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Attraction and Retention of Immigrants in Small Centres: The Case of Kingston, Ontario

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ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF IMMIGRANTS IN SMALL CENTRES:
THE CASE OF KINGSTON, ONTARIO

by

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A Major Research Paper
presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in the Program of
Immigration and Settlement Studies

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ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF IMMIGRANTS IN SMALL CENTRES: THE CASE OF KINGSTON, ONTARIO

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Master of Arts
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ABSTRACT

Rising concern over the large number of immigrants who have settled in Canada's three largest municipalities (Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver) in the last two decades, has combined with recent concern over economic decline in some of Canada's less populated regions to create a push for an increase in municipal government responsibility for issues related to immigration. This has sparked a trend in small municipalities taking action to increase their ability to attract and retain newcomers to their area. This paper explores this process through a case study of Kingston, Ontario, using 2001 and 2006 Census data and interviews with key informants in the community. Analysis of a number of factors in Kingston related to immigrant needs and community attitudes, resulted in the conclusion that this third-tier municipality is in the beginning stages of taking appropriate steps towards the sustainable attraction and retention of immigrant residents.

Key Words: attraction and retention; immigrant settlement; Kingston, Ontario; small centres; second-tier cities; third-tier cities; regionalization.

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A big thank you to my supervisor, Dr. Michael Doucet, and to my second reader, Dr. Sandeep Agrawal, for their suggestions and encouragement throughout the writing process.

Thank you, also, to the individuals in Kingston, Ontario, who participated in this study as key informants. Your knowledge of immigration in the community and enthusiasm for this project helped to make my work enjoyable and worthwhile.

Finally, a special thank you to my parents, for their interest, encouragement, and support over the last twelve months. Your confidence in my abilities gave me the drive I needed to achieve my goals. I love you.

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to the residents of the City of Kingston, Ontario. May you take pride in each other, and may your efforts to build an inclusive and prosperous community bring you great success.

Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	vii
List of Figures.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Methodology.....	2
Review of Literature.....	5
About Kingston.....	11
Findings.....	20
Employment.....	21
Education.....	23
Availability of ESL Classes and LINC.....	25
Immigrant Services.....	26
Ethno-cultural Diversity.....	27
Accessible and Affordable Housing and Healthcare.....	30
Awareness of Kingston as an Immigrant Destination.....	31
Attitudes Towards Immigrants and Immigration.....	32
Intercultural Awareness.....	33
Current Strategies.....	35
Discussion.....	38
Conclusions.....	46
Bibliography of Resources.....	48
Appendix A: Interview Questions.....	51

List of Tables

Table 1: Participant Identification Coding.....	4
Table 2: Top Five Census Tracts by Immigrant Population, 2001.....	17
Table 3: Top Five Census Tracts by Immigrant Population, 2006.....	18

List of Figures

Figure 1: Kingston Residents' Knowledge of Official Canadian Languages, 2006.....	13
Figure 2: Mother Tongue of Kingston Residents, 2006.....	13
Figure 3: Languages Spoken Most Often in Kingston Homes, 2006.....	14
Figure 4: Visible Minorities in Kingston, 2006.....	15
Figure 5: Period of Immigration of Current Immigrants in Kingston.....	16
Figure 6: Census Tracts with the Highest Percentages of Immigrant Residents, 2001....	17
Figure 7: Census Tracts with the Highest Percentages of Immigrant Residents, 2006...	18

Attraction and Retention of Immigrants in Small Centres: The Case of Kingston, Ontario

Introduction

When the publishing of the 2001 Canadian Census results indicated exceptionally low population levels in certain areas across the country (Abu-Laban and Garber 2005, 521), strategies aimed at achieving a more balanced population distribution gained a level of attention they had not seen since Clifford Sifton's rein as Minister of the Interior from 1896-1905 (Kelley and Trebilcock 2000, 118). In the decade and a half leading up to the 2001 Census, Canada had experienced large and consistent flows of immigrants into the three leading metropolises, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver (MTV). The combination of this recent pressure on Canada's largest cities, and the fear of collapse of her smaller ones, resulted in the provincial and federal agenda known as regionalization. Leading the way towards this new agenda was Citizenship and Immigration Minister, Denis Coderre. While his strategies have never been unanimously supported (see McIsaac 2003), Coderre's declaration of the need to "develop flexible approaches to attract immigrants to smaller centres" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, news release 2003, in Abu-Laban and Garber 2005, 535) was echoed in smaller and less-populated areas all over the country. Local governments and service agencies of larger municipalities were also in support of such a strategy. This was more due to their knowledge of the lack of resources available to newcomers, and the barriers they were faced with upon arrival in the largest cities, than due to the numbers of immigrants themselves (Walton-Roberts 2007, 13).

While regionalization theory has taken the form of programs such as the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) at the provincial and federal levels, agencies, corporations and government groups at the local and municipal level have also been busy

at work on the issue. According to Halliday (2006), smaller cities that want to be successful in the future need to be able to “attract, retain, and support the development of a diverse citizenry” (88). The purpose of this paper is to shed light on this recent trend in attracting and retaining immigrants in smaller centres. In particular, it examines the city of Kingston, Ontario, as a case study in what this process involves. Through an in-depth literature review, Canadian Census data analysis, and interviews with key informants in the community, the author hopes to determine how far the city of Kingston has come in terms of embracing immigration, and how far it needs to go to secure a successful future. This paper begins with a review of related literature, followed by a description of the various research methods employed by the author. A brief overview of the city of Kingston in terms of history and current immigrant resident demography leads into a detailed account of the findings of this study, as well as discussion points. The final section includes a summary of these findings and notes for future research.

Methodology

In order to arrive at a comprehensive set of conclusions in this case study, as to the current state of affairs in Kingston, Ontario, in terms of the successful settlement of immigrants, a number of methods were employed. The Statistics Canada database was used in two ways. First, through the Community Profile tool, the number of immigrants in the city of Kingston¹, as well as characteristics of those immigrants—age, education level, and Canadian language ability—were established. Second, the mapping function of the Community Profile tool was used in combination with the City of Kingston’s official

¹ For the purposes of this study, it was more pertinent to use data related to the *city* of Kingston, as opposed to the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), due to the unlikelihood of many immigrants choosing to settle in the northernmost regions of the latter.

website mapping tool, Statistics Canada data, and Microsoft Excel, to determine where in the city of Kingston there was a large concentration of immigrants, if anywhere. The mapping function of Statistics Canada's Community Profile tool provided a view of the division of the city into Census Tracts (CTs). Close examination of these boundaries—as well as those of the municipal Electoral Districts (EDs) from the City of Kingston's website mapping tool—allowed for identification of which EDs were located within or between which CTs. Population data, provided by Statistics Canada's Community Profile for the city of Kingston, Ontario, allowed for the comparison of immigrant population and total population in each CT. Using Microsoft Excel for calculation purposes, the CTs with the highest proportion of immigrant residents were determined for both the 2001 and 2006 Census years. This information was used to select an appropriate Council member for interview purposes.

Due to time constraints and the nature of the research, it was decided that the bulk of the material used for analyzing Kingston's current level of preparedness for immigrants—and desire or effort to enhance it—would be determined by a small number of key informant interviews. Individual interviews 30-60 minutes in length were conducted with six key informants in the Kingston community over a period of two weeks. Participants were chosen based on their role in the community and its corresponding relationship to immigration information and/or issues. For reasons of confidentiality, the names of these participants will not be used in this paper. Instead, the individuals will be identified by a general description of their position in the Kingston community. The following table illustrates the coding that will be used throughout the

paper. It is necessary to identify the organizations they are a part of, for the purpose of future discussion.

Table 1: Participant Identification Coding

Coded Identification	General Community Role Description
KEYS representative	High level staff member at Kingston Employment and Youth Services
ISKA representative	High level staff member at Immigrant Services Kingston and Area
Queen's representative	High level staff member of Queen's University Human Rights Department
KEDCO representative	High level staff member of Kingston Economic Development Corporation
City Council representative/ Councilor	City Councilor of Electoral District located in Census Tract with highest proportion of immigrant residents in Kingston
Department of Community Services representative	High level staff member of City of Kingston's Department of Community Services

Each individual was asked a series of questions relating to their knowledge of the current organization of the Kingston community in terms of immigrant needs accommodation, as well as past, current, or future initiatives in which they were involved or of which they were aware. The primary investigator chose to use a semi-formal approach to the interviews to allow the participants the freedom to engage with questions that most interested them or that they felt most knowledgeable about, while ensuring that certain issues were touched on. For a list of the questions asked to each participant, please refer to Appendix A.

Additional methods of research included the review of a current proposal for action on immigration issues put forward by partner organizations in the Kingston community, and the examination of a federal government-funded monograph entitled *Attraction and Retention of Immigrants: A Tool Box for Smaller Centres*. In addition,

information was found in a series of recent newspaper articles written for the *Kingston Whig-Standard* on various topics related to immigration in Kingston.

With this wide range of resources and research methods, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn regarding the city of Kingston's current attitudes towards, and service ability for, immigrants who choose to settle in the area.

Literature Review

The themes of this paper come out of a recent literature that emphasizes the importance of municipal-level involvement and leadership related to immigration programming. While issues of immigration are officially the shared jurisdiction of the federal and provincial governments in Canada, their distance from the everyday reality of immigrant life has been shown to contribute to a lack of appropriate measures for immigration management within municipalities (Walton-Roberts 2007, 13). Poirer's work (2004) provides insight into many aspects of the reasons for, and consequences of, increasing municipal government power when it comes to issues of immigration. The first advantage Poirer notes is the superior ability of municipalities to manage issues related to increases in ethnic diversity. Their closeness to residents, geographically as well as in terms of political accountability, means that municipal governments are in a better position than provincial and federal governments to foster healthy inter-cultural relationships. Municipalities are also in a good position to bring together a number of actors for the purposes of planning and implementing programs, and the fact that they feel the largest impact of immigration indicates the potential to manipulate these programs effectively. According to Poirer, these factors can combine to produce

economic development and an increase in quality of life for all municipal residents. However, another significant consequence of increasing municipal responsibility for immigration management is the potential that this devolution of power by the provincial governments will not be accompanied by a corresponding download of funds. This has obvious implications on the extent to which municipal programs can be successfully implemented, and is an issue my research hopes to discuss.

Within this literature on the advantages of municipal-level management of immigration is the acknowledgement that not all municipalities are faced with the same challenges. This awareness has given way to a method of categorization of cities based on population size, economic activity, and service availability, among other things. This categorization primarily refers to cities as first-tier, second-tier, or third-tier. Krahn, Derwing, and Abu-Laban (2005) provide a good definition of each. First-tier cities refer to the three largest metropolises in Canada, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver (MTV), where the majority of immigrants to the country initially land or soon end up. They have extremely large populations, lots of opportunity for employment, education, and available housing, and the extent of their immigration services is unparalleled in the rest of Canada. Second-tier cities are described by Krahn *et al* as having populations over 500,000 people, a strong and diversified economy, a large presence of ethnic diversity, and a multitude of immigration services available. They give the examples of Edmonton and Calgary, Alberta, as second-tier cities. Third-tier cities tend to have a population less than 500,000 and things like employment opportunities, cultural diversity, and immigration services are limited. Examples include London, Windsor, and Halifax. Through this initial description, I propose that Kingston, Ontario is a third-tier city, due to its

population of just over 114,000 (Statistics Canada 2007a), and the information that this study brings to light.

Closely connected to this acknowledgement of differently-tiered cities, and the emerging appreciation for increased municipal responsibility in immigration initiatives, is literature that examines the movement of immigrants in order to understand how municipalities can prepare themselves to attract and retain newcomers. The long-standing approach to immigrants in this regard has been to view them as beneficial for economic development and to fill labour shortages (Krahn *et al* 2005; Metropolis 2003; Triple S. Community Building 2005). The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) was designed to do just that by matching immigrants with specific skills to jobs appropriate for their abilities (Krahn *et al* 2005). However, the majority of the literature that includes recommendations for how to attract and retain newcomers consists of various non-economic aspects as well.

Studies, such as that done by Krahn *et al* (2005), examine the reasons behind newcomers' choices to move out of, or remain in, a given city. What these studies tend to find is that immigrants are more likely to live in a place where there are employment opportunities for them, preferably in their field of training, and educational institutions for their children. They also look for the availability of English or French as a Second Language (E/FSL) classes for everyone, easily accessible and appropriate immigration services, and an established group of residents from their ethnic background (National Working Group on Smaller Centre Strategies 2005, 34). Things like the climate of an area, or the availability of affordable housing, could also be reasons for leaving or remaining (Metropolis 2003; McIsaac 2003; Krahn *et al* 2005). McIsaac (2003) and

Poirer (2004) also noted the importance of the immigrant's knowledge of the municipality they are living in or are planning to move to, and the presence of ethno-specific organizations within the community that might cater to their specific cultural needs.

One implication of this knowledge regarding the factors influencing the settlement decisions of newcomers is deciding how municipalities, especially smaller ones, can work towards accommodating these needs. The literature frames this in terms of potential strategies small cities should consider adopting. For example, Bauder and di Biase suggest a general approach of ensuring settlement and employment services are “adequate,” coordinating newcomers’ skills with local labour-market opportunities, and using marketing strategies to increase awareness of the area as a settlement destination (Mulholland 2006, 33). The Metropolis organization (2003) recommends, more specifically, the formation of a community-based council whose aim is to assess the needs of the community and determine how immigration might help to address those needs, as well as how the community might address the needs of immigrants. McIsaac (2003) suggests starting by coordinating all immigration services, from recruitment to settlement to establishment in the community, and states that this coordination must be preceded by cooperation among all affected parties.

These strategies are part of a quickly developing trend towards what is called Smart Settlement or Sustainable Settlement. Triple S. Community Building (2005) provides a good example of this approach to preparing a community for newcomers. They maintain that immigrants will be less likely to leave a municipality that they have grown attached to, and that the municipal government has an important role to play in

fostering this attachment. Access to services and recreation activities that are most likely to be beneficial for immigrants in the long-term is one suggestion for municipal initiative. However, the most important recommendation is to encourage newcomers to participate in social and political aspects of the city along with the economic, and to include them in decision-making processes in the same ways as other residents. “It is not enough to just bring someone to a place—you have to give them a stake in the community” (Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades, date unknown, par. 4).

A similar sentiment is expressed throughout a comprehensive monograph entitled *Attracting and Retaining Immigrants: A Tool Box of Ideas for Smaller Centres* (National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies 2005). This toolbox was funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and created for the purpose of providing concrete suggestions to NGOs, government, and other stakeholders, for action towards attracting and retaining newcomers to their smaller centres (Frideres 2006, 7). It is often referred to in works related to immigrant populations in second- and third-tier municipalities, as a good guide for groups and individuals looking for ways to approach this issue (Mulholland 2006, 33; Derwing and Krahn 2006, 9). The working group suggests viewing the strategizing process as long-term, and ensuring it be as widely collaborative as possible so as to properly address the concerns of all affected parties. It recommends the formation of a committee made up of community partners and residents to carry out an in-depth review of the city using SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) analysis—comparing a community’s internal strengths and weaknesses in their ability to attract and receive newcomers with external factors such as opportunities and threats in nearby cities. Using this approach will help the community to

“form strategies and make choices” (National Working Group 2005, 29) appropriate to their individual needs and goals.

It is unclear whether the City of Saskatoon based the following initiative on the suggestions made in the toolbox; however, Saskatoon provides an example of the first steps in the process of Sustainable Settlement, with the recent development and implementation of a Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Policy. Its purpose is to contribute to an environment of welcome, inclusion, and social cohesion in Saskatoon through the formation of a working committee to formulate strategies and action plans to these ends (Garcea 2006, 18). One such strategy has been the development of a report to determine the city’s need for attraction and retention of immigrants, how this can be achieved, what immigrants will need for successful settlement, and how policies, programs, and service agencies can be improved to accommodate these needs. This initiative puts Saskatoon, and other cities engaged in similar action, well on their way to a future of Sustainable Settlement.

One acknowledged gap in research on these issues is the small number of local studies, relative to provincial and federal studies, to support and expand upon them (Metropolis 2003). It is within this gap and the above literature framework that I place my research. Through an examination of the current state of affairs in Kingston, Ontario, I plan to analyze how the community of a third-tier municipality prepares itself for the attraction and retention of immigrant residents. The purpose of my research is to find out if Kingston, Ontario is a place in which Sustainable Settlement is occurring, or if it has the right mix of elements to make it successful in the future, as a third-tier city aiming for the Sustainable Settlement of an immigrant population sector. While the literature

emphasizes the importance of municipal government involvement, this study examines the current actions of both the municipal government and groups and organizations in the larger Kingston community. Therefore, ‘municipality,’ as it is used in this study, refers to the efforts and strategies of the entire community. This is an acknowledgement of the lack of municipal government jurisdiction over elements such as education and employment, which are important in discussions of immigrant attraction and retention.

About Kingston

The city of Kingston, Ontario, has some historical experience with the clashes that can occur between different cultures. The Cataraqui region of southern Ontario—of which the current city of Kingston is a part—was chosen by Robert Cavelier de La Salle as the location for a fortified trading post in 1673. This fortification was later renamed Fort Frontenac and was occupied by the French until 1758, when it was taken over by the British. Kingston has also had its hand in welcoming outsiders. It became a place of refuge for those fleeing the American Revolution, and eventually developed into the “primary community of South-Eastern Upper Canada” (Tourism Kingston 2008).

In addition, Kingston is a historically significant location in terms of Canadian politics and education. Between 1841 and 1844, the town of Kingston served as the first capital, and was the location of the first meeting of the Parliament of the United Canadas. It was incorporated as a city in 1846. Around this time, the Church of Scotland chose Kingston as the location for a school to teach clergy and others science and literature. This school evolved into Queen’s University.

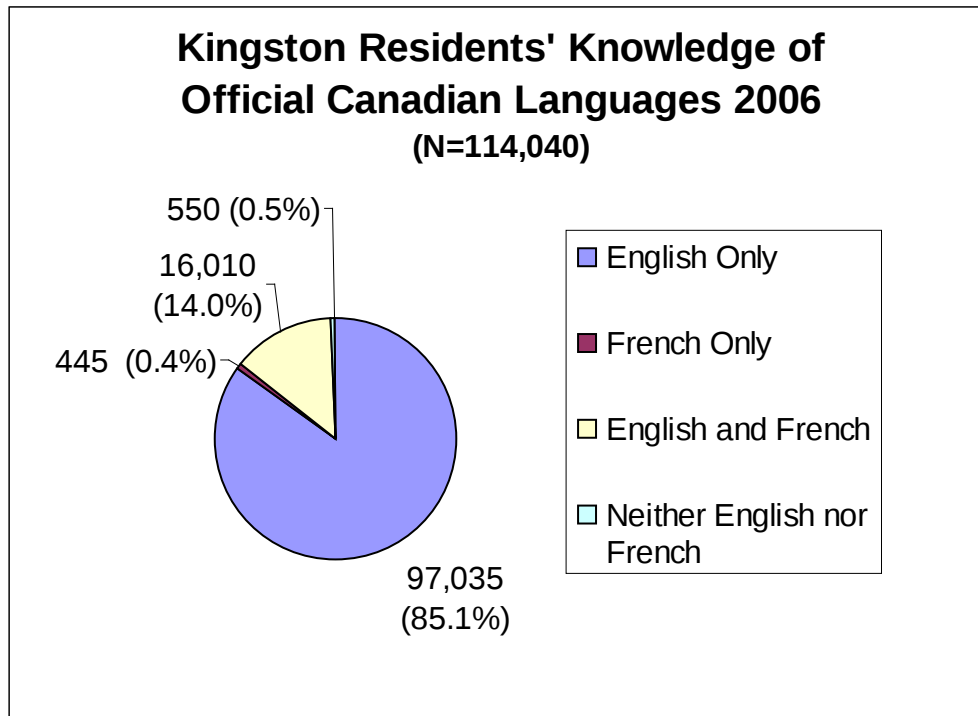
While Queen’s University remains an important local feature, early industries in the area had no such luck. Kingston was the location of a large shipbuilding and

locomotive-building industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Currently, the city is based primarily on employment related to its educational institutions, the Canadian military, service, and retail.

A history so rooted in Western European culture is bound to have an impact on the state of the current city today. In fact, 64% of the 2006 population, aged fifteen years or older, in the city of Kingston, is third generation Canadian or more (Statistics Canada 2007). While this does not guarantee these residents to be of Western European descent, this option becomes more likely when one considers that 92% of the Kingston population is considered *not* to be of visible minority status (Ibid). In Addition, a quick scan of Life Members of the Kingston Historical Society (KHS)—a strong presence in the city for many decades—illustrates an overwhelming majority of surnames of Western European descent (KHS 2005, 2).

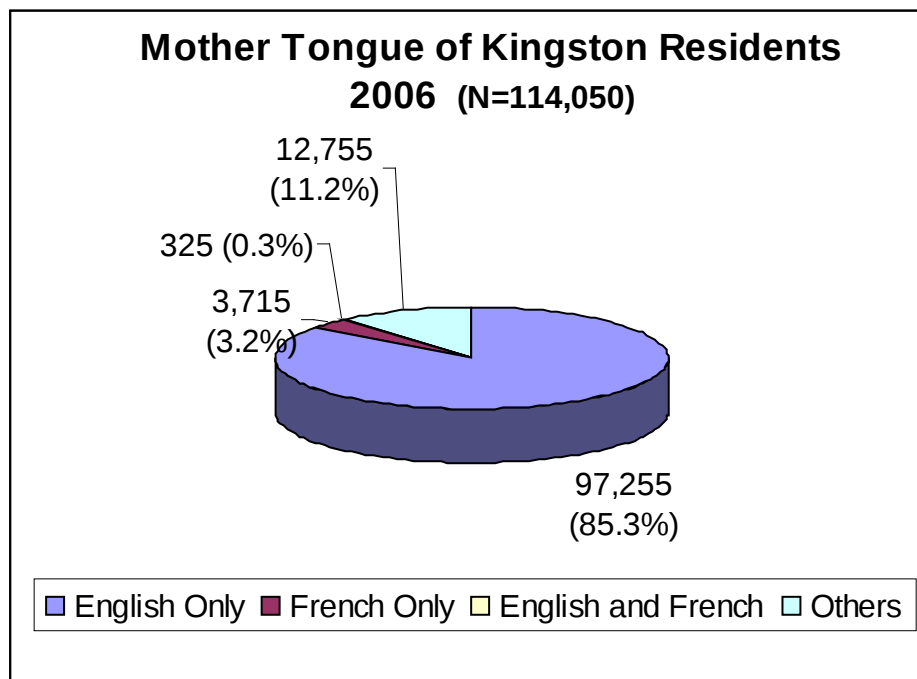
Given this information, it is no surprise that residents of Kingston are primarily English-speaking and very few speak neither of the two official languages (see Figure 1). However, these data do not speak to the diversity that can be seen in Kingston if, for example, residents are examined by mother tongue: in 2006, 12,755 residents spoke neither English nor French as a first language (see Figure 2). Similarly, if the language spoken most often at home is the focus, one finds that in 2006, 5,100 residents spoke a non-official language at home (see Figure 3) (Statistics Canada 2007).

Figure 1: Knowledge of Official Languages



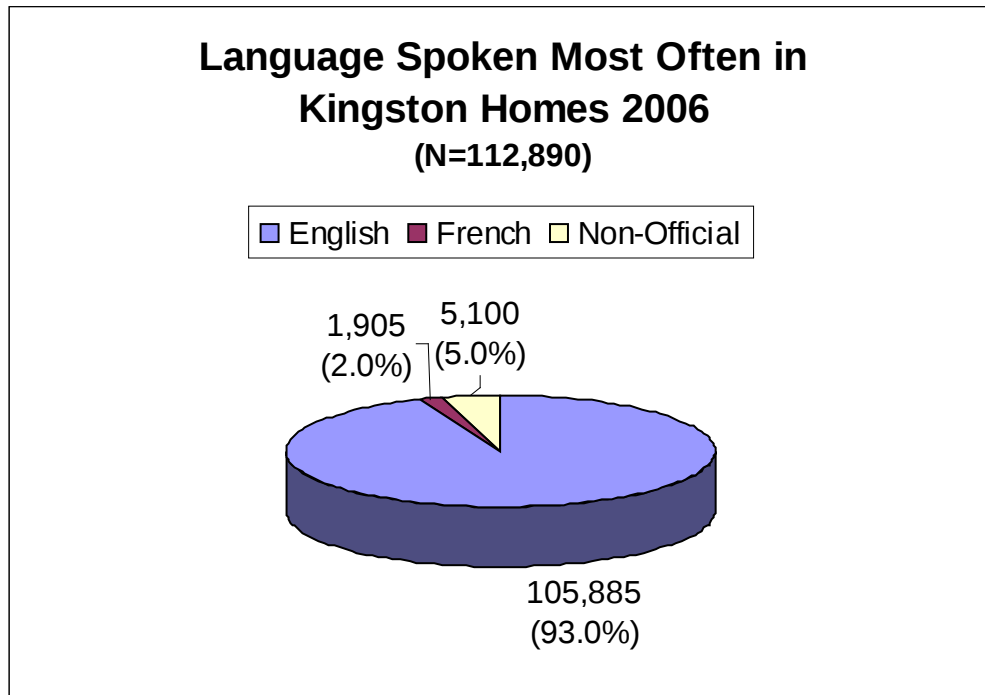
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profile for the city of Kingston, Ontario

Figure 2: Mother Tongue



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profile of the city of Kingston, Ontario

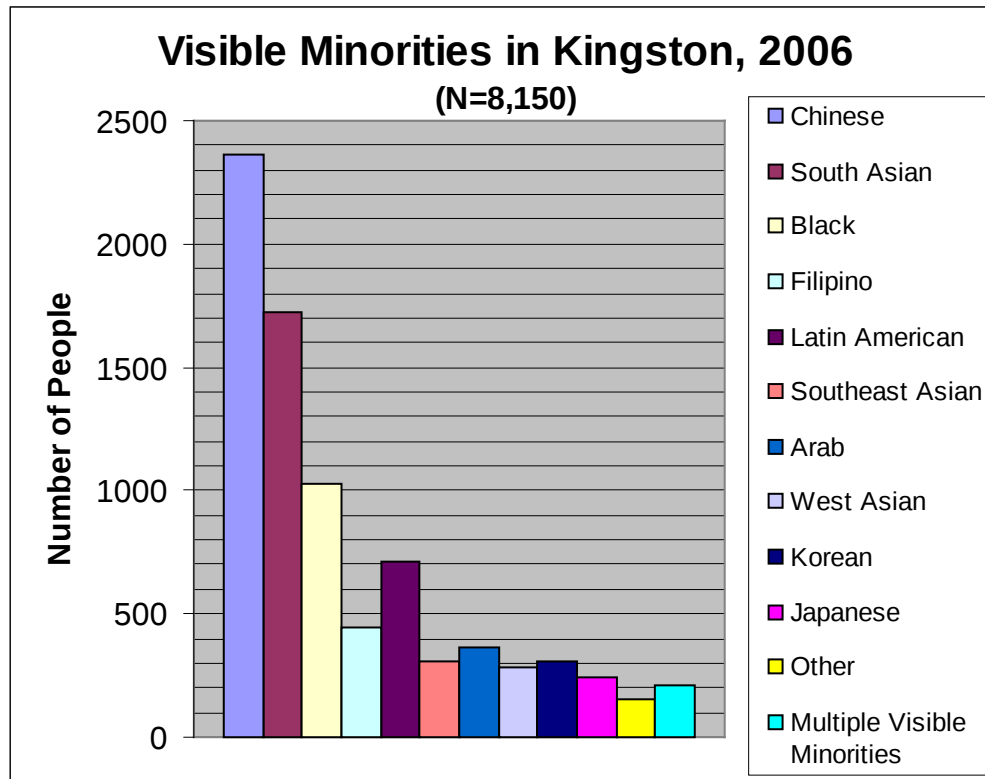
Figure 3: Language at Home



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profile of the city of Kingston, Ontario

Visibly, Kingston's diversity is seen primarily in the Chinese, South Asian, and Black communities, among others (see Figure 4). However, while the visible minorities of Kingston numbered just over 8,000 people in 2006, the number of residents who were identified as immigrants in the 2006 census was double that, at 16,205 people (Ibid). At 14.2% of the population, Kingston's immigrant community is slightly less proportional to its total population of 114,050 than many cities of similar size. For example, Guelph, Ontario, whose total population in 2006 was 114,943, had an immigrant community that accounted for 21.0% of that figure (Statistics Canada 2007b). However, Kingston remains somewhat ahead of others. Sherbrooke, Quebec, for instance, had a 2006 population of 107,290, 10.8% of which was foreign-born (Statistics Canada 2007c).

Figure 4: Visible Minorities in Kingston

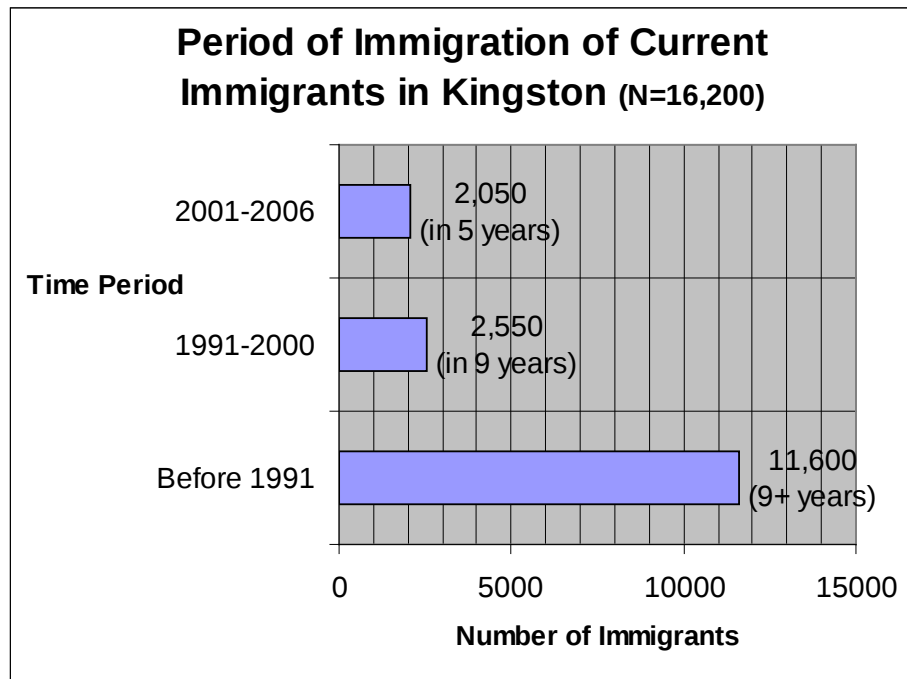


Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profile of the city of Kingston, Ontario

Figure 5 illustrates the proportion of Kingston's immigrant population that arrived before 1991, between 1991 and 2000, and between 2001 and 2006 (Statistics Canada 2007). From these data, it appears that the number of immigrants settling in Kingston has been steadily increasing over the last fifteen years. Other data tell a similar story. According to the 2001 Census, 20,930 people—immigrants and non-immigrants—moved into the city of Kingston in 2000-2001; 3,005 or 14.4% of them were from a different province or country. According to the 2006 Census, only 7,515 people—immigrants and non-immigrants—moved into the city five years later; 2,840 of whom were from outside Ontario or Canada. While in 2006, 23.4% more migrants to Kingston came from farther away than in 2001—in other words, an increase in immigrants—the data show a

profound decrease in people coming to Kingston overall. This indicates that immigrants are imperative for the continued growth of the city if it is concerned about population and labour-market sustainability in the future.

Figure 5: Period of Immigration

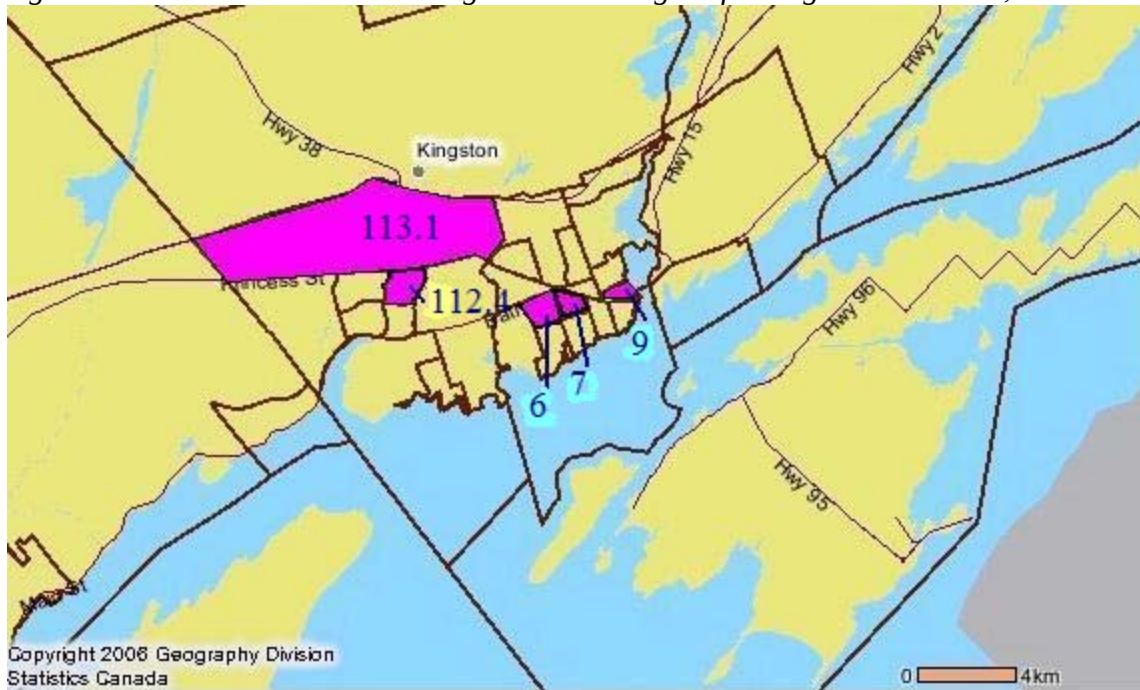


Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profile of the city of Kingston, Ontario

More recent data show that Kingston's net gain of settlers in 2004-2005 was at a rate of -0.5/1000 people, which increased to 0.8/1000 people in 2005-2006 (Statistics Canada, 2007). This indicates an overall increase in settlers to the city in recent years, and points to the possibility of unusual circumstances in the years before that.

It is also interesting to identify where immigrants in Kingston are located, geographically. The following map indicates the five Census Tracts (CT) that contain the largest proportion of immigrants relative to their individual populations, for the years 2001 and 2006.

Figure 6: Census Tracts with the Highest Percentages of Immigrant Residents, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Community Profile of the city of Kingston, Ontario

Table 2: Top Five Census Tracts, by Immigrant Population, 2001

Census Tract	% Population that were Immigrants - 2001
6	22.1
9	17.1
7	16.8
113.1	16.6
112.4	16.1

It is interesting to note that the CT 6 (refer to Figures 6 and 7) was home to the highest proportion of immigrants for both Census years. Similarly, CT 9 and CT 7 dropped from second and third place in 2001, to third and fourth place in 2006; however, the percentage of immigrants in these areas increased in both instances. It is also observed that CT 113.1 and CT 112.4, which both made the top five CTs in 2001, failed to do so in 2006, while CT 2 and CT 13 do not make an appearance until 2006.

Figure 7: Census Tracts with the Highest Percentages of Immigrant Residents, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profile of the city of Kingston, Ontario

Table 3: Top Five Census Tracts, by Immigrant Population, 2006

Census Tract	% Population that were Immigrants - 2006
6	29.1
2	22.3
9	21.2
7	20.5
13	19.4

It is especially significant that CT 2 makes its debut in second place, with an immigrant population of 22.3% of all residents within its boundaries. This latter fact may lead one to conclude that the majority of immigrants in this CT are more recent newcomers—new to Canada or Kingston in the last five years—compared to immigrants in CT 6, who may have been settled in the area for quite some time. Another possible explanation is that because CT 2 includes Queen’s University campus, there may be a

significant amount of low-cost rental housing available in the area. This may be attractive to newcomers looking for a place to settle.

While Census data provide a snapshot of the diversity of Kingston residents in terms of visible minorities (see Figure 4), they do not distinguish between visible minorities who identify as immigrants and those who identify as long-term residents and/or Canadian citizens. For information related to Kingston's immigrant population in terms of who they are, where they come from, and what languages they speak, this study's key informants proved to be the best sources. More than one key informant identified a period in the 1950s and 1960s when large numbers of people from European countries settled in the area. Specifically, Portuguese, Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Austrian, and Polish nationalities were mentioned (Interviews D and E). The representative from Immigrant Services Kingston and Area (ISKA) discussed the more recent immigrant population in terms of the languages the organization sees most often (Interview B):

...we're still seeing a large amount of Mandarin-speaking immigrants; we have a growing number of Arabic-speaking. Hindi and Urdu are still relatively strong. Spanish and Portuguese are still really strong. I see [French-speaking] coming up....like from the Congo...a little bit of Tagalog—not too much—but those are our predominant languages.

The representative also indicated small numbers of Russian speakers and other Eastern European languages, and suggested that the presence of these language-speakers at ISKA was a good indication of who is in Kingston's immigrant population. Using the above information, one can conclude that, while European immigrants made up the majority of newcomers to Kingston in the past, the more recent immigrants are individuals and families from China, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and central Africa. This shift could

be interpreted as a reflection of the changes in immigration laws and attitudes over time in Canada as a whole. It is interesting to note that European immigrants are still numerous, especially those from Portugal. One possible explanation for this is that the established Portuguese community plays a role in attracting newcomers of Portuguese decent to Kingston because of the built-in cultural support system. It is impossible to tell from these data whether Spanish-speaking newcomers are from European or Latin American backgrounds.

Findings

In order to understand the extent to which Kingston is an environment conducive to the successful settlement of immigrants, it is necessary to examine a number of elements in the community. These elements have been indicated by researchers as the things immigrants look for in a destination—things that are necessary to help newcomers integrate into and become successful in a new community—and things the community itself must be aware of if it wants to attract and retain these individuals (Please refer to Literature Review). The elements include issues related to employment, education, English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) instruction or Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), and immigrant services in general. Existing pockets of residents of similar ethno-cultural background, the presence of ethno-cultural organizations, and affordable and accessible housing and healthcare are also important, as are an awareness of Kingston as an immigrant destination, and an atmosphere of welcome and intercultural awareness on the part of current residents. The interviews with key informants in the Kingston community were the primary sources for the above information in this study. While the information provided by the key informants was exceptionally helpful for this

study, it is important to acknowledge that a sample of six individuals is not large enough from which to draw unquestionable conclusions. Therefore, this paper does not assume to do so, and the reader is asked to accept the following findings with the knowledge of such limitations.

Employment

There appear to be two major parts to the subject of employment. First, there are issues related to developing and/or recognizing the skills with which immigrants arrive in Kingston. Second, in order for these skills to be utilized in an employment setting, there needs to be: a) jobs available, and b) employers willing to hire immigrants.

The partnership between ISKA and Kingston Employment and Youth Services (KEYS) is such that the employment aspects of immigrant services in Kingston are coordinated and carried out by the staff at KEYS. While KEYS offers employment services to all members of the Kingston community, immigrant employment services make up a distinct branch of the organization, the focus of which is on the unique needs of newcomers to the area. KEYS offers Canadian employment information through one-on-one counseling, as well as job search workshops (JSW) for immigrants. JSWs offer clients the opportunity to improve their resume and interview skills, as well as gain tips on job searching techniques and to learn what they need to do to get a foreign certification recognized. KEYS also has a LINC school in their organization, which offers specialized workplace-related language classes for LINC levels 6 and 7, as well as regular LINC classes, levels 3-7. This allows newcomers to increase their English language skills as they relate to various career paths or employment positions. While there are not currently many bridge-to-work programs in Kingston, where newcomers are

matched with a mentor within a company they are interested in working for, the KEYS representative acknowledged this as something on which the organization would like to work in the future.

Both the representative from KEYS and the representative from the Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO) acknowledged the growing presence of a labour shortage in the Kingston area (Interviews A and D). In a recent newspaper article in the *Kingston Whig-Standard*, the CEO of KEDCO suggested a gap of about 400-600 jobs currently exists in the city (Flegg 2008c, 6). However, the representative from KEYS hypothesized that these jobs were not likely to be high-level positions that require specific training and education, such as engineering. Interestingly, it is widely recognized that high-level jobs that *are* available, such as those for family physicians, are rarely accessible to even the most qualified immigrant, due to barriers to certification recognition within various professional organizations at the provincial and national levels (Flegg 2008c, 6; Interview D). This was indicated as one of the challenges faced by spouses who accompany their partner to Kingston for a teaching position at Queen's University (Interview C). Amidst issues such as loneliness and cultural isolation often cited by international professors' family members—especially visible minorities—is the very real obstacle of finding an employment position that not only pays decently, but that is somewhat related to the individual's interests and past experience. The representative from Queen's also indicated that international students often face similar challenges once they graduate, and are doubly tested due to time restrictions on the application process for permanent residency once school has ended. Therefore, Kingston is actively losing a significant number of highly skilled people due to a combination of federal and

provincial policies, protectionist professional associations, and the overall employment environment in the area.

The representatives from KEYS and KEDCO, however, were quick to point out that the problem is not a lack of willingness on the part of employers to hire immigrants. The KEYS representative indicated that most employers understand that much of their future success could very well depend on the availability of immigrant workers. The KEDCO representative took the discussion further and suggested that Kingston's major employers—companies such as Dupont, Novelis, Envista, and Bombardier—because they are multinational corporations with a variety of employees all over the world, could actually be responsible for a significant portion of the immigrant presence in Kingston.

Education

The availability of educational facilities is the second element the Kingston community needs to be aware of if it is trying to attract and retain immigrants. While elementary and secondary schools were not a focus of this study, the KEYS representative did mention the availability of ESL classes offered by both the Limestone District School Board and the Kingston Catholic School Board (Interview A). Unlike the LINC program, ESL classes are not limited to immigrants only, but are open to anyone wanting to improve English as their second language, which includes immigrant students. The benefit of having ESL classes available is that new Canadian citizens who no longer qualify for the LINC program are able to continue their study of the English language so that it does not become more of a barrier to their integration into the Kingston community.

The city of Kingston is also fortunate in terms of education, as the home of three post-secondary institutions, Queen's University, the Royal Military College of Canada, and St. Lawrence community college. While Queen's is likely the largest source of international talent out of the three schools—and thus the most likely source of potential permanent settlers for Kingston—earlier discussions indicated that other factors might be putting Kingston at risk of losing that talent pool to larger regions with more specialized employment opportunities. Nevertheless, it was evident in the interview with the representative from Queen's that the university's International Students Centre provides exceptional service quality to their students. Although they do not specialize in immigration concerns specifically, their increasingly “active” relationship with ISKA means that if these concerns do arise, there is a reliable referral process to accommodate them (Interview C).

There were two significant issues related to international students and faculty at Queen's University, that came up in the interview with the Queen's representative, and which are important to mention in this study. While Queen's prides itself on its global outlook—and most likely, rightly so—there appear to be some issues related to cultural difference that have, in the past, had an impact on students' abilities to study and professors' abilities to teach and study at the school. One issue relates to the cultural misunderstanding that sometimes occurs between international graduate students and their Canadian research supervisors. According to the Queen's representative, a situation may develop wherein, due to the educational structure from which an international student is coming, they may not question what their supervisor says, because they have been taught that perhaps it is impolite to question a professor. On the other hand, the

Canadian supervisor may be more accustomed to an environment in which students speak up if they have any concerns, and if they do not speak up, everything must be fine. In the past, situations like this have caused such a degeneration of the student-supervisor relationship that a new supervisor had to be found in order for the student to finish his or her studies. Although this extreme outcome is rare, the situations leading up to it are indicative of a larger problem within the Queen's community in terms of cultural understanding.

Another situation that has come up from time to time at Queen's involves faculty members from other countries, whose topics of study or methods of teaching are met with disapproval by other faculty members, due to unease with different cultural influences over the education process. This situation has, in the past, led to faculty members looking elsewhere for places to do their research, and stimulates the same concerns as the first example, in terms of embracing diversity at Queen's university. While Queen's acknowledges these concerns, especially with the former situation, and is working to address them, even the production of one or two dissatisfied individuals could add to a trend in international students and faculty members choosing a place other than Kingston in which to permanently settle, if they choose to stay in Canada.

Availability of ESL Classes and LINC

As previously mentioned, ESL classes are offered by both public school boards in the Kingston area, and are available for both immigrants, new Canadians, and anyone else who is interested in improving their English. LINC levels 3-7 are offered by KEYS in conjunction with their employment services for newcomers, and Literacy Kingston provides instruction in the first stages of English literacy, as well as LINC levels 1-2.

KEYS works closely with Literacy Kingston to ensure the language needs of their immigrant clients are met appropriately (Interviews A and B). Although the LINC classes at KEYS are running very close to capacity, the KEYS representative gave voice to the fact that expanding these services is not overly difficult. Because LINC is a service offered to all newcomers by the federal government, if Kingston developed the need for expanded services, the federal government would provide the necessary funding. One language-related thing that ISKA provides is Canadian Language Benchmark Assessments (CLBA). They bring in a CLB assessor for a day or two to see clients and determine which LINC level classes they would best suited for, and KEYS takes things from there (Interview B).

Immigrant Services

In terms of immigrant and settlement services outside of LINC and employment, ISKA is the only major provider. This agency was forged out of the remains of the former organization responsible for immigration services in the community, Kingston and District Immigrant Services. KDIS, which, due to circumstances not disclosed in the interviews, was forced to close a couple of years ago, had been a fairly small agency, and not widely known in the city. Since its inception less than two years ago, ISKA has been working hard to change this, and to expand its programming in order to better serve Kingston's immigrant community. It is still quite a small operation; however, it has made exceptional headway during its short existence.

Due to the grassroots nature of human services, according to the ISKA representative, other small community groups dedicated to immigrant needs have existed in the city for a long time, such as the Refugee Coalition and church sponsorship groups.

ISKA values the work they do and endeavors to support them in their activities, by providing appropriate resources and being available for questions and concerns. Services that ISKA itself provides include training volunteers to act as Hosts for newcomers—a program in which a citizen is matched with a newcomer to help with social integration—conducting English conversation circles, and facilitating group information sessions and orientation to Canadian culture. They also advocate for immigrant rights and promote cultural awareness in the community, accompany clients to appointments where necessary, and maintain their own language bank of volunteers. However, the ISKA representative identifies one of their most important contributions as their ability to network with other organizations and service agencies, and to develop partnerships to better serve their client base (Interview B).

Ethno-cultural diversity

Earlier presentation of data gave evidence to the existence of various ethno-cultural groups in Kingston, immigrant, visible minority, and otherwise. The above discussion of situations at Queen's University provided examples of the implications of a) not having an extensively diverse population, and b) failing to accommodate or acknowledge as equal, the diversity that does exist. Interviews with key informants outside of Queen's indicated similar concerns in the community at large, in the form of some of the challenges faced by immigrants in the city. These conversations also gave rise to some questions regarding a possible trend in the decline of awareness of diversity in Kingston.

James' on-going research regarding religious diversity in Kingston, has indicated that around 77% of Kingston residents are either Protestants or Roman Catholics (2006,

58), and that Kingston “epitomizes Upper Canada’s Anglo-Celtic customs and values” and “has changed little over the past 300 years” (Ibid, 56). While this latter statement may be arguable to some, depending on the angle from which it is approached, the challenges faced by members of minority religions in Kingston may lend it some support. The KEDCO representative identified a lack of accommodation of diversity in community infrastructure, citing as an example, people of the East Indian Orthodox faith who live in Kingston and travel to Toronto to go to church because there is not a local institution, nor the funding necessary, to meet their needs. With members of the Kingston community who are part of larger non-Christian religions, such as Islam, things have indeed improved in the last two decades with the opening of The Kingston Islamic Centre. However, Muslims and Hindus in Kingston are in the same position in that their own diversity must sometimes be set aside in order for any form of their faith to be practiced at all, due to small numbers and a lack of resources (James 2006, 58). The representative from Queen’s stated that the university has seen people leave Kingston because of the limitations in place due to such small ethno-cultural communities (Interview C):

The communities are not large, so [people] end up looking for those communities in Toronto and other places, and [they]’re constantly commuting and constantly traveling, and eventually it’s just like, ‘Oh, why not move to Toronto?’ That’s mostly what we see.

This sentiment was echoed in an article entitled, “Immigrants long to belong,” printed in a recent issue of the *Kingston Whig-Standard*. An individual from China commented that “the stuff that makes you feel at home—the language, the music, the colours, many of the

foods—are missing in Kingston, so it’s harder for immigrants in Kingston” (Flegg 2008b, 2).

Perhaps one of the gravest concerns in terms of diversity in the Kingston community is the seemingly low level of awareness that any exists at all. The representative from ISKA indicated this gap in the city’s awareness by relaying that it is not uncommon for residents to say, during ISKA’s public education presentations, “Immigrants? Who are you talking about? There are no immigrants here” (Interview B). Interestingly, more than one key informant identified a time in Kingston’s past when such comments were less likely to occur. In the 1980s and early 1990s, Kingston celebrated its cultural diversity in the form of an event called *Folklore*. The ethno-cultural groups with the largest populations during that time appeared to be those of European decent, such as Italian, Portuguese, Hungarian, and Polish, as mentioned earlier in the paper. *Folklore* provided an opportunity for the larger Kingston community to experience the food, music, and traditional dance and dress of the various cultural groups in their midst. It was set up as a system of pavilions between which patrons were shuttled by the municipal transit service, free of charge. Although multicultural festivals in general have been criticized for merely perpetuating the simplistic symbolism of various cultures, the two key informants expressed strong beliefs that *Folklore* had had much more of an impact on the Kingston community. The Council representative, for example, described the event as transcending the four days it was held, and having positive effects on everyday life (Interview E):

...I think that it really not only educated, but also...people carried those experiences through, so you start[ed] to see some of that in other areas of the city...

It helped to build a more intimate awareness of the existing diversity, it seems, because it did not just promote a growing knowledge of the diversity that existed between people, it encouraged and provided an arena for participation in that diversity. Both the Council and KEDCO representatives expressed genuine interest in seeing the *Folklore* festival resurrected for the betterment of community relations in Kingston (Interviews E and D).

Accessible and Affordable Housing and Healthcare

A few different opinions were expressed by the interview participants on the subject of housing in Kingston. The Queen's University representative described how the lower level of awareness of cultural difference mentioned above sometimes had an impact on international students' abilities to find hassle-free rental housing (Interview C). Where students are visible minorities, there have been cases of human rights abuses by landlords wherein the students were asked to provide more documentation than is typically called for; sometimes more than the students were able to produce. To address this issue, the university has instituted what they call Town-Gown Relations, where a staff member will handle tensions that occur between students and landlords.

The Queen's representative's impression of social conditions in Kingston was that "there are already huge issues" (Interview C). However, when it comes to immigrants accessing affordable housing in the area, the representative from ISKA stated that it was "generally something that we can deal with relatively quickly" (Interview B). Rental housing was described as being usually fairly accessible; however, if there ever was a need for outside input from a housing help centre, ISKA's networking efforts have brought them much success.

Healthcare appears to be fairly accessible as well. One of the biggest issues surrounding accessibility for immigrants is the language barrier, which ISKA helps its clients overcome through the use of a volunteer language bank. Between the staff and volunteers at ISKA, there are about 23 languages available to newcomers, and these talents are often used for communication purposes on outings such as visits to the doctor or dentist. However, for longer outings, such as hospital stays, or for sensitive issues, a certified translator is used, so as to respect both the vulnerability of the client's position and the limitations of volunteerism. The ISKA representative identified that this is often what hospitals in the area will do as well (Interview B).

As for the Queen's representative's concerns about social conditions in the city, it was clear, during the interview with the City's Department of Community Services representative, that there was an understanding of the importance of these issues at the municipal level, not just for the city's current residents, but also for its chances of attracting future residents (Interview F).

Awareness of Kingston as an Immigrant Destination

Also crucial for attracting future residents is ensuring that people are aware of Kingston as an option for settlement. The KEYS representative saw this as something that should be one of Kingston's top priorities in terms of immigration (Interview A):

We have to do...a better job of selling what we already do. We have an excellent language training program through KEYS, Kingston Literacy, the boards of education...and I think the work that ISKA is doing through KCHC [Kingston Community Health Centre]—settlement services—is top rate; very, very good in terms of providing those supports...[but] a lot of those things are not known even within the community, let alone outside the community, from where new people are coming.

The representatives from ISKA, KEDCO, and Queen's agreed, but were concerned that at this point, there is not enough to advertise about. The ISKA representative gave the example that refugee claimants will rarely come to Kingston because of the lack of infrastructure in place to cater to their unique needs. They will choose instead to claim status in Toronto, Fort Erie, or other areas, "in communities that actually have something in place" (Interview B). The representative from Queen's voiced a concern, not with a lack of services, but with the disconnect between the global society that the university is working to foster and accommodate, and the small town mentality of the rest of the city (Interview C):

[The city] pushes the small town historic values in terms of tourist attraction and attracting people to come and live here...that's what they feel they do well...but the disadvantage of that, when you think of people who are coming from other countries, is that it is kind of limiting...[so] you're saying 'global' here at Queen's, and 'we want the best,' and that necessarily means a global approach...while Kingston is saying 'small town', etc.

Queen's has recognized a pattern forming, in that a lot of the diversity—ethno-cultural and otherwise—that the university manages to attract to Kingston, is not being retained because of the different approach promoted by the city. This becomes an issue of the attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in Kingston, not only of the municipal government, but of the residents themselves. Insights into this aspect of attraction and retention in Kingston are discussed in the following section.

Attitudes towards Immigrants and Immigration in Kingston

Without a welcoming community atmosphere, any efforts at improving Kingston's support system for immigrants, and advertising Kingston as an immigrant

destination, will be useless. When asked about their impressions of the overall attitudes of people in Kingston towards immigrants and immigration, the interview participants gave a variety of responses, which were, for the most part, quite positive. While the Council representative described Kingston as “open and inviting and easy for people to find their way around” (Interview E), the representative from KEDCO felt that the city was more likely seen from the outside as a “challenging, more difficult place” to move into, not only for immigrants, but for other people moving to Kingston as well (Interview D). The experiences of the Queen’s representative echoed these sentiments, while the KEYS representative looked at things on more of a continuum (Interview A):

I think that there’s been a change in the last five to six years, in terms of how people are seeing Kingston as a community. I think at one time it was a very white community that people either didn’t know how to respond to or were not sensitive to the needs of immigrants...I think [now] there’s a growing desire from employers and the community at large to become welcoming and receptive, and to know there’s an advantage to community in terms of making it a more diverse community...

The representative from ISKA stated that the attitudes of mainstream society in Kingston seemed “very mixed” (Interview B). While ISKA has found many aspects of the community to be quite embracing of newcomers, there is no question that they feel there is a lot that remains to be done.

Intercultural Awareness

One of the most pressing issues, according to ISKA, and the first necessary step to success, according to the Department of Community Services representative, is increasing the mainstream community’s level of intercultural awareness (Interview F), which was touched on in earlier sections of this paper. As an organization, ISKA works

hard to improve this. The ISKA representative described their attempts at capacity building in the community—what they refer to as public education—in order to prepare the city for newcomers. The participant commented that simple misunderstandings are often what prevent people of different cultures from getting along. The example provided was of people from certain cultures not looking others in the eyes, and causing distrust to build on the part of the majority culture. It is important to inform people that things like this are not necessarily a form of dishonesty or impoliteness, but could in fact be a sign of respect, or simply a sign of shyness (Interview B).

ISKA tries, not only to inform the larger community about their work with newcomers, but also to engage long-term residents in some of the activities that the organization facilitates. The representative from ISKA gave the examples of inviting a professional from Ontario Works to speak about the system, or inviting a community member to share their talent for a certain craft. While the goal is to keep the programming client-centered, ISKA works hard to engage the Kingston community as much as possible. It is also something they would like to improve even more.

KEYS is involved in preparing the community in a similar way. They have done workshops in the community in the past, about diversity in the workplace, and the KEYS representative expressed interest in doing more of that in the future (Interview A). Queen's University also plays a part. One thing the Human Rights Department does is to conduct training workshops with various groups on topics related to human rights and diversity (Interview C). The model that is most often used is one of anti-oppression and anti-racism, which promotes an awareness of individuals' and groups' involvement in the reinforcement of structural barriers that exist in today's society, especially for visible

minorities. This acknowledgement helps people to support the destruction of these barriers.

The findings from the interviews with key informants in the Kingston community, as described above, are important for understanding what the city currently has to offer on the topic of attraction and retention of immigrants, and what they need to work on. However, it is clear that the participants of this study are not in denial about the need to make improvements. There are a number of strategies already in place in the community to do just that, as the following section describes.

Current Strategies

The City of Kingston's Department of Community Services is currently working on what they refer to as the Cultural Master Plan. The hope is that this plan will put the necessary pieces in place to develop a public policy framework that can be used to address a variety of broad issues related to diversity, such as settlement, recreation, economic development, and sexual orientation, among others (Interview F). The Community Services Department representative stated that it was important to begin with a policy framework approach, especially as the municipal government, because that is what will keep all city departments on the same track. It is also helpful for community organizations, as they can use it as a reference framework in the future. The goal of the Cultural Master Plan is to translate the framework that develops, into an action plan to implement at the local level. Due to administrative changes within one of the advisory organizations, the Kingston Area Race Relations Association, and the desire to include and have full support of advocacy groups and other community organizations, this project has been in the works for over a year. However, the representative from the Department

of Community Services stated that the current City Council has been very supportive of the strategy, and its future looks very positive.

The most significant strategy in progress at the time of the interviews, was one put forward by KEYS, KEDCO and ISKA, in partnership, with the purpose of determining the current demography and needs of immigrants in Kingston. Similar to the City's Cultural Master Plan, this strategy, entitled Local Immigration Partnership, Kingston Region Strategy, begins with a period of background research that will be used to inform an action plan for the community that would "encourage immigrants to come to Kingston and stay in Kingston once they come" (Interview A). The research will focus on who Kingston immigrants are, where they are from, and what made them choose Kingston, while also seeking out newcomers who have left the community and finding out the reasons behind that. Steering the project will be an advisory committee, similar to what the Attraction and Retention toolbox suggests to smaller centres (National Working Group on Smaller Centre Strategies 2005, 27). The KEYS representative hopes it will be made up of people from KEYS, KCHC (ISKA) and KEDCO, the three founding agencies, as well as the City, Queen's, St. Lawrence, the boards of education, and perhaps the Chamber of Commerce, among others. The project's focus is on both social and economic factors, in recognition of the important contributions immigrants to the city can bring to both sectors. While the two- to three-year project's proposal was pending approval by the federal government at the time of the interviews, none of the representatives from the three partner organizations—KEYS, KEDCO and ISKA—felt that there would be any trouble in obtaining approval. "It very much fits the agenda of the government right now, so I think there's a very good chance" (Interview A). Nor do these

agencies have any false ideas regarding the project as an all-in-one solution. As the KEDCO representative put it (Interview D):

It won't be the golden nugget that's going to solve the problem, but hopefully it's going to identify a path where we can introduce some major improvements. I think it's reasonable that we have a long way to go.

Outside of this major project, KEDCO and ISKA both have a number of other strategies they are working on. KEDCO, for example, has already started disseminating advertisements around the province to encourage people to come work in Kingston, and has plans to pursue the Provincial Nominee Program with the help of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. Both initiatives are part of a new allocation of resources in the corporation towards labour market support (Interview D).

ISKA has been working closely with the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) to create a province-wide database of information related to current immigrants in Ontario. They will use information such as country of origin, skills and experience, age, gender, level of education level, etc., in order to continue to develop province-wide programming and services that cater to immigrant needs. It could also be useful for research purposes, especially where issues of regionalization and mobility are concerned, as it will provide a more detailed account of who has decided to live where. Until this larger database is available, the ISKA representative is also involved in manual data-collection from Kingston immigrants, as a way to overcome some of the challenges the organization is facing due to a lack of reliable data.

Other local research related to immigrants is being done by ISKA and its advisory committee, which is roughly eighty percent immigrant membership, and includes residents from all around the world who have lived in the area for different lengths of

time. One subcommittee is currently working on a proposal for a three- to five-year strategic plan whose purpose would be to generate funds for the establishment of accommodation and support for refugee claimants (Interview B). This initiative is in response to the acknowledgement mentioned earlier in this paper, that refugees are not choosing to make claims in Kingston because of the lack of a support system available to suit their unique needs.

Lastly, ISKA is also working on a project called the Ontario Day-to-Day DVD, which looks at ways to make easier the preparation part of the immigration process, for people not yet in Canada.

Discussion

The above findings correspond with various aspects of the literature reviewed in the third section of this paper. This lends a certain degree of significance to this study, despite the limitations imposed on it by participant sample size. These insights are discussed below.

According to Poirer (2004) and Walton-Roberts (2007), it is important for a municipal government to play more of a leadership role when it comes to immigration and their community. While Kingston's Department of Community Services is making excellent progress on issues related to diversity—which include factors of immigration—it currently does “next to nothing” (Interview F) specifically related to immigrant attraction and retention. While some participants in this study felt that the city could benefit greatly from a municipal government that took more initiative on the subject (Interview C), this author would argue that the role of the municipality is perhaps more

one of reaction to and support of the initiatives of its community organizations. The fact that community organizations and agencies are the ones spearheading the most applicable of immigration strategies is in accordance with Poirer's argument that those who feel the largest impact of immigrants in the community are in the best position to suggest ways in which to make the city more accommodating (2004). Poirer has also argued the municipal government is best able to manage issues related to diversity and the fostering of healthy intercultural relationships between residents. The purpose of the Department of Community Service's Cultural Master Plan is to do just that, although progress has been slower than many would like (Interview F). Council plays a role in this goal as well, and has been described as being "very interested and very respectful of the various cultural needs" (Interview E) of the people who bring such concerns to the table at council meetings. It appears as though the authors of recent literature on the topic would not object to the ways in which the City of Kingston is handling immigration issues.

According to the literature, the larger community's ability to attract, retain and support newcomers is based on its strength and weakness in a number of categories (Krahn, Derwing, and Abu-Laban 2005; National Working Group on Smaller Centre Strategies 2005; McIsaac 2003; Metropolis 2003), which were discussed in detail in the last section. While this study found that there is, in fact, a labour shortage in Kingston, not many of the available jobs match the preferred field of work of the local immigrants, or even of international students looking to stay in the city after graduation. However, the limitations placed on recertification of immigrants with medical experience, for example, are creating another kind of employment/skills mismatch within the community. Given this information, it seems that Kingston needs to improve the types of employment

opportunities available to immigrants in the area, and do a better job of matching local skills to local employment positions.

For immigrants with children, or those looking to advance their academic or applied studies, Kingston's Queen's University and St. Lawrence College offer wonderful opportunities, and could be a great source of attraction for newcomers. However, the concerns expressed by the representative from Queen's on the subject of embracing diversity within the institution, are important to keep in mind. Queen's and St. Lawrence must do their part, as members of the Kingston community, to increase the comfort and support of people who choose to live here, even if only for two or four years. As for elementary and secondary level education, facilities exist all over the city, and this study found that ESL classes are available in some of them. A more in-depth look into these facilities is required, however, for an accurate assessment of their ability to address the needs of immigrant children.

For a city the size of Kingston, having access to LINC levels one through seven is a wonderful achievement and an asset when looking to attract and retain immigrants, and increase the ease of their integration into the community. The partnerships that exist between KEYS, ISKA and Literacy Kingston seem to be working well, and could act as a model for other smaller centres looking to develop the English-language component of their immigration services.

Similarly, for an immigration service agency that has been running for less than two years, ISKA, under KCHC appears to be doing a wonderful job of reaching out to immigrants to find out what they need and want from their service agency, as well as engaging the larger Kingston community in attempts to provide public education on their

work. Through its partnership with ISKA, KEYS plays a very significant role, not just in the provision of LINC, as described above, but also in the provision of employment services. According to the interviews, ISKA has become “a flagship” within Eastern Ontario and even Ontario as a whole, due to its dedication and success in addressing immigrant needs in a small municipality (Interview B). While they do not deny they can always improve, this author suggests that focusing their energies on the public education piece may be a more urgent priority than further developing their settlement services, at this point, if the Kingston community as a whole is to become more inviting for immigrants.

One of the attractive elements that Kingston is lacking is the existence of established groups of various ethno-cultural backgrounds, to act as extra support systems for newcomers to the city. While there do exist a number of ethno-cultural organizations (the Pakistani Canadian Association and the East Indian Association are two that were mentioned in the interviews (Interview D)), their small member counts make it difficult for them to act as significant magnets for attracting newcomers of similar backgrounds. While there is no easy solution for increasing the ethnic diversity of the city, putting into motion various strategies to increase Kingston’s level of preparedness for newcomers and acceptance of diversity should provide results in this area over time.

Affordable housing and accessible healthcare for immigrants in Kingston was described in the interviews as not overly difficult to access. However, some concern was voiced as to how long this would be the case, were Kingston to begin receiving a lot more immigrants and refugees (Interview B):

We have to be cognizant that that will have an impact on Kingston, on our social systems, our healthcare systems, and it's definitely a reality, so we need to be prepared.

While immigrant services may be preparing themselves, this is an issue that the municipal government needs to focus on as part of their responsibility to new settlers in the city.

Many of the interview participants voiced concerns with the lack of awareness of Kingston as a potential immigrant destination. However, there seems to be a growing effort to rectify this, as is evident in KEDCO's advertising strategy. The next step would be to ensure that such a strategy includes information to target immigrants in particular. The KEYS representative mentioned past invitations to international employee recruitment events (Interview A). Increasing Kingston's participation in such events would, at the very least, increase awareness of what the city has to offer, and may result in the settlement of newcomers with skills that match what the city needs. Another thing the city could look at is increasing the accessibility of its website, a suggestion made in the Toolbox for Smaller Centres (National Working Group on Smaller Centre Strategies 2005, 47).

One of Kingston's biggest challenges is combating the lack of intercultural awareness and understanding in the community. While attitudes towards immigrants themselves are reportedly fairly open and embracing, issues of ethno-cultural diversity do not seem to be included in that in a consistent way. ISKA is doing a wonderful job at addressing this issue, through its work at engaging the community in events and workshops at the centre. The same can be said for KEYS, with its diversity in the

workplace workshops, and Queen's University's Human Rights Department, when they deliver information on intercultural awareness and rights issues. The City of Kingston's Cultural Master Plan is also a positive step, and has the potential to make a great impact on many municipality-run elements in the community.

A comparison of current strategies at work in the city of Kingston and strategies suggested in the literature shows that Kingston is in a good position to achieve success as an immigrant-friendly community in the future. Bauder and di Biase (in Mulholland 2003) recommended a three-tiered approach that includes employment and immigrant services, connecting immigrants' skills to labour-market opportunities, and marketing your city as an immigrant destination. This study has established that employment and immigrant services in Kingston are more than adequate, and are able to expand if the need arises. KEDCO's involvement in the Local Immigration Partnership proposal should provide an excellent opportunity to increase the connections between local labour needs and immigrants' skills, and the representative from KEDCO mentioned the organization's plans to become more involved with the Provincial Nominee Program in the near future, which will also help to address this issue. Marketing of what the city has to offer, as addressed above, is something many organizations are aware of and are working towards improving.

The Metropolis organization, which focuses its research on issues of immigration in Canada's cities, suggests the formation of community-based councils dedicated to addressing immigration concerns. The proposal put forward by KEYS, KEDCO and ISKA, detailed above, calls for the creation of a Local Immigration Partnership Council made up of educational institutions, health-care organizations, employers and

employment services, cultural associations, faith communities, and new and established immigrants, among others (KCHC, KEYS, and KEDCO 2008, 13). The inclusion of such a wide variety of community members and associations is extremely positive, and is also recommended by the National Working Group on Smaller Centre Strategies (2005). If the proposal is accepted, the Kingston Community has a lot to look forward to.

Something McIsaac (2003) suggests for smaller centres looking to make themselves more accommodating to immigrants is to coordinate all immigration services, at all stages of the immigration process in the community. While ISKA and KEYS are already doing this very successfully, there is an excellent opportunity here for the Department of Community Services to get the city more involved, and possibly to take the coordination of various services to the next level.

The Triple S. Community Building organization identified the importance of providing recreational opportunities in smaller municipalities, that reflect the interests of various ethno-cultural groups. Right now in Kingston, there has been a request put to council regarding the creation of a cricket pitch in one of the recreational parks in the city. While a final decision had not been determined at the time of the interviews, the openness of Council members to the idea, including the Mayor (Flegg 2008c, 6), indicates that it is a real possibility. This would be an excellent contribution to the creation of awareness and support of ethno-cultural diversity in Kingston.

Finally, the Toolbox provided by the National Working Group on Smaller Centre Strategies (2005) encouraged community organizations and municipal governments to view the process of preparing to attract, retain, and support newcomers as long-term. Among the participants interviewed, this seemed to be something they were well aware

of, and prepared for, which is another indicator of a future of success on this project in Kingston. In addition, there is an effort being made to ensure that whatever strategies are put in place they will be ones that reflect the uniqueness of Kingston's needs, and not be merely copies of other cities' plans (Interviews F and D). However, close attention will be paid to the best practices of other communities, as identified in the joint proposal for a Local Immigration Partnership (KCHC, KEYS, and KEDCO 2008, 3).

While there are many more suggestions for ways in which to approach increasing a city's level of preparedness for immigrants, time restrictions prevent their inclusion in this study. What has been determined, in this review and analysis of the current state of affairs in Kingston, Ontario, is that the city, as a whole, is in the beginning stages of preparing itself for attracting, retaining, and supporting immigrant residents. While immigration services, such as LINC and employment services, are much further ahead than the municipal government in their ability to cater to immigrant needs, Councilors, the Mayor, and the Department of Community Services appear to be willing and able to contribute to existing efforts, and to add their own input where circumstances allow. There was no mention, in any of the interviews, of any downloading of responsibility or lack of funds by the provincial government. If the existing partnerships and initiatives are encouraged and continuously developed, a trend suggested by the information obtained in this study, then Kingston can look forward to a successful future as a small centre promoting the sustainable settlement of newcomers, with all the challenges and benefits that entails.

Conclusion

This paper began with an overview of recent literature on the topics of municipal leadership in immigration, factors affecting attraction and retention rates in second- and third-tier cities, and strategies for success in immigrant recruitment and support. In combination with the above findings and discussion (as a result of interviews with key informants in the Kingston community) and a review of recent Census data, many conclusions can be drawn about the city's present and future ability to attract, retain, and support immigrants.

The elements of employment, education, housing and healthcare appear to be in good shape in Kingston. However, they will likely require consistent attention and improvement through funding, partnerships, and policy discussions between relevant parties, if they are to continue to provide opportunities for newcomers to Kingston as the city grows. The mismatch between immigrant skills and available employment is a concern that needs to be addressed by both the community organizations that cater to immigrants, and the professional associations that are posing a challenge to membership.

Immigrant services specifically, such as LINC, employment services, and community settlement programs appear to be operating at a level and pace that are appropriate to the immigrant community's current needs. If the dedication of these organizations continues, it seems that newcomers to Kingston have a lot to look forward to.

The largest concerns brought to light in this study were related to community awareness and understanding of ethno-cultural diversity, and immigrants in particular. As discussed above, the strategies that are currently in place in Kingston show a lot of

promise for addressing these concerns, and members of both the municipal government and community service organizations appear dedicated to this cause.

However, the true extent of both immigrant and community needs in Kingston, and their corresponding solutions, cannot be conclusively established within the confines of this preliminary study. Some suggested avenues for further research include a more in-depth study of the current immigrant population in Kingston, as well as the interplay between federal and provincial immigration policies, and the reality that exists in the local community. It would also be extremely valuable to determine immigrant residents' views on matters related to their service needs, and perception of the city as a settlement destination. Matters relating to child and youth immigrants, as well as elderly newcomers could also be researched to an extent that was not possible in this study. Non-immigrant members of the Kingston community could also be very valuable sources of information related to cultural awareness in the city, and attitudes towards the changes that newcomers necessarily bring. While time and space placed limitations on this study of immigration issues in the third-tier city of Kingston, Ontario, its findings indicate an interest in, and dedication to these issues, on the part of the interview participants and their respective organizations. This in itself bodes hope for future research on immigrant issues in smaller centres, and the successful settlement of newcomers to Kingston, specifically, in the future.

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Interviews

Interview A. Kingston Employment and Youth Services (KEYS) staff member. 21 July 2008. Kingston, Ontario.

Interview B. Immigrant Services Kingston and Area (ISKA) staff member. 22 July 2008. Kingston, Ontario.

Interview C. Queen's University Human Rights Department staff member. 22 July 2008. Kingston, Ontario.

Interview D. Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO) staff member. 29 July 2008. Kingston, Ontario.

Interview E. Kingston City Councilor. 30 July 2008. Kingston, Ontario.

Interview F. City of Kingston, Department of Community Services staff member. 31 July 2008. Kingston, Ontario.

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Interview A: Questions for KEYS representative

a) Roles and official stance

- What role does your organization play in terms of immigrants/immigration?
- How would you describe your organization's official stance on matters relating to immigration and immigrants? (need them? Want them?)
- How would you describe the attitudes towards immigrants in the Kingston area in general? Of citizens? Of employers/business owners? Of the municipal government?
- Can you describe some of the programs and initiatives here, which you feel are the most important?
-Prompts for this question: employment, ESL, community-building, relations with other residents, housing, transportation, attraction/retention, certification equivalency services, bridge-to-work programs/mentoring
- Have you heard of 'Smart Settlement' or 'Sustainable Settlement'? What is your organization's view of this approach? Have you been involved in related initiatives? (giving immigrants a stake in the community at large, and the decision-making processes that influence them)

b) Relationships with other institutions/organizations

- From where does this organization receive information related to immigration and immigrants in Kingston with which to inform its programs and initiatives? (ie: what Kingston newcomers need, etc.)
- From where do you receive funding, and how is it distributed?
- What is this organization's relationship with the municipal government? What about with provincial and federal governments? –PNP connections? Overseas recruitment of immigrants by Kingston employers? Attraction/retention strategies
- Do you have partnerships with other organizations within the Kingston area? In other cities?

c) Looking forward

- What are some of the benefits and challenges this organization has discovered in relation to immigration in Kingston on social, economic, and political levels?

- Do you think Kingston is organized in such a way that immigrants are able to settle successfully?
- Are there any immigrant needs or desires that are not being addressed appropriately in Kingston, or are facing resistance? (eg: How difficult is it for immigrants to gain adequate employment in Kingston?)
- What is your organization's goal in terms of immigration? How do you picture the future of immigration in Kingston?

Interview B: Questions for ISKA representative

a) Role and official stance

- How would you describe Immigrant Services Kingston & Area's (ISKA's) official stance on matters relating to immigration and immigrants?-something Kingston/Canada wants/needs? Difference in feelings towards temporary foreign workers? Refugees?
- How would you describe the attitudes towards immigrants in the Kingston area in general? Of citizens? Of employers/business owners? Of the municipal government?
- What is ISKA's role in terms of immigrants/immigration?
- What cultural/language groups do you serve most often? Do these reflect the make-up of the immigrant population in Kingston? What languages are your services available in?
- Can you describe some of the programs and initiatives here at ISKA, that you feel are the most important?
-Prompts for this question: employment, LINC/ESL, community-building, relations with other residents, housing, transportation, attraction/retention, diversity education in community, certification recognition, settlement counselling
- Have you heard of 'Smart Settlement' or 'Sustainable Settlement'? What is ISKA's view of this approach? Have you been involved in related initiatives? (giving immigrants a stake in the community at large, and the decision-making processes that influence them)

b) Relationships with other institutions/organizations

- From where does ISKA receive information related to immigration and immigrants in Kingston with which to inform its programs and initiatives? (ie: what Kingston newcomers need, etc.)

- From where does ISKA receive funding, and how is it distributed?
- What is ISKA's relationship with the municipal government? What about with provincial and federal governments? –PNP, Can-Ont agreement
- Do you have partnerships with other organizations within the Kingston area? In other cities? (Are there other immigration service agencies in the area?)

c) Looking forward

- What are some of the benefits and challenges ISKA has discovered in relation to immigration in Kingston on social, economic, and political levels?
- Do you think Kingston is organized in such a way that immigrants are able to settle successfully? - Are there any immigrant needs or desires that are not being addressed appropriately in Kingston, or are facing resistance? –housing, employment bridge-to-work programs, language/cultural barriers, acceptance by community, recreation, transportation
- What is ISKA's goal in terms of immigration? How do you picture the future of immigration in Kingston?

Interview C: Questions for Queen's University Human Rights Department representative

- How often, if ever, do issues of immigration come up at Queen's? Can you provide any examples?
- What is the official standpoint here, on immigration in the city of Kingston and at this institution? What does Queen's feel is its role/responsibility?
- What is the general attitude towards immigrants in Kingston, by the students and staff at the university?
- Is the university or its affiliate organizations/student groups involved in any immigration-related initiatives on campus or in the city?
-language services, refugee sponsorship, advocacy, attraction/retention, continuing education
- Can you give any insight into the parallels between the lives of foreign students and the lives of immigrants in Kingston?
- How many foreign students does Queen's educate each year? Do you know if many of them stay in Canada? Kingston?
- What might be some reasons for staying or not staying?

- How involved in student life are foreign students?
- Do you think Kingston is organized in such a way that immigrants are able to settle successfully?
- Are there any immigrant needs or desires that are not being addressed appropriately in Kingston, or are facing resistance? At Queen's?
- How do you picture the future of immigration in Kingston?

Interview D: Questions for KEDCO representative

a) Roles and official stance

- What role does your organization play in terms of immigrants/immigration?
- How would you describe your organization's official stance on matters relating to immigration and immigrants? (need them? Want them?)
- How would you describe the attitudes towards immigrants in the Kingston area in general? Of citizens? Of employers/business owners? Of the municipal government?
- Is KEDCO involved in any immigration-related initiatives?
-Prompts for this question: to increase employment ops for newcomers and businesses, community-building, relations with other residents, attraction/retention of skilled workers, certification equivalency services, bridge-to-work programs/mentoring
- Have you heard of 'Smart Settlement' or 'Sustainable Settlement'? What is your organization's view of this approach? Have you been involved in related initiatives? (giving immigrants a stake in the community at large, and the decision-making processes that influence them)

b) Relationships with other institutions/organizations

- From where does this organization receive information related to immigration and immigrants in Kingston with which to inform its programs and initiatives? (ie: what Kingston newcomers need, etc.)
- From where do you receive funding, and how is it distributed?
- What is this organization's relationship with the municipal government? What about with provincial and federal governments? –PNP connections? Overseas recruitment of immigrants by Kingston employers? Attraction/retention strategies

- Do you have partnerships with other organizations within the Kingston area or in other cities that might be beneficial to immigration attraction and retention initiatives?

c) Looking forward

- What are some of the benefits and challenges this organization has discovered in relation to immigration in Kingston on social, economic, and political levels?
- Do you think Kingston is organized in such a way that immigrants are able to settle successfully?
- Are there any immigrant needs or desires that are not being addressed appropriately in Kingston, or are facing resistance? (eg: How difficult is it for immigrants to gain adequate employment in Kingston?)
- What is your organization's goal in terms of immigration? How do you picture the future of immigration in Kingston?

Interview E: Questions for Kingston City Council representative

- Did you know that your electoral district is part of the census tract in the Kingston area with the highest percentage of immigrant residents in both the 2001 and 2006 census?
- Given what you know about your constituents, what reasons might you give for the high number of immigrants in your district?
- Has this changed the way you might otherwise approach your role as councilor of this district?
- Are there any immigrant-related programs/initiatives/issues that you have noticed in your jurisdiction? (what's happening, what needs to happen?)
- How would you describe the general attitudes towards immigrants and immigration in your jurisdiction? Of City leaders and staff? Kingston in general?
- How often do issues of immigration come up in council meetings? Is there a certain way in which these issues are approached or taken care of? (ie: committee focusing on newcomers, certain department, etc.)
- Do you think Kingston is organized in such a way that immigrants are able to settle successfully? - Are there any immigrant needs or desires that are not being addressed appropriately in Kingston, or are facing resistance? –housing, employment bridge-to-work programs, language/cultural barriers, acceptance

by community, recreation, transportation, availability/access to settlement services

- To your knowledge, how involved are newcomer/immigrant members of your electoral district in municipal politics and/or community events? (do you get phone calls or letters from them? Complaints?)
- How do you picture the future of immigration in Kingston? In your district?

Interview F: Questions for City of Kingston's Department of Community Services representative

a) Role and official stance

- How would you describe the City of Kingston's official stance on matters relating to immigration and immigrants? (do we need it/want it?)
- What is the City's role in terms of immigrants/immigration? Do you have a department whose responsibilities include jurisdiction over immigration issues? If not, what is the protocol if issues arise?
- How often do issues of immigration come up in Council meetings or day-to-day business?
- Are there currently, or have there been in the recent past, official initiatives developed and/or run by the City of Kingston, that relate to immigrants or immigration?
-Prompts for this question: employment, ESL, community-building, relations with other residents, housing, transportation, attraction/retention
- Have you heard of 'Smart Settlement' or 'Sustainable Settlement' in relation to immigrants in the Kingston community? What is the City's view of this approach? Has it been involved in related initiatives? (ex: encouraging immigrants to come to City Council meetings, sit on public committees, or establish their own committees?)

b) Relationships with other institutions/organizations

- From where does the City receive information related to immigration and immigrants in Kingston with which to inform its programs and initiatives?
- From where does the City receive funding, and how is it distributed?
- What is the City's relationship with the provincial and federal governments, in terms of immigration? With other cities, such as Toronto?

c) Looking forward

- What are some of the benefits and challenges the City has discovered in relation to immigration in Kingston on social, economic, and political levels? –examples: diversity of ideas, recreation; more workers; sometimes not with the skills we need; political consensus: keeping everyone’s interests a priority.
- How would you describe the attitudes towards immigrants in the Kingston area in general? Of citizens? Of employers/business owners?
- Do you think Kingston is organized in such a way that immigrants are able to settle successfully? - Are there any immigrant needs or desires that are not being addressed appropriately in Kingston, or are facing resistance? –housing, employment bridge-to-work programs, language/cultural barriers, acceptance by community, recreation, transportation
- What is the city’s goal in terms of immigration? How do you picture the future of immigration in Kingston?