

# Municipal Roles in Immigrant Settlement, Integration and Cultural Diversity

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By 2031, immigrants are expected to make up between 25 and 28 per cent of the Canadian population and visible minorities about one-third (Malenfant et al., 2010). Since more than 95 per cent of foreign-born and visible minority Canadians live in urban centres, municipal governments will increasingly assume a de facto role in crafting policy and program responses to migration and cultural diversity. Yet, despite the urban character of immigration to Canada and other settler states, scholarship on the responses of public authorities to migration has been dominated by state-level typologies of laws governing territorial admission and citizenship (Castles and Miller, 2003; Mahnig, 2004). This bias has obscured important variations in subnational approaches to the settlement and integration of newcomers.

This article shifts the focus to the local arena by analyzing municipal roles in immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity in six of Canada's most diverse cities. Drawing on interview and documentary evidence, an inventory of corporate policy and program responses in Vancouver, Abbotsford, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Brampton will provide the database for a proposed local-scale typology that classifies and distinguishes among cities according to the normative premises underlying the official recognition of cultural differences in the public sphere, the types and extent of their initiatives and the locus of bureaucratic authority for settlement, integration and diversity issues. The article concludes with a brief discussion of the factors influencing variations in local approaches.

A study of the scope and nature of municipal involvement in this policy field is timely as newcomers and members of cultural minorities face serious challenges to their economic and social integration in cities across Canada. A 2006 report on Canada's 24 largest municipalities and

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metropolitan areas revealed that the unemployment rate for recent immigrants was 2.3 times higher than for non-immigrants. Recent immigrant households were also two to four times more likely than non-immigrant households to report low incomes (Tucker, 2009: iii, 42). In Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton and the Region of Peel (which includes the City of Brampton) the incomes of recent immigrants had fallen behind those of non-immigrants between 2001 and 2006. In Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary and Peel, home ownership affordability for recent immigrants deteriorated at higher rates or did not improve to the same extent as for non-immigrants (2009: iv, 44). Labour force data suggest that immigrants, particularly newcomers, have borne the brunt of unemployment since the onset of the recession in late 2008 (Toronto Immigrant Employment Data Initiative, 2011).

Immigrant settlement patterns and immigration reforms in 1960s that ushered in dramatic transformations in the national origins of newcomers also have implications for intercultural relations in urban centres. Visible minorities constitute near or absolute majorities of the residents of Toronto, Vancouver and Brampton, and they are a significant presence in Edmonton, Calgary and Abbotsford, where they make up between 23 and 26 per cent of their populations (Statistics Canada, 2006). However, visible minorities are more likely than whites to report that they have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment because of their ethnocultural characteristics, language, accent or religion (Badets et al., 2003), and the vast majority of hate-motivated crimes are motivated by race, ethnicity or religion (Dauvergne et al., 2006; Gannon, 2004). As newcomers and cultural minorities in cities across Canada face daunting challenges to their economic and social integration, it is germane to ask whether municipal governments regard immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity issues as falling within their scope of authority, and if so, how they have approached this file.

### **Immigrant Settlement, Integration and Cultural Diversity: Is There a Municipal Role?**

Under the *Constitution Act, 1867*, the federal Parliament has exclusive authority for “naturalization and aliens” (s. 91), the final selection and admission of immigrants (with the exception of independent immigrants and refugees selected abroad who are destined for Quebec), the determination of refugee status, and the final selection and admission of temporary residents, live-in caregivers and international students. Section 95 assigns concurrent legislative power over immigration to the federal and provincial governments, with the provinces limited in that any laws they pass must not be “repugnant to any act of the Parliament of

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**Abstract.** This article examines municipal government roles in immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity in six of Canada's most diverse cities. Drawing on documentary and interview evidence, the review of corporate initiatives in Vancouver, Abbotsford, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Brampton addresses three areas: the position or profile of these issues on the municipal government agenda; diversity, human rights and anti-racism policies for city institutions and the broader community; and access and equity policies. The inventory provides the data for a proposed local-scale typology that classifies and distinguishes among cities according to the normative premises underlying the official recognition of cultural differences in the public sphere, the types and extent of initiatives and the locus of bureaucratic authority for these issues. The analysis identified distinct approaches at the sub-state level. Toronto was the only city that has fully embraced a multicultural approach recognizing cultural diversity in most or all aspects of its corporate policies and structures and which grants collective rights to members of disadvantaged groups. The intercultural or civic universalist approaches prevailed in most study sites. Just three cities have developed comprehensive and relatively centralized approaches to these issues. The results suggest that sub-state authorities will not necessarily adopt the discourse and policy responses associated with state-level multiculturalism.

**Résumé.** Cet article examine les approches des gouvernements municipaux dans six municipalités diverses du Canada en ce qui concerne l'établissement des immigrants, l'intégration et la diversité culturelle. L'inventaire des initiatives au niveau de l'entreprise à Vancouver, Abbotsford, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto et Brampton s'adressent à trois secteurs : la position ou le profil d'établissement des immigrants, l'intégration/problèmes de diversité dans le programme du gouvernement municipal; la diversité, les droits de l'Homme et les politiques anti-racisme pour les institutions de la ville et la communauté dans son ensemble; et les politiques d'accès et d'équité. L'inventaire forme la base d'une typologie à échelle locale qui est structurée en trois parties : les prémisses normatives fondamentales soulignant la reconnaissance officielle des différences culturelles dans la sphère publique; les types et l'étendue des initiatives et le lieu d'autorité bureaucratique de ces problèmes. L'analyse de preuves documentaires et d'entrevues a identifié des approches distinctes à l'établissement des immigrants, l'intégration et la diversité culturelle. Toronto était la seule ville à approuver entièrement l'approche multiculturelle qui reconnaît la diversité culturelle et tous les aspects de ses politiques et de ses structures d'entreprise, tout en accordant des droits collectifs aux membres de groupes défavorisés. Les approches interculturelles ou universelles ont prévalu dans la plupart de sites d'études. Juste deux villes ont développé des approches complètes et relativement centralisées à ces problèmes. Les résultats suggèrent que les autorités de sous-état n'adopteront pas nécessairement les réponses de discours et politique qui sont associées avec le multiculturalisme d'état-niveau.

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Canada." In practice, Ottawa shares its authority with provincial and territorial governments in matters where immigrant settlement and adaptation intersect with provincial powers. Both orders of government provide newcomers with a range of settlement and integration programs and services, before and after their arrival in Canada (Winnemore and Biles, 2006). The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, 2001* (section 8) also authorizes the federal minister to sign agreements with the provinces to facilitate the co-ordination and implementation of immigration policies and programs.

A confluence of provincial interest in acquiring more control over immigration and social policy and Ottawa's desire to reduce public spending has eroded the federal government's monopoly of policy making in the selection and settlement of immigrants. Ten provinces and the Yukon

have signed such agreements with the federal government; Quebec was the first to obtain full responsibility for immigrant settlement and integration services in 1991. Agreements signed with Manitoba in 1996 and British Columbia in 1998 gave these provinces full responsibility and funding for delivering settlement services and a consultative role regarding immigration policy and targets, the delivery of federal services and information sharing. Agreements with Alberta, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia provide for co-operation on recruitment, planning and settlement, although there is no funding for the latter (Tolley, 2011). All provinces and territories have signed provincial nominee program agreements allowing them to nominate individuals to the federal government for consideration as immigrants.

Several forces have contributed to growing municipal involvement in settlement and integration matters. The political dimension of provincial–municipal relationships that permits some measure of local innovation in areas where laws or rules of procedures have been vague or nonexistent (Andrew, 1995), the erosion of airtight jurisdictions of authority (Peninx et al., 2004: 5) and the paradigm shift from government to governance (Bekkers et al., 2006: 23–24), have all enhanced the potential for municipal action. The 2005 *Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement* (COIA) includes a provision to involve municipalities and community stakeholders in planning and discussions on the recruitment, settlement and integration of immigrants. Through COIA, funding has also been provided for the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) initiative, a multi-level and multi-sectoral governance arrangement that has sparked the interest of municipalities and neighbourhood associations in developing strategic plans to build inclusive and responsive environments for newcomers (Burr, 2011).

### **Local Government Responses to Immigrant Settlement, Integration and Cultural Diversity: Theory and Practice**

The concepts of “settlement” and “integration” represent different stages of the process of immigrant adaptation to a new land. The settlement stage follows pre-arrival preparations and begins as soon as immigrants arrive at a national border and are processed and admitted into the country. During this stage, newcomers secure accommodation, prepare to enter the labour market, enrol their children in school and seek health care providers (Tolley, 2011). The integration stage follows and is typically conceived as the long-term, multi-dimensional process through which an immigrant becomes a member of the receiving society. The social dimension of integration refers to immigrant participation in Canadian institutions; the cultural dimension describes the process of learning about the

host culture, its values and norms (Heckmann, 1997); the economic dimension involves finding a job and earning an income that matches one's educational and experiential background; and political integration refers to involvement in political and civic activities.

European research on local government approaches to immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity has found wide variations in philosophical approaches and policy responses to these questions. Alexander's study of migrant policies in 17 European cities drew on host-stranger relations theory, which is concerned with how individuals and societies define membership and belonging, to propose a five-category typology of official responses in the legal-political, socio-economic, cultural-religious and spatial policy domains (2004: 63). Each of the transient, guest worker, assimilationist, pluralist and intercultural approaches reflected differences in official attitudes about the temporal and spatial presence of migrants, and normative premises about the place of their ethnic, racial and religious "otherness" in the host society.

Similarly, Poirier's analysis of official discourse used by city officials in Montreal and Ottawa also distinguished between assimilationist and pluralist models (2004: 6-7). Assimilationist models of immigrant settlement and inclusion are based on the idea that expressions of cultural distinctiveness should remain in the private sphere and that public spaces should be "neutral." The discourse associated with this approach emphasizes individual equality, the recognition of individual rights and the right to protection from discrimination. The radical variant of this model assumes a monocultural perspective, whereby the host society expects the minority group to conform to the lifestyles and values of the dominant group in both public and private spheres. The civic universalist variant of the assimilationist model distinguishes between public and private space; the maintenance of cultural distinctiveness is acceptable in the private sphere but not in public institutions, where the recognition of group-based differences is discouraged and all citizens are considered equal with respect to the rules and values of collective life (2004: 7).

The pluralist model is premised on the idea that diversity in the private sphere should be reflected in the public realm, and that society can be understood as a mosaic of communities. The multicultural variant of this model values the recognition of difference in the public sphere, including the granting of collective rights to minorities, while the intercultural variant places equal emphasis on the recognition of diversity and identities and the promotion of common reference points for the immigrant and host society (2004: 8).

In Canada, there is an ongoing debate about whether practical differences exist between the federal government's policy of multiculturalism and the Quebec government's policy of interculturalism. Garcea has noted that both envision the incorporation of immigrants or minority cul-

tures into the larger political community as a reciprocal endeavour. Furthermore, there is a close correspondence between the legislative and policy foundations of the Quebec model and the goals of federal multiculturalism policy to foster an appreciation of cultural diversity, cross-cultural understanding, the participation by members of ethno-cultural groups in economic, social, cultural and political life, and the preservation of the uniqueness of cultural communities (2006). Gagnon and Iacovino believe that interculturalism is distinct from multiculturalism because the former does not imply “a society built on the juxtaposition of a mosaic of ethnic groupings” but a common public culture where French is the language of public life (2007). According to this perspective, interculturalism, unlike multiculturalism, places equal emphasis on recognizing diversity and identities and promoting common reference points for the immigrant and host society. While the debate about meaningful differences between multiculturalism and interculturalism cannot be resolved here, the fact that differences are *perceived* to exist in both the local European and Canadian contexts justifies their treatment as distinct approaches.

Other typologies of municipal government responses to settlement, integration and cultural diversity in Canada have classified cities on the basis of their activity levels and policy styles (such as whether and when governments act upon settlement and diversity issues). Tate and Quesnel identified proactive and reactive policy styles to describe the accessibility and receptivity of municipal services for ethnocultural populations in Toronto and Montreal (1995). Proactive municipalities collected and mapped demographic information and consulted with community groups and city departments to implement institutionalized efforts to identify and address immigrant needs before problems arose. Reactive municipalities established a bureaucratic unit to deal with community demands and complaints after the eruption of interethnic tensions. Wallace and Frisken expanded this binary distinction to include a third category of “inactive” cities that failed or refused to acknowledge that immigrant settlement was affecting the character of the municipality or the service needs of the local population (2000: 17). Their research on Greater Toronto Area (GTA) municipalities found large variations in the scope and variety of responses in numerous policy areas, differences that persisted between cities with immigrant populations of similar sizes and operating under the same provincial constraints (2000; Frisken and Wallace, 2003).

Good’s typology of multiculturalism policies in the GTA and Greater Vancouver area distinguishes between “responsive,” “somewhat responsive” and “unresponsive” municipalities (2009). Her classification framework is organized along two axes: the policy styles of municipal officials, and the comprehensiveness of efforts to promote ethnocultural equity, with comprehensiveness referring to the breadth, range and depth of

policies. Geographers Edgington and Hutton have classified local council commitment to multiculturalism and the provision of equitable and accessible services in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), Abbotsford and the District of Mission according to the spatial location of the constituent municipalities (2002: 11–15).

The typology proposed in this article shares one important property with the typologies developed by Good, Wallace and Frisken and Tate and Quesnel but differs in other key respects. Like these frameworks, it distinguishes between the types and extent of corporate activity levels. Unlike these typologies, it situates official attitudes about the appropriate recognition of cultural difference in the public sphere on a philosophical continuum, an approach that has been employed by Alexander (2004) and Poirier (2004). Unlike any existing local-scale typologies, it identifies whether responsibility for these issues has been centralized or decentralized within the municipal bureaucracy.

Having observed differences in the philosophical orientations or comprehensiveness of immigrant policies, researchers have proposed several explanations for local variations. In Bradford and Birmingham in the United Kingdom, local governments have emerged as important actors in this policy field and have been responsive to “bottom-up” ethnic group demands for input into policy processes (Rex and Samad, 1996). In contrast, the evolution of immigrant policies in Paris, Berlin and Zurich has been described as overwhelmingly reactive and ad hoc, with exclusionary political interventions triggered by fears that the presence of migrants, particularly the spatial concentration of low-income migrants, could threaten social peace and public order (Mahnig, 2004).

In Canada, factors that have been linked to proactive responses in Greater Toronto Area municipalities have included an early start to developing programs for the immigrant community, greater fiscal capacity, a triggering event such as an influx of refugees or heightened racial tensions and supportive political leadership (Wallace and Frisken, 2000: 29–32). The proportionate size of the immigrant population, the timing of recent immigration, and the electoral strength of minority communities, appear to have exerted little to no influence on municipal policy responses (2000: 23–27). In the GVRD, determinants of municipal activity levels included the presence of immigrant, visible minority and non-English-speaking populations, the city’s history of social policy involvement in the delivery of services and cultural issues and inter-group tensions (Edgington and Hutton, 2002).

Local civil society actors and elected politicians also have an impact on municipal government responses. An active network of immigrant-serving agencies and community groups, as well as sympathetic politicians, have been identified as key drivers of municipal action in Montreal and Ottawa (Poirier, 2004: 9, 16), Edmonton (Derwing and Krahn, 2006)

and Sherbrooke (Corriveau and LaRougery, 2006; Vatz Laaroussi et al., 2006). Good (2009) has argued that variations in the comprehensiveness and policy styles of municipalities in the GTA and Greater Vancouver can be traced to differences in the ethnic configurations of constituent cities, which made the emergence of public–private governance arrangements dedicated to managing immigration and multiculturalism policy more or less likely. Generally, municipalities with biracial ethnic configurations and lasting public–private coalitions were more likely to be responsive than multiracial municipalities where it was more difficult to build coalitions around these issues.

### **Methodology**

This article employs a comparative case study design in order to develop an inventory and typology of municipal roles in immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity. This design is best suited for describing and explaining the outcomes of a small number of cases in a manner that is sensitive to historical chronology and context (Ragin, 1987). Toronto, Brampton, Calgary, Edmonton, Abbotsford and Vancouver were selected as case studies because they are among the country's most diverse cities and are home to relatively large populations of immigrants and visible minorities within their respective provinces (Table 1). A sample of cases from three provinces permits an assessment of the impact of the broader political, legal, financial and cultural context in which the cities are situated, while the selection of two cases from each province controls for provincial effects.

The inventory of municipal corporate initiatives was compiled through an analysis of official documents and semi-structured interviews with governmental and non-governmental officials in each municipality. The inventory addresses three areas: the position or profile of immigrant settlement, integration and/or diversity issues on the municipal government agenda; diversity, human rights and anti-racism policies for city institutions and the broader community; and access and equity policies. Four indicators were used to evaluate issue profile: the existence of formal immigrant settlement policies adopted by council; the establishment of council advisory bodies dedicated to diversity; the prominence of these issues in strategic/official plans and vision statements; and the establishment of separate administrative structures responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring related policies. Three indicators were used to assess a government's approach to diversity, human rights and racism: the adoption of multicultural policies; the adoption of human rights, anti-racism and/or anti-harassment policies; and member-

TABLE I  
Population Profiles of Cities and Provinces, 2006 Census

	Toronto	Brampton	Ontario	Edmonton	Calgary	Alberta	Vancouver	Abbotsford	BC
Population	2,503,281	433,806	12,160,282	730,372	988,193	3,290,350	578,041	123,864	4,113,487
Population change 2001–2006 (%)	.9	33.3	6.6	9.6	12.4	10.6	5.9	7.2	5.3
Non-official home language only (% of population)	31.2	27.4	15.1	12.7	13.9	9.1	32	19.1	15.7
Immigrants (% of pop.)	50	47.8	28.3	22.9	24.8	16.2	45.6	26.2	27.5
Immigrated before 1991 (% of immigrants)	47.9	45.9	55.4	57.5	49.6	56	50	54.5	54.1
Immigrated 1991–2006 (% of immigrants)	52.1	54.1	44.6	42.5	50.4	44	50	45.5	45.9
Visible minority population (% of pop.)	47	57	22.8	22.9	23.7	13.9	51	26.4	24.8

ship in the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination.

Responses in the area of access and equity were determined through an analysis of human resources, corporate communications and public consultation policies and practices. Human resources policies showed whether a city had implemented targeted initiatives to recruit, hire and train visible minorities and/or immigrants; employment equity policies designated for members of disadvantaged groups; and mentoring and internship programs for immigrants and/or visible minorities. The review of corporate communications and public consultation policies indicated the municipal government's stance on providing translation and interpretation services in non-official languages and on the engagement of minority and immigrant residents in public consultations.

The inventory provided the database for a three-dimensional typology that classifies municipal roles in immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity. The typology's first dimension is based on an overall assessment of the normative premises underlying the official recognition of cultural difference. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks employed by Alexander and Poirier, it situates municipal discourse and policies on a continuum ranging from the radical and civic universalist variants of the assimilationist model to the multicultural and intercultural variants of the pluralist model. The main contrast is between cities that employ universalist discourse in their documents and which implement policies and programs that do not recognize cultural differences and those cities which employ pluralist discourse and implement policies and programs that are specifically designed for immigrants and minorities. The second dimension reflects the type and extent of corporate initiatives, distinguishing between cities that address immigrant settlement and diversity concerns on all or nearly all indicators (comprehensive), a minority of indicators (selective) or relatively few indicators (limited).

The third dimension identifies the locus of bureaucratic authority for settlement, integration and diversity issues. It distinguishes between cities that have established a separate administrative unit to develop, implement and monitor these policies across the bureaucracy (centralized), and those which have not and which assign relatively more discretion to department/unit managers (decentralized). Since typologies are inherently static and cannot capture the dynamic aspects of the process of settlement and integration, the proposed classification system should be viewed as a conceptual space in which municipal government responses can be provisionally situated and traced over time. The article concludes with a discussion of the factors driving municipal roles in immigrant settlement, integration and diversity, based on the documentary and interview evidence.

## **The Position or Profile of Immigrant Settlement, Integration and Cultural Diversity**

### *Position or Profile on the Municipal Agenda*

Although global migration has made a significant contribution to population growth in all six municipalities, Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary are the only cities that have formalized their involvement in the immigration and settlement policy field. This shows that the presence of a substantial foreign-born population does not necessarily lead to greater municipal involvement in this area. In 2001 the newly amalgamated City of Toronto adopted an immigration and settlement policy framework due in part to its pre-eminence as the primary destination for immigrants and refugees to Canada. The framework is comprehensive, covering the areas of economic integration, intergovernmental consultation and collaboration, service access and equity, planning and co-ordination, advocacy and public education, and building community capacity and civic participation. Its goal is to help the city work with other orders of government and sectors of society to ensure that it continues to attract newcomers, to help them develop a sense of identity and belonging to the city and to fully participate in its social, economic, cultural and political life (City of Toronto, 2001). This was followed up in 2007 by a memorandum of understanding with the provincial and federal governments, in which the signatories agreed to collaborate on research, policy and program development related to immigration and settlement (Staff Report, 2008). The prominence of these issues on the municipal agenda was signified by former Mayor Miller's statement of priorities for the 2006–2010 term of council: strengthening the city's cultural diversity through the extension of voting rights to non-citizens, ensuring multilingual access to city services and expanding the city's mentorship program to help internationally trained professionals find work (City of Toronto, 2006a).

In 2007 Edmonton became the second municipality to adopt a formal immigration and settlement policy that is modelled on Toronto's policy framework and addresses nearly identical service and program areas (City of Edmonton, 2007). The move was prompted by Mayor Mandel's recognition that Edmonton was lagging Calgary in the attraction and retention of skilled immigrants and that the city needed to improve its welcome to newcomers (Phair, 2007). Social justice considerations were also instrumental, as there were concerns about the ability of newcomers to access services and goods without a formal settlement policy and about possible stereotyping, discrimination and racist behaviour on the part of well-established groups afraid of change (City of Edmonton, 2006). Calgary's Welcoming Community Policy, introduced in 2011, provides a framework for the attraction and retention of immigrants in five areas

that largely correspond with those identified in Toronto and Edmonton: social and economic integration; intergovernmental relations; service access and equity; advocacy, communication, public awareness and education; and vulnerable segments of the immigrant population (City of Calgary, 2011).

### *Council Advisory Bodies*

Municipalities have been more active in establishing advisory bodies dedicated to immigrant settlement and/or diversity. As of late 2010, Edmonton and Vancouver had mayoral advisory councils (City of Vancouver, 2005), and Calgary, Toronto and Vancouver had council advisory committees or working groups addressing these matters (City of Vancouver Advisory Committee on Diversity Issues, 2007; City of Vancouver, 2010). Brampton city council did not have a similar body, but Peel Region, which includes Brampton, co-chairs the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, which is responsible for developing a co-ordinated and integrated community plan for newcomer services (Region of Peel, 2010).

### *Vision Statements and Strategic/Official Plans*

Municipal vision statements convey symbolic messages about the civic identity, while strategic and/or official plans guide detailed planning processes. A review of these documents found no clear correlation between the proportionate size of a municipality's immigrant or visible minority population and the emphasis that cities placed on immigration or cultural diversity. Neither Abbotsford nor Brampton, the latter a city with an immigrant and visible minority population double the size of Abbotsford's (Table 1), highlighted these features as part of their civic identities in their respective vision statements (City of Abbotsford, 2010; City of Brampton, 2011). Vancouver and Toronto have similar shares of immigrant and visible minority populations, yet the former city's mission and values statements stress universalist phrases such as "responsiveness, excellence, fairness, integrity, leadership and learning" (City of Vancouver, 2009a), while Toronto's "Diversity Our Strength" motto emphasizes the city's cultural diversity and the distinct community identities of its pre-amalgamation constituent municipalities (City of Toronto, 2010).

Although Brampton and Vancouver are more similar to each other than to Edmonton in terms of population diversity (Table 1), Edmonton's strategic plan identified "embracing a wealth of cultures and creating a city that is welcoming to newcomers" as municipal responsibilities that should direct all departmental and agency plans over the next ten years (City of Edmonton, 2006), Brampton's *Official Plan* also recognized the need to create a multi-faceted social services system for immigrants and

other population segments (City of Brampton, 2006), while *City Plan: Directions for Vancouver* placed more emphasis on neighbourhood identities than on the city's "diverse cultural heritage" (City of Vancouver, 2001).

### *Administrative Structures*

Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver have adopted relatively centralized and co-ordinated approaches to settlement, integration and/or diversity issues, while other municipalities have assigned more discretion to units within the municipal bureaucracy. Toronto's Diversity Management and Community Engagement Unit (DMCEU) is located in the city manager's office and is responsible for advising, developing policy, monitoring legislation, co-ordinating access and equity information, engaging in advocacy, providing community support, promoting public education and administering a community grants program. The DMCEU is the legacy of practices in the former municipalities of Toronto, Scarborough and Metropolitan Toronto prior to amalgamation in 1998. These municipalities had separate administrative units dedicated to these issues, while the former municipalities of North York and Etobicoke had designated staff, but no separate units. Following the amalgamation of these cities into the new City of Toronto, the human resources and diversity policies of all amalgamated municipalities were harmonized with those of Metro Toronto and the old city of Toronto.

The DMCEU prepared the 2003 *Plan of Action for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination*, which ensures that non-discrimination, anti-racism, accessibility and equity policies and programs are integrated in the operations of the municipality (City of Toronto, 2003). It explicitly recognizes that multiple factors, including race and place of origin, contribute to discrimination against individuals and communities. The city manager must present an annual report to council on the status of the plan, and the auditor general conducts a social audit of the city's performance in achieving these goals. The DMCEU also co-ordinates an interdivisional staff team that leads the city divisions in developing their respective action plans on access, equity and human rights for the term of council. Working with the now-inactive Mayor's Roundtable on Access and Equity, the DMCEU also developed the equity lens, implemented corporate-wide in 2009. All reports signed by the city manager must include an equity impact statement using the equity lens. The lens requires that managers engaged in policy planning determine if diverse groups face barriers and whether the division has reduced or removed those barriers, assess the policy's impact on diverse groups, identify the changes that will benefit diverse groups, and measure the results (City of Toronto, 2006b).

The unit also monitors the selection process for the city's agencies, boards and commissions to ensure that appointments reflect the city's diversity, and works to improve the opportunities for businesses owned by designated groups to compete for city contracts. The DMCEU's community support functions include helping cultural communities raise public awareness about their unique histories, and administering a grants program for non-profit organizations. The Community Partnership and Investment Program, which evolved out of a program established by Metro Toronto in the early 1980s to address multicultural issues, was expanded after the Task Force on Access and Equity recommended in 1999 that grant programs be adapted to respond to emerging, under-resourced communities.

Vancouver's social planning department employs a full-time multicultural social planner and dedicated staff for multicultural and diversity issues. The department supports the immigrant integration work carried out by nine neighbourhood houses in the city, funds diversity and immigration-related non-profit and social service agencies through its community service grants (Sandercock, 2009), develops policy recommendations to council, conducts research and liaises with other civic departments, governments and diverse communities to address cultural diversity issues (City of Vancouver, 2006).

Edmonton's Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) is responsible for implementing the city's Immigration and Settlement Policy. The ODI's functions include building a workforce that reflects the city's communities; developing policies that recognize the diversity of city customers and citizens; providing staff training programs that value diversity and inclusion; and developing working relationships with senior governments and external organizations. The office also supports the bureaucracy on diversity, inclusion, equal opportunities and human rights issues and works with a cross-departmental diversity and inclusion committee to develop department plans rooted in the Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Implementation Plan (Reilly, 2009). In contrast to Toronto, Vancouver and Edmonton, the responsibility for identifying goals, actions and performance measures associated with Calgary's Welcoming Community Policy is located within individual business units (City of Calgary, 2011).

### **Diversity, Human Rights and Anti-Racism Policies**

The adoption of provincial multicultural policies in the form of a statute or statement by nine provinces between 1974 and 2004 (Garcea, 2006) has not translated into their universal adoption by cities. Abbotsford and Vancouver are the only communities with a multicultural relations state-

ment or civic policy, respectively. Both documents highlight the positive contribution of cultural diversity, the necessity of discouraging prejudice and discrimination and the importance of service accessibility (City of Abbotsford, 1998; City of Vancouver, 2005). In contrast, all six cities have adopted human rights or anti-discrimination policies consistent with provincial human rights laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, accommodation, goods, services and facilities.

Despite these commonalities, there is room for local innovation in the field of human rights. Municipal policies in Alberta and British Columbia cover the same ground as the *Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* (City of Calgary, 2001) and British Columbia's *Human Rights Code*, respectively. Toronto's *Human Rights and Harassment Policy* (1998) has gone beyond the 16 grounds of discrimination in employment specified in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* to include gender identity, literacy, political affiliation, membership in a union or staff association and any other personal characteristic. Literacy levels were added to the list in response to complaints that these provisions had been excluding cultural minorities from gaining public service employment in cleaning and trades occupations. Toronto is also the only city that has introduced mandatory human rights training for management and supervisory staff (Pennachetti, 2010), the only municipality with a Hate Activity Policy and Procedures Statement, and the only one that has established a separate Human Rights Office that provides information and assistance about city-related human rights and harassment issues to the public, the Toronto Public Service and members of council.

Toronto's pioneering initiatives on the human rights front date to the 1970s. Following a series of racially motivated attacks on newcomers of East Indian origin, the government of Metropolitan Toronto set up a task force to study racism, discrimination and attitudes towards newcomers. The 1977 Pitman report, *Now is Not Too Late*, became the blueprint for Metro to begin systematically addressing access, equity, racism and discrimination (Pitman, 1977). Soon after, Metropolitan Toronto established the Multicultural and Race Relations unit, the forerunner of the DMCEU (confidential interview). While the broader legal and philosophical context of support for multiculturalism and growing racial tensions were the initial drivers of anti-racism programming, the institutionalization of human rights initiatives suggests the persistence of a political and bureaucratic culture that supports these ideals.

Vancouver's Equal Employment Opportunity Program (EEO), established in 1977, collaborates with departments to: enhance the accessibility and inclusiveness of city facilities, resources and processes; disseminates information about equity, inclusion and diversity practices and human rights legislation; provides training on harassment prevention, diversity, human rights and literacy; resolves harassment and discrimi-

nation issues; and promotes best practices in areas related to human rights. The program director reports to city council periodically on the progress made by all city departments (City of Vancouver, 2009b). Working out of the EEO program, the Hastings Institute provides training, consulting and resource services in the areas of equity, human rights, diversity, literacy, accessibility, workplace accommodation and human rights, to external organizations in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

Four cities—Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto and Vancouver—have joined the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD). Formed in 2006 in response to a call from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, CCMARD is part of an international coalition of cities committed to fighting racism, discrimination and xenophobia. Membership involves a commitment to monitoring racism and discrimination in the community and municipal actions taken to address these problems, promoting equity in the labour market and equal opportunity housing, providing equal opportunities as an employer, service provider and contractor and promoting an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Aboriginal and racialized communities into the city's cultural life (Stewart, 2007).

## **Access and Equity**

### *Employment*

Activity levels, philosophies and practical responses concerning the recruitment, hiring, and training of immigrants and minorities varies widely among the municipalities. Toronto, Brampton, Edmonton and Calgary participate in multisectoral coalitions to address immigrant labour attraction, retention and/or other integration issues facing newcomers (such as the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), the Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council, the Immigrant Sector Council of Calgary), while Vancouver lacks a similar body. Vancouver and Toronto are the only cities where hiring policies are informed by the multicultural philosophy of granting collective rights to members of minority groups. Vancouver's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (EEO), established in 1986, encourages the hiring of women, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, and Aboriginal people (City of Vancouver, 2009b). Toronto's Employment Equity Policy (2000) commits the city to work with its employees, unions, employee associations and community organizations representing "women, racial minority people, people with disabilities, Aboriginal people and other groups, to develop initiatives that promote equity in the workplace." Toronto is also the only

city with an Employment Accommodation Policy that aims to remove barriers to the fair testing of the job abilities of minorities (City of Toronto, 2004). Toronto and Edmonton are the only cities that have recently conducted employment equity surveys measuring the representation of visible minorities and other designated groups in the public service. A 2007 survey of non-unionized staff in the Toronto Public Service found that 14 per cent were from racial minorities, which is less than one-third of the visible minority of the broader population (James, 2009). Similar patterns were observed in Edmonton, where a 2006 census found that 13 percent of the city's workforce self-identified as "non-white," below the 23 per cent representation of visible minorities in the population (Reilly, 2009).

The employment policies of Brampton, Abbotsford, Calgary and Edmonton reflect a civic universalist approach that provides "equal employment opportunities" for individuals rather than for underrepresented groups. For example, Abbotsford's Equal Opportunity Policy subscribes to a definition of equality that "transcends concepts of race, ethnicity, gender and disability." It strives to "promote equal access to all municipal services and employment opportunities, to encourage the participation of citizens from all backgrounds in the development of policies, practises and services ... and to create a work environment in which people are hired or promoted because of their qualifications and not because of factors unrelated to their ability to do the job" (City of Abbotsford, 1983). Calgary's Respectful Workplace Policy emphasizes "maintaining a safe and productive workplace where all city employees are treated with respect and dignity" (City of Calgary, 2001).

The four largest cities have implemented initiatives to recruit, mentor and/or train members of immigrant and minority communities, with Toronto and Edmonton the most active. Edmonton has published recruitment materials highlighting community diversity, established recruitment and internship programs for immigrants and provided cultural diversity training and language programs to city units with labour shortages or where immigrants have expressed concerns about accessing jobs. In order to boost the number of immigrants working for transit and medical emergency services, the city created an employment access program that works with local partners to deliver job skill and language training (Reilly, 2009). Toronto offers both internship and mentoring opportunities for immigrant job seekers. In 2009, 90 city mentors provided immigrant job seekers with advice on resume preparation, dress and behaviour appropriate for the Canadian workplace, and introductions to professional networks (Pennachetti, 2010). In 2007, a pilot, two-year mentoring program was introduced to remove barriers in hiring and promotion processes that affect Black African Canadian employees in exempt and management positions.

Vancouver's EEO program collaborates with departments to reach a more diverse applicant pool, delivers public presentations about employment opportunities and co-ordinates work experience placements with community agencies and educational institutions. Calgary does not have a corporate-wide mentoring or internship program but some units offer a pre-employment workplace English pilot program for immigrants or on-site English pronunciation courses (City of Calgary, 2011). Brampton does not have a mentorship or internship program, but the Region of Peel is a member of TRIEC's mentoring partnership, which matches skilled immigrants with established professionals in the same occupation.

### *Corporate Communications and Public Consultation*

Corporate communications policies ranged from largely unilingual, English language approaches modified by limited degrees of linguistic pluralism, to corporate-wide multilingualism in nascent and mature stages (Tossutti, 2009). Abbotsford, Calgary and Edmonton do not have formal corporate policies on the translation of written documents into non-official languages. However, some units that deliver emergency or frontline services in these cities translate some materials into other languages. Abbotsford City Manager Frank Pizzuto cites translation costs and concerns about the city's inability to meet demands for translations from other language groups as the reasons why more products are not published in non-official languages. Interpretation services for inquiries at Abbotsford's city hall are provided on an informal basis by employees with proficiency in 13 non-official languages (Pizzuto, 2008).

Calgary does not have a corporate-wide policy on multilingual translations, but does offer telephone interpretation through a 311 line that provides callers with information about non-emergency municipal government services. Edmonton's 311 information line provides third-party telephone interpretive services in more than 150 languages. The service complements the Citizens and New Arrival Information Centre in City Hall, where "311" agents offer in-person support (Reilly, 2009). The city also publishes a newcomers' guide in eight languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Hindi, Mandarin, Punjabi and Vietnamese), which is available on the city's website. Officials say it is unlikely the city will adopt a multilingual communications strategy due to the uneven quality of translations and the belief that it may be more effective to reach newcomers through verbal or disc media formats. Edmonton's Public Involvement Framework also requires that diversity/translation be considered when departments and branches need to solicit the opinions of ethnocultural groups (City of Edmonton, 2005).

In 1995, Vancouver city council adopted a diversity communications strategy and subsequently implemented a multilingual information

and referral phone service in four languages. In 2007, council adopted the recommendations of the *Report of the Mayor's Task Force on Immigration* to establish formal translation and interpretation protocol and guidelines (City of Vancouver, 2007: 11). They are designed to give residents equal access to important civic services and information and to provide direction to staff on the provision of language services. City council also accepted the task force recommendation to employ staff fluent in Vancouver's predominant languages and to offer third-party telephone interpretation services in more than 150 languages for 311 Access Vancouver, launched in 2009 (City of Vancouver, 2007: 10).

As in other cities, the absence of a formal policy did not preclude the publication of materials in non-official languages. Information about important city-wide policies has been published in Chinese, Filipino, Punjabi, Vietnamese and Spanish, in addition to English (Mackenzie, 2007). Vancouver's newcomers' guide is published in English and four non-official languages (Chinese, Punjabi, Spanish, Vietnamese) and the *Guide to Municipal Services* is available in English, Chinese and Vietnamese (City of Vancouver, 2005). Both publications are available on the city's website. The clerk's department also maintains an inventory of staff who speak a second language (City of Vancouver, 2006). Outreach to cultural and immigrant groups is also an important feature of the *CityPlan Neighbourhood Visions* process (Sandercock, 2009).

Toronto and Brampton are the only cities with formal corporate policies based on the principle of multilingualism. Toronto's Multilingual Services Policy is the legacy of policies adopted before amalgamation by Toronto and Metro, which had multilingual access policies and designated multilingual staff providing translation and interpretation services (City of Toronto, 2003). The current policy is based on the principle that residents are entitled to municipal services and programs which are "racially sensitive, culturally and linguistically appropriate" (City of Toronto, 2002). Home language census data, the language needs of a particular community or neighbourhood, and the nature of the information (such as life-threatening issues) determine the priorities for multilingual translation or interpretation. Although not required by the provincial *French Language Services Act*, public information on citywide issues that is translated into a non-official language is automatically translated into French. On average, the city issues full or partial translations of publications in 50 languages. Decisions about the language of communication are made on a program basis because the city offers a broad range of programs for a diverse audience (MacDonell, 2008).

Toronto's immigration and settlement web portal for prospective immigrants and new arrivals features information primarily in English, with links to services providing translated or interpretation resources. Decisions concerning the translation of web-based documents are influ-

enced by the durability of information, so as to manage the legal risks of disseminating out-of-date vital information (MacDonell, 2008). The city's 311 telephone line for non-emergency city services and programs offers information in more than 180 languages. As in Edmonton, Toronto requires that public consultation processes consider providing interpretation services in non-official languages. Since 2006, Toronto's corporate advertising policy has required the placement of advertisements in the ethnic media for city-wide campaigns. In 2007, Brampton adopted a Multilingual Services Policy that aims to increase verbal and written communication provided in languages other than English. The policy establishes a 5 per cent population benchmark for determining the languages of translation, and priorities for the translation of documents. Brampton also offers third-party interpretation services through a call centre and at service counters (City of Brampton, 2007).

### **An Explanation and Typology of Municipal Roles in Immigrant Settlement, Integration and Cultural Diversity**

The absence of direction from senior governments on immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity issues gives municipalities wide latitude in crafting their responses to demographic change. Although the presence of diversity was not a sufficient condition to spur corporate initiatives, the sheer size of Toronto's immigrant and visible minority community (confidential interview, 2007), the presence of a large, politically active South Asian community in Abbotsford (Grewal, 2007) and a large immigrant population in Brampton were influential factors. In Edmonton, Calgary, Toronto and Peel Region (Brampton), local labour market conditions or pressure from the business and/or non-governmental sectors have also been important drivers of municipal involvement (Birjandian, 2007; Good, 2009; Phair, 2007; PinPoint Research, 2009). In these four municipalities, competition for skilled workers and professionals, or a mismatch between the employment immigrants find and their educational and professional backgrounds, have led to the creation of multisectoral alliances that are working to attract and retain newcomers.

In Edmonton, Vancouver and Toronto, interviewees referred to the critical role of municipal politicians who championed immigration and diversity issues (Chan, 2007; confidential interview; Pallard, 2007; Nsaliwa, 2007). A strong commitment to these issues from public service managers, many with professional backgrounds in social services or social justice, was also evident in Edmonton, Toronto and Calgary. Accounts of why some municipal government initiatives were more constrained than others referred to a lack of interest on the part of elected officials and the absence of visible minority voices on council in Calgary before 2011

(Birjandian), and to limited fiscal capacity (Pizzuto) and an unwillingness to dedicate resources to these issues in Abbotsford (Grewal). Municipal government officials did not generally identify provincial governments or broader provincial contexts as impediments to action.

The inventory of corporate responses furnished the database for a three-dimensional typology of municipal roles in immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity (see Tables 2 and 3). The first dimension is based on an overall assessment of the normative premises underlying the recognition of cultural differences in the public sphere. Toronto is the pioneer and lone practitioner of the full multicultural model of settlement and diversity. Its council priorities, vision statement, CCMARD membership, strategic plan, DMCEU, human resource and multilingual corporate communications policies, public outreach practices, and role in founding the TRIEC, illustrate that the recognition of cultural difference infuses nearly all aspects of its corporate philosophy. No other city in this sample has emulated Toronto's approach, although Edmonton and Brampton have been inspired by some of its elements.

Edmonton has formally recognized the salience of cultural differences on many indicators, but it has been more reluctant than other

TABLE 2  
Summary of Municipal Corporate Initiatives

	T	B	C	E	A	V
Immigration/settlement a council priority	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Diversity-related advisory body	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Vision refers to cultural diversity	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Strategic/official plan refers to cultural diversity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Multiculturalism policy	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
CCMARD member	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Administrative structures dedicated to immigrant settlement and/or diversity	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
Employment Equity (EE)/Equal Opportunity (EO)	EE	EO	EO	EO	EO	EE
Audit composition of workforce?	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
Anti-racism/anti-harassment/human rights policies	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Recruitment outreach	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Mentorship program for immigrants/minorities	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Internships for immigrants/minorities	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
Multilingual corporate communications policy	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
Language: written communication*	ML	ML	LM	LM	LM	LM
Language: verbal communication*	ML	ML	ML	ML	LM	ML
Ethnic media advertising policy?	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Adapted public consultation practises?	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y

\*ML = multilingual; LM = limited multilingual

TABLE 3  
 A Typology of Municipal Roles in Immigrant Settlement, Integration and Cultural Diversity

Dimension	Vancouver	Abbotsford	Edmonton	Calgary	Toronto	Brampton
Recognition of difference	Multicultural/Intercultural	Civic Universalist	Intercultural	Civic Universalist	Multicultural	Civic Universalist
Types and extent of corporate initiatives	Comprehensive	Limited	Comprehensive	Selective	Comprehensive	Limited
Locus of bureaucratic authority	Centralized	Decentralized	Centralized	Decentralized	Centralized	Decentralized

cities to institutionalize these differences in its employment and corporate communications policies. In contrast to Toronto and Vancouver, Edmonton's municipal employment policy emphasizes the removal of barriers to the employment of individuals rather than members of designated minority groups. Unlike Toronto and Brampton, Edmonton has not opted for a multilingual corporate communications policy. For these reasons, Edmonton's approach is best described as intercultural rather than multicultural.

Vancouver's approach straddles the multicultural and intercultural variants of the pluralist model. The city has mayoral and council advisory bodies on multiculturalism, a multiculturalism policy, an employment policy that encourages the hiring of members of disadvantaged groups, and recruitment outreach and work placement initiatives targeted for immigrants and/or minorities. It also provides multilingual interpretation and translation services and was planning to develop a corporate communications policy that would set guidelines for the use of non-official languages. However, unlike Toronto and Edmonton, it has not adopted an immigration and settlement policy despite the strong presence of immigrants and visible minorities. Since its mission and overall vision statement make no or only cursory references to immigration or diversity, Vancouver has been more reticent than Toronto in recognizing cultural diversity as an integral feature of the civic identity. For these reasons, its approach is best described as mixed multicultural-intercultural.

The civic universalist approach best characterizes the corporate policies adopted by Abbotsford and Calgary until early 2011. Beyond strategic/official plans that briefly acknowledge the multicultural makeup of their communities, these cities have not established separate administrative units to address settlement, integration and diversity issues. Their human resource policies stress equal opportunities for individuals, they have not established internships or mentoring programs for immigrants and minorities, and issue fewer corporate publications in non-official languages. Calgary's adoption of a Welcoming Community Policy in 2011 signals that it is interested in formalizing its role in immigrant settlement and integration, but it is too early to tell how the framework will be implemented on the ground. Brampton also largely conforms to a civic universalist approach, although its Multilingual Services Policy may indicate a shift toward the pluralist end of the continuum.

The typology's second dimension examines the type and extent of corporate initiatives, distinguishing between comprehensive, selective and limited responses. Table 2 shows that Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver have addressed these issues on all or nearly all indicators. Edmonton's Immigration and Settlement Policy, vision statement, strategic plan, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, CCMARD membership, recruitment and internship initiatives, public consultation strategies and role in creating the

ERIEC illustrate that immigration and cultural diversity issues occupy a high profile on the municipal agenda. Calgary's response has been selective, and those of the two smaller cities, limited. The intercity variations cannot be simply attributed to a community's size, demographic composition and historical timing of immigration, since Calgary and Edmonton are comparable on these fronts. Furthermore, Brampton and Toronto share similar proportions of immigrant and visible minority populations, but occupy different positions on this dimension.

The third dimension describes the locus of bureaucratic authority for immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity. Since Abbotsford, Calgary and Brampton have not established separate administrative units that co-ordinate and monitor these matters, their organizational approaches are relatively decentralized in comparison to Edmonton and Toronto, which are situated on the centralized end of the authority spectrum. Both cities have established offices that are located in the offices of the deputy city manager or city manager and which are responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring these issues. Both cities are unique in requiring that all departments address diversity in policy planning. Vancouver's Social Planning Department supports immigrant integration activities and the city's EEO program monitors the hiring of members of designated groups and collaborates with departments to enhance access to city services. However, the absence of a formal immigration and settlement policy means that departments exercise relatively more discretion in addressing these issues. In sum, Vancouver's organizational approach can be characterized as centralized, although less so than in Edmonton and Toronto.

## **Conclusion**

Six of Canada's most diverse cities have adopted distinct philosophical and practical responses in the field of immigrant settlement, integration and cultural diversity. Although Canada adopted a policy of official multiculturalism in 1971, just one city has fully embraced a multicultural approach that recognizes cultural diversity in most or all aspects of its corporate policies and grants collective rights to minorities. In most study sites, the intercultural or civic universalist approaches prevailed. Just three cities have developed comprehensive and relatively centralized approaches to these issues. This study has shown that local models deviate significantly from the national model of multiculturalism. By developing a typology of immigrant settlement, integration and diversity that is sensitive to local conditions, researchers can track whether municipal approaches follow similar or divergent trajectories as the level of diversity in their communities intensifies.

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