and resolve. For example, activities that CIC considers to be within their scope of responsibility and in which WRWG is similarly interested or vice versa. The greatest success will lie at the intersection of mutual interests where both WRWG and CIC achieve their goals.

Lastly, while there is a lot of variability among UOs, their resident experience and expertise affords great potential to impact the sector. UOs are connected to their communities and members, and by virtue of their work, have an affinity for change and collaboration, both of interest to CIC. Presently, UOs have the advantage of there being no competitors, with few exceptions (BC, MB). By taking steps to strengthen their organizations and offerings, each can encourage membership by the expanded number of agencies that hold CIC contribution agreements, their unique place as a sector hub, convener and voice is affirmed.

The collated opportunities are provided in the table below:

WRWG COLLATED OPPORTUNITIES

	<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Description</i>
National	National agenda	Develop a deep familiarity with GC's agenda and define ways (programs/services) by which WRWG could be clearly responding
	Technology	Advance a case for technology and its use to increase sector effectiveness and efficiency
	Information Access	Differentiate the data and information offerings of umbrella organizations from that of government websites in a way that provides greater value.
	Technological Competency	Provide support to member organizations to increase their technological effectiveness as related to service delivery and organizational effectiveness
	Increasing immigration	Prepare for increased future immigration
	Sector leadership in multi-stakeholder strategies	The sector (and umbrella organizations) can become a "band leader" in bringing stakeholders to the table, facilitating cross-jurisdictional discussions, helping to create comprehensive strategies and leveraging existing experience and expertise and resources to bring all parts of sector together including new SPOs.
	Change Imperative	Settlement and integration is not having the intended positive results for many newcomers. Canadian society generally, as well as the economy particularly, is impacted. At the same time, Canada desperately needs immigrants to augment its labour force and support the economy and it needs them to be successful in their employment achievements as well as their overall integration into society.
	System fluidity	The political, economic and social urgency for system reform could set the stage for greater openness to creativity and for involvement of the sector in new roles. For example, the sector could seek involvement in the federal-provincial vision process and influence system reform and outcomes determination.
	CIC leadership	CIC could play a lead role on behalf of the federal government in bringing other ministries to cross-jurisdictional tables. It could do this locally and for the Western Region. CIC could create enabling structures to facilitate policy discussions on crosscutting issues involving settlement agencies and other government ministries (e.g., policy tables with ministries responsible for health, education and housing - policy areas which are frequently engaged by settlement organizations in creating integrated solutions for families/communities. (Burstein 2012)
	Federal Immigration Policy	How new federal directions will change the characteristics and needs of newcomers, dynamics of settlement and impact on

	<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Description</i>
		services was identified as an area about which to learn more and to innovate responsive services.
Western Region	Establish strong regional presence	Strength in maintaining separate provincial UOs to address unique/provincial issues, but very beneficial to have a strong regional presence. Can lead to creation of a strong and collective Western voice to have influence with CIC and create a different conversation. A regional approach is the West's best chance to successfully compete with the strength and presence of the OR.
	Strategic Approach	Define strategic goals and priorities.
	Competitive Advantage	As part of strategic planning, analyze and define the competitive advantage of the WRWG entity as a whole. Consider what can be accomplished as a whole that the separate parts cannot achieve.
	Value Proposition	Consider what value can be extended to stakeholders such as funders and also members. For example, could WRWG be a leader in building connections and capacity of the sector across the country or in developing evidence-based practices and an outcome framework.
	WRWG partnership	Even with the range in UOs among WRWG, appreciation was noted for respect accorded the smaller organizations and reinforces the need to see one another as partners; foster communication and partnership. Increased connections among five partners are important - shared knowledge about best/promising practices. This could also include creating synergies around common or joint proposals.
	CIC Partnership	As with any partnership, it is important to understand the cares of the partner. CIC has a high interest and priority in LIPs, and very few currently exist within the WR. Could the WRWG advance the LIP model? How can it build connections and capacity of the sector across the country?
	Rural interest	With a higher portion of rural populations in the WR, there is an opportunity to share expertise and develop innovative solutions to attracting and retaining newcomers to rural areas.
	Increasing numbers and portions of newcomers into the WR	Develop and advance a case for a unique WR Immigration Strategy, including resources, given the trend in increased numbers. This could include an analysis of funding over time to determine whether funding is being sustained with growth.
	Temporary Foreign Workers	With the negative public opinion about the TFW program, there may be ways to remove some of the GC pain, perhaps, for example, through community-based program/employer oversight through methods defined and developed by WRWG.

	<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Description</i>
Umbrella Organizations	Organizational experience and expertise	All of the WRWG UOs are community-based board-governed organizations, each with experience establishing programs, developing funding, community engagement/consultation and with responding to sector change (regionalization, repatriation). This expertise represents a considerable resource to the sector.
	Best practices	A variety of best practices exist – program support and sector capacity building. Sharing and advancing selected practices at the national level could be possible as well as innovation of new best practices that address the rapidly changing immigration landscape.
	Service provider organizations	Develop offers to attract the full range of sector SPOs to existing UOs and in this, to be seen to be speaking on behalf of the region. This can also generate revenue for UOs.
	Convener role	Create value to CIC by demonstrating an ability to bring together the growing range of service providers.
	Leverage membership & stakeholders support	UOs have the opportunity to advance policy and program agendas through clear demonstrations of support by members and also through focused campaigns.
	Create a picture	Track number of programs and contribution agreements in order to create and understand the full picture.
	Co-management model	Define Alberta co-management model more specifically and determine broader applicability

When considered as a totality, there is clearly wide-ranging opportunity for WRWG to develop a distinct offer that is of value to both CIC and their members and stakeholders. It is hoped that this report aids in setting the stage for further discussions. The environmental scan is intended as a point-in-time snapshot of the current trends, challenges and opportunities for the WRWG to consider in strategic planning. It provides an objective review of the relevant issues and conditions in order to understand the operating context. It is recommended that continuous scanning and engagement with environment be implemented as a practice to ensure that relevant factors are considered in planning.

7 Appendices

Appendix A: External Trends

Appendix B: Sector Data Trends

Appendix C: 2012 Call for Proposals – Western Region Priorities

Appendix D: Comparison of Umbrella Organizations

Appendix E: Overview of CIC Discussion Paper

Appendix F: Source Documents and Project Reference