



# National Immigration Centre (NIC)

## Spring 2021 Members Meeting Agenda

### Virtual Event (MS Teams)

#### Theme: Immigration Regionalization

*In recent years there has been a significant increase in efforts to encourage newcomers to settle outside of major centers. IRCC has launched specialized regionalization programs such as the Atlantic Immigration and Rural and Northern Immigration pilots. A growing number of smaller communities have also mobilized locally to attract and retain newcomers.*

*COVID-19 has challenged these efforts, as disruptions to normal permanent resident arrivals have seen a reversal of the trends toward more secondary-center settlement. However, a continued focus on regionalized settlement may be a key to ensure economic opportunities for newcomers arriving in a post-COVID-19 economy.*

#### Meeting objectives

- Learn about and discuss how to plan for and design inclusive cities.
- Discuss how working in rural areas in particular changes how we approach settlement service provision and integration.
- Learn about what attracts immigrants to smaller communities and makes them more likely to stay there long-term.
- Highlight best practices to help communities attract and retain newcomers.
- Hear directly from those with lived experiences of settling outside of major urban areas.
- Begin to develop an immigration regionalization research agenda.

#### Meeting contact

Jo-Leen Folz, Council Officer, The Conference Board of Canada

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## Session 1, April 7, 2021

1:00 p.m. –

1:30 p.m. **Welcome and National Immigration Centre Updates**

**Iain Reeve, Director, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada**

**Jo-Leen Folz, Council Officer, The Conference Board of Canada**

1:30 p.m. –

2:30 p.m. **Panel – Diver(city): Building Welcoming Cities**

*What do we need to consider when planning for and building welcoming and inclusive cities? Why is attracting immigrants increasingly important for smaller communities and how are these places transforming themselves to attract immigrants? What is the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships in making multicultural cities ‘work’ in practice?*

**Moderator: Yilmaz Dinc, Senior Research Associate, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada**

**Sarah Wayland, Senior Project Manager, Hamilton Immigration Partnership**

**Zhixi Zhuang, Associate Professor, Ryerson University**

**Anna Triandafyllidou, Chair, CERC, Ryerson University**

2:30 p.m. **Adjourn Session 1**

## Session 2, April 8, 2021

1:00 p.m. –

2:30 p.m. **Panel – Working in Rural Areas: Settlement Sector Experiences**

*In what ways does working in rural communities affect the way we approach settlement service provision and integration? What unique challenges do newcomers face in rural areas? How have service providers adapted and innovated?*

**Moderator: Iain Reeve, Director, Immigration, The Conference Board of Canada**



**Oliver Pryce, Project Coordinator, Rural Employment Initiative,  
Newcomer Centre of Peel**

**Elizabeth Kaminsky, Policy Analyst, IRCC**

**David Cashaback, Senior Director, Settlement and Integration  
Policy, IRCC**

**Steve Reynolds, Executive Director, Regional Connections Inc.**

**2:30 p.m.     [Adjourn Session 2](#)**

## **Session 3, April 21, 2021**

**1:00 p.m. –**

**2:00 p.m.     [Panel – Attracting and Retaining Immigrants Beyond the Gateways](#)**

*What informs the decisions immigrants make about where to settle? What draws people to non-traditional locations and makes them more likely to stay long-term?*

**Moderator: Kathryn Dennler, Research Associate, Immigration, The  
Conference Board of Canada**

**Ather Akbari, Professor, St. Mary's University**

**Michelle Nguyen, Research Technician, CERC, Ryerson University**

**Tony Fang, Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Cultural and Economic  
Transformation, Memorial University**

**2:00 p.m. –**

**2:15 p.m.     [Stand and Stretch Break](#)**

**Jo-Leen Folz, Council Officer, The Conference Board of Canada**

**2:15 p.m. –**

**2:45 p.m.     [Panel – Lived Experiences](#)**

*What challenges and opportunities have immigrants faced when settling outside of major urban centres? What initially attracted newcomers to these locations and what encouraged them to remain?*



We will be providing pre-recorded interviews with our speakers ahead of this session. We will bring everyone together on the day of the meeting for an interactive discussion period. This is not a webinar or formal presentation. This is intended to be a fully interactive discussion between the speakers, attendees, and guests.

**Moderator: Jo-Leen Folz, Council Officer, The Conference Board of Canada**

**Manikantan P Chandrasekharan (Mani), Rural Employment Initiative Participant, Sault Ste. Marie**

**Tetiana Miminoshvili, Immigration Experience, Morden Manitoba**

2:45 p.m. –

3:00 p.m. **Break**

3:00 p.m. –

3:45 p.m. **Breakout Research Agenda Discussion**

3:45 p.m. –

4:00 p.m. **Closing Remarks**

4:00 p.m.

**Meeting Adjourns**

## Next Events

- [Canadian Immigration Virtual Summit](#), May 25-27, 2021
- **Fall 2021 Members Meeting (date TBC)**
- ***Stay tuned for more webinars, networking events and virtual presentations throughout the months to come!***