



Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in Cranbrook and Kimberley, British Columbia

This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.

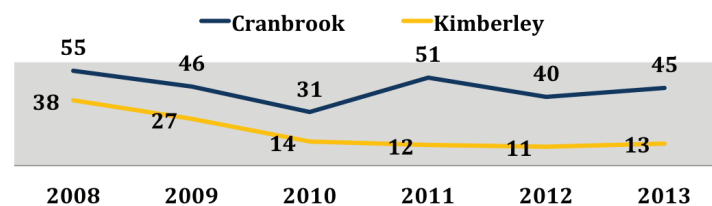


Population (2011): 25,037 residents in Cranbrook and 6,654 in Kimberley.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Permanent Resident Landings Cranbrook & Kimberley 2008-2013

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada



Data sources: 4 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs) receiving funding from CIC, Provincial, NGO, and private sources. Some SPOs receive no funding.

- Findings validated locally.

SETTLEMENT SERVICES



Top services offered

- Information and orientation, language training, help finding a job, cultural events, legal support/referrals, social inclusion/integration support



Key gaps identified

- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Almost all of the services need to expand
- Lack of an accessible "one-stop-shop" for newcomer services
- Inadequate funding



Barriers to access services

- Lack of services as a result of inadequate funding
- Language difficulties of newcomers
- Lack of information about services available



Top services needed

Information and orientation, social inclusion/integration support, assistance finding housing and with daily life, health services (including mental health), occupational mentorship and networking, and language training and assessment.



Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services

- Information and orientation
- Language training
- Help finding a job and help with daily life.
- Financial support

PARTNERSHIPS



The most commonly identified partnerships exist with school boards, umbrella organizations, newcomers, health services, municipal offices, civil society groups, children/family services, businesses, ethno-cultural groups and others. Participants reported a desire for a partnership with universities, police force, and language training providers.

INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY



- Perception: It is "very difficult" or "somewhat difficult" for newcomers to obtain employment due to lack of jobs, language barriers, lack of recognition of foreign credentials, and the perceived need among employers for Canadian qualifications and experience.
- Lack of ethnic community groups, difficulty accessing the labour market, language barriers, and a high overall unemployment rate makes it challenging for newcomers to settle in the two communities.

IMMIGRATION SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND GAPS IN CIC'S WESTERN REGION: Cranbrook & Kimberley, British Columbia

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Cranbrook and Kimberley, British Columbia and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Cranbrook and Kimberley by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Cranbrook and Kimberley. Data was collected in October 2014 from 4 organizations that serve newcomers in Cranbrook and Kimberley through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization. One participant is a CIC funded agency that also receives provincial, private, and NGO funding. A second organization receives federal, private, and provincial funding, while a third agency receives no funding at all. The fourth respondent did not provide information about funding. Two survey respondents provided email feedback on the preliminary survey findings contained in the draft report.

Background

Cranbrook and Kimberley are small communities located in the south east corner of BC, in an area known as the Kootenays. According to Statistics Canada, the population of Cranbrook in 2011 was 25,037, a 3.7% increase from 2006. The 2011 Kimberley population was 6,654 which represents an 8.4% increase from 2006. CIC figures from 2008-2013 indicate the arrival of 268 Permanent Residents to Cranbrook and 115 to Kimberley.

Community Settlement Concerns

ACCESSING SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Of those surveyed, 3 respondents thought that the number of newcomers in their area had increased in the past 5 years, and speculated that this was due to industrial expansion and arrival of increasing numbers of TFWs. When asked for their perception about how easy it is for newcomers to settle, 3 respondents reported that it is "somewhat difficult" while the fourth respondent suggested that it is "somewhat easy." Respondents

suggested that difficulties stem from the reduction in funding that occurred as a result of the recent shift from provincial to CIC funding and the lack of an accessible "one-stop-shop" for newcomer services. The barriers perceived to most inhibit settlement include: lack of ethnic community groups, difficulty accessing the labour market, language barriers, and a high overall unemployment rate. Most respondents also drew attention to the difficulties of making social connections and fitting into small, homogenous, and relatively insular local communities. Further, 3 respondents agreed that over 25% of newcomers find it difficult to locate the services they need in their communities. This was perceived to be mainly due to lack of services as a result of inadequate funding, language barriers, and lack of information about services. However, respondents also noted that the small size of their communities may assist newcomers as the limited number of service providers means they are relatively simple to locate. For the most part, respondents indicated that all of the concerns listed in Appendix A have been raised.

GETTING JOBS

All respondents reported that it is "very difficult" or "somewhat difficult" for newcomers to obtain employment due to lack of jobs, language barriers, lack of recognition of foreign credentials, and the perceived need among employers for Canadian qualifications and experience. Respondents indicated that newcomers tend to be concentrated in low paying, low skill, part time work.

Available Settlement Services

CURRENT SERVICE PROVIDER CAPACITY

Three respondents provided information about the number of newcomers they serve. Together, these three agencies serve 50 PRs, 21 Refugees, 15 International Students, and 12 Naturalized Citizens each month. In the month before the survey was conducted, 11 PRs and 6 International Students requested but did not receive services from these organisations.

INVENTORY OF SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Respondents indicated that all of the services listed in Appendix B are available in their community except for recognition of foreign credentials. Specifically, apart from investment opportunities and recognition of foreign credentials, all of the services listed are offered to some extent by at least 1 respondent as well as another SPO. All respondents indicated that they provide integration support, legal support, and childcare.

The most needed services for newcomers were reported to be information and orientation, integration support, help with daily life, help finding housing, health services (including mental health), occupational mentorship and networking, and language training and assessment. At least 2 respondents indicated a need for expansion in all of the service areas listed in Appendix B

NEWCOMERS INELIGIBLE FOR CIC FUNDED SERVICES

Respondents reported that the most needed services for newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services are information and orientation, language training, help finding a job, financial support, and help with daily life. Turning to specific categories of ineligible newcomers, respondents were unanimous that Refugee Claimants require all of the services listed in Appendix B, and TFWs require all the services listed except occupational mentorship and networking, help setting up a business, recognition of foreign credentials, and educational upgrading. At least 2 respondents indicated that Naturalized Citizens need each of the services listed in Appendix B, and 1-2 respondents indicated that International Students need each of the services listed.

Tracking and Planning

Although only one respondent's services for newcomers are guided by an internal strategic plan, all respondents reported that their organization regularly assesses the service needs of newcomers. Two assess needs internally, 2 assess needs jointly with other SPOs, and 1 assesses needs both internally and jointly. Assessments are done informally through observation and conversation. Additional sources of information include community tables and other SPOs. Respondents were not aware of annual reports on settlement achievements in their area.

Specific Capacities

Almost all survey respondents reported that their organisation currently has adequate capacity to meet reporting requirements, coordinate services with other service providers, communicate with stakeholders, create

governing and strategic plans, and staff skills for delivery and maintenance of services. At least 2 respondents stated that they lack adequate capacity for: provision of services in both official languages, mobilization of community to support newcomers, financial support to maintain current services from government and nongovernmental sources, and staff to provide services. At least 2 respondents indicated that additional future capacity will be needed for: staff to provide services, staff skills for delivery and maintenance of services, financial support to maintain current services from government and nongovernmental sources, mobilization of community to support newcomers, provision of services in both official languages, and creation of governing and strategic plan.

Partnerships

The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). All respondents reported active partnerships with other SPOs to provide settlement and welcoming, while 2 respondents also partner to provide integration services. At least 3 respondents report partnerships with school/school boards, umbrella organizations, newcomers, health services, municipal offices, civil society groups, children/family services, businesses, ethno-cultural groups, labour market services, religious organizations, foundations, and public libraries. Two organisations desire partnerships with universities, police force, and language training providers. In feedback, 1 respondent drew attention to the need for stronger partnerships between service providers and SAHs to ensure the adequate provision of services to sponsored refugees. The respondent emphasized that this would involve inclusion of SAHs in funding applications. Another respondent stressed that collaboration requires a funding allocation process that takes into account expertise and experience rather than lowest bids to identify which organisations should provide which services. There is also a desire to reactivate and expand partnerships developed under Welcoming Communities with a new focus on developing regional strategies to attract and retain newcomers. However, as in other communities, respondents noted the need for dedicated funding to support such collaborative efforts.

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Appendix A – Possible Concerns about Access to Services

CONCERNS ABOUT ACCESS TO SERVICES

- Lack of services in community
- Confusion about where to get help
- Not being eligible for services
- Language difficulties
- Lack of childcare
- Transportation difficulties
- Hours of the day that services are offered
- Financial difficulties
- Discrimination because of being a newcomer
- Discrimination because of race or ethnicity

Appendix B – List of Possible Services

SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation
- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

Appendix C – Possible Organizational Capacities

- Staff to provide services
- Financial support from government sources to maintain current services
- Financial support from non-government sources to maintain current services
- Communication with stakeholders
- Coordinating services with other service providers
- Staff skills for delivery and maintenance of services
- Mobilization of community to support and welcome newcomers
- Creation of governing and strategic plan
- Meet reporting requirements
- Provide services in both official languages