

# ARISA SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE 2006

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION - MAKING THE MOST OF WHO AND WHAT WE KNOW

## CONFERENCE REPORT



19 TO 22 SEPTEMBER 2006 ASSOCIATION FOR NEW CANADIANS, ESL TRAINING CENTRE ST. JOHN'S

CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY:



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Canada

ARAISA Settlement Conference

**2006**

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

MAKING THE MOST OF WHO AND WHAT WE KNOW

19 ~ 22 September 2006

Association for New Canadians, ESL Adult Training Centre

St. John's, NL

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## Executive Summary

The Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (ARAISA) held their annual settlement conference, in St. John's, Newfoundland, at the ESL Adult Training Centre from 19-22 of September. The conference, brought together SSP (settlement services provider) organizations, community stakeholders, and three levels of government, as well as representatives from the immigrant community in Atlantic Canada to participate in policy and issue based workshops.

The goal of ARAISA Settlement Conference was to address issues related to newcomer settlement and integration, foster cross-cultural awareness, encourage strong partnerships and promote the Atlantic region as a desirable resettlement destination. A key objective of the conference was to highlight the important role that immigration can play in sustaining Atlantic Canada. ARAISA 2006 was supported by the **Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency** and the **Department of Canadian Heritage**.

This report provides an overview of each of the sessions in the order which they were presented. The resources used to develop the content of this report include PowerPoint presentations and written materials used by panelists for their presentations; notes and written materials recorded by those in attendance; and other online resources. A copy of this report is available on the Association for New Canadians' (ANC) website ([www.anc-nf.cc](http://www.anc-nf.cc)). Full copies of the presentations are also available in English at the same location.

# Background

The Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies Inc. (ARAIISA) was officially formed in 1994 as a regional body to represent the needs of settlement-integration agencies throughout the Atlantic Provinces. ARAISA currently has twelve member agencies from Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

## Mandate

ARAIISA's mandate is to identify and address the needs and concerns of immigrants, immigrant service providers and agencies in the Atlantic Region.

## ARAIISA Objectives

- To facilitate the information exchange process among immigrant serving agencies;
- To act as a collective voice representing the interests of newcomers, service providers, and service organizations;
- To encourage the training and professional development of settlement staff; and,
- To assist government in the formulation and implementation of policies and programs.

## Member Agencies

- Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area (MAGMA), Moncton, NB
- Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc (MCAF), Fredericton, NB
- University of New Brunswick English Language Program, Fredericton, NB
- YM-YWCA of Saint John, Saint John, NB
- Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC), Halifax, NS
- Halifax Regional School Board Adult ESL, Halifax, NS
- Metro-Region Immigrant Language Services (MILS), Halifax, NS
- Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA), Halifax, NS
- YMCA Newcomer Centre, Halifax, NS
- Holland College, Charlottetown, PEI
- PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada, Charlottetown, PEI
- Association for New Canadians (ANC), St. John's, NL
- New Brunswick Multicultural Council Inc., Fredericton, NB.

## DAY 1: Tuesday, September 19

### PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

The Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies Annual Settlement Conference provided the opportunity for the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) to host pre-conference workshops. The Department of Canadian Heritage hosted the workshop, “Introduction to Canada’s Action Plan Against Racism,” which provided an overview of Canada’s Action Plan, a plan that aims to combat racism and strengthen social cohesion through specific anti-racism measures. The second presentation, “Best Practices in Financial Management,” offered Executive Directors and Financial Managers the opportunity to review some promising practices and models for project and program financial management.

### REGISTRATION AND RECEPTION

The Association for New Canadians in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador prepared a welcoming reception for the delegates attending the ARAISA conference. The guests were greeted with a warm welcome an opportunity to renew acquaintances as well as to register for the upcoming events. Following a short reception, delegates were invited to participate in roundtable discussions on the various program areas.



The registration table at the ARAISA 2006 Annual Settlement Conference

## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

This year, the ARAISA Conference Planning Committee recommended holding the roundtable discussions at the beginning of the conference. The purpose of this was to allow participants the opportunity to meet and liaise with their colleagues at the beginning of the conference in order to facilitate increased networking and information sharing. Roundtable discussions were held on the following program areas: Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP), Immigrant Settlement Adaptation Program (ISAP), the Host program, Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS), Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), Enhanced Language Training (ELT), Employment, and Management. Following the roundtable sessions, notes were provided to the facilitator. The following represents a summary of the key points as reflected in the session notes.

### **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)**

**Facilitator: Christy Jacquard – Saint John YM–YWCA**

The Resettlement Assistance Program was created to ensure that newcomers to Canada would immediately receive the information and services necessary to establish themselves in their new community, while providing support to assist newcomers to become independent and self-sufficient. These support services are available to pre-approved Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) upon arrival in Canada. The suggested recommendations stemming from this discussion are outlined below.

- There is a lack of medical information available for GARs upon arrival. It was recommended that medical information be provided to the Service Provider Organization (SPO) who is meeting the client in Canada. The Association for New Canadians (ANC) in St. John's has developed a Gateway project to do initial assessment and match clients with a local physician.
- Service Provider Organizations should have a liaison with all refugees and not just Karen refugees. Karens arrive with sealed medical files which makes it easier to assess health issues and concerns.
- It was recommended that information from the Computer Assisted Immigration Processing System (CAIPS) be shared, however, only the information pertaining to settlement should be shared.
- There is an issue with the ten day waiting period for replacement of missing cheques from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). This poses a problem when cheques go missing and rent is due, as clients are sometimes forced to pay rental penalties. It was suggested that direct deposit be used instead of cheques, however, extra steps must be considered to make direct deposit operate successfully.

- It was recommended that funding hours be increased from thirteen to thirty per individual.
- It was recommended that the Life Skills Program be extended to all provinces. The Association for New Canadians (ANC) in Newfoundland is currently developing a Life Skills Program.
- The treatment and awareness of infectious diseases was raised as a concern. Delegates recommended setting up protocols, providing education, as well as dispelling myths about infectious diseases.

### **Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP)**

#### **Facilitator: Irina Raduly – Multicultural Association of Greater Moncton Area**

The Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP) is meant to supplement the Resettlement Assistance Program, and includes any support services that are offered to newcomers in order to assist them to integrate into their new community. The key points stemming from the ISAP roundtable discussion are outlined below.

- Provincial Government support is key.
- Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) clients need services to assist them and their families in the settlement process. The current assumption is that these clients do not need support because of their financial background. A review of the Provinces that were represented in the discussion showed that:
  - (i) In New Brunswick, priority is given to GARs
  - (ii) In Nova Scotia, the balance is fair
  - (iii) In Newfoundland Labrador there are not many PNP clients, priority is given to GARs
- iCAMS is very time consuming. It was recommended that the Atlantic Provinces enter data early in the morning, before Ontario and Québec regions log in.
- There was a discussion on the need for support for single parents, i.e, life skills, parenting skills, and alternative ways of disciplining children, etc. New Brunswick has a Parenting Program, Newfoundland and Labrador has Life Skills, and Nova Scotia has school support workers.
- It was recommended that two years of support be made available for clients with special needs. After one year, an evaluation should be conducted to determine if additional support is required.
- Coordination between three centres in New Brunswick is difficult and time consuming as resources are dispersed and limited. Suggested that NB have a central agency in operation in order to have a strong voice and greater allocation of resources.

- It is crucial to invite mainstream organizations, the public, and politicians to witness positive events and things happening in immigration. Often too much time is focused on the negative aspects of immigration.
- There appears to be no consistency in the information provided at the overseas orientation. Updated information packages are needed to provide accurate information to potential newcomers.
- There is a shortage of physicians/dentists in the Atlantic Provinces. In Newfoundland Labrador, the Gateway Project has been very successful assisting newcomers in finding physicians.
- Networking in the community is important. Translators, volunteers, etc. are difficult to retain.

### **The Host Program**

**Facilitator: Cindy Li – Saint John YM-YWCA**

The Host Program matches permanent residents with volunteers who help them adjust to life in Canada. Volunteers help newcomers overcome the stress of moving to a new country, learn how to use available services, practice their English or French, develop work contacts, participate in the community and do routine activities such as banking, shopping, and using local transit. The hosts also provide encouragement and emotional support. Key points stemming from the Host Program discussion are outlined below.

- There is a challenge in volunteer recruitment. Finding and retaining volunteers is a concern. Some volunteers are apprehensive about the commitment, and the amount of information given to them can be overwhelming.
- At YMCA in Halifax as well as in some other agencies, it is difficult to recruit young volunteers. It is also a challenge finding volunteers in the summer months.
- It is difficult to find adequate male volunteers. It was suggested that universities are an excellent location to find potential male volunteers.
- Some clients request a volunteer who is Canadian. This can be problematic because many volunteers are immigrants.
- Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) clients need mentors, who can assist with networking and professional development.
- Facilitating a volunteer group discussion was recommended, allowing volunteers to share personal experiences with each other. This can also help make training topics more interesting.

- It was also suggested that coordinators offer scenarios for discussion at information sessions.
- At the Association for New Canadians in St. John's, the Teen Tutoring Program, Homework Club, and adult conversation classes are a branch of the Host Program. There are approximately twenty youth volunteers associated with Teen Tutoring, and the adult conversation classes are run by volunteers.
- In terms of Host volunteer retention, it was stressed that regular contact was very important and volunteers must be shown that they are appreciated. It is also necessary to remind clients about events, meetings, etc. Reminders and follow-up are important.
- It was suggested that evaluation be standardized for the Host program as well as for the volunteers.
- Delegates stressed the importance of confidentiality in the client – volunteer – coordinator relationship.
- There was a discussion on how the Host Program can be expanded to maximize current resources.
- It was suggested that a Host conference/working group would provide the opportunity to discuss issues and share promising practices.
- There is a lack of professional development available for Host Program workers. It was suggested that the program should include a professional development component for Host Program workers and volunteers.
- In relation to developing a Youth Group, Halifax Host Program recruited parents of the youth first to introduce the program. This proved to be helpful as the parents would also encourage their children to attend.

## **Settlement Workers in the Schools (SWIS)**

### **Facilitator: Rocio McCallum – PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada**

Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) is a school based outreach program designed to help newcomer students and their families settle in their school and community. Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) connects newly arrived families to services and resources in the school and the community in order to promote settlement and foster student achievement. Key recommendations stemming from the SWIS discussion are outlined below.

- A summary of SWIS Program Funding showed that:
  - (iv) At YMCA in Halifax, program funding comes from CIC
  - (v) At MISA, program funding comes from CIC
  - (vi) In PEI, program funding comes from the provincial government.
  - (vii) In Fredericton, New Brunswick, program funding comes from CIC
- The YMCA of Halifax has a school nurse or a family doctor explain and conduct immunizations. In Prince Edward Island, the families are referred to the settlement agency for immunizations.
- In terms of student placement in schools, it is difficult to determine what is in the best interests of students, that is, placement with their peers or according to language proficiency.
- The lack of school records is a challenge. This is particularly evident with refugee clients who have little or no record of academic performance.
- With regard to school registration forms, some do not require immigration status information. Other Provinces, such as Nova Scotia, have included it on the form.
- When youth feel more integrated in schools, they are happier and it creates a more positive atmosphere.
- The work can be cyclical with new students coming and staff turnover. New administrators need to be introduced to the programs and concepts.
- In Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, there are fifty new ESL students at the junior high level, which poses a problem and adds to waiting lists.
- It can take many years to learn academic English, whether there is a transition program or not, newcomer youth need a lot of support.
- There was a discussion of initiatives for the summer months. Summer ESL programs, social activities, and recreation work well in the summer months. Also, YMCA summer study skills program was successful.

- In Fredericton there is no summer school as of yet. However, they have a homework club with volunteers from Frontier College. Clients are mostly from Africa and are Francophone.
- The *New Moves* video is a valuable tool. It shows youth talking about their experiences.

## **Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada**

### **Facilitator: Sheila Scott – Multicultural Association of Fredericton**

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is a national English as a Second Language (ESL) program delivered by qualified and experienced instructors. The program is based on the underlying principles of adult language learning and teaching as defined in the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) document. Key points stemming from this discussion are outlined below.

- There was the lack of stable levels beyond CLB level three. In some provinces LINC classes include levels 1 – 5 and in others levels 1 – 3. Consequently, Enhanced Language Training (ELT) means different things in different provinces.
- Waiting lists appear to be a real problem in some provinces due in part to the addition of Provincial Nominees. This is not the case in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- In provinces where there are long wait lists, teachers felt pressured to push people along from one level to the next in order to accommodate the people who were waiting for seats.
- There is a Family Learning Program at the Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC). The program involves adults and children and aims to reinforce the importance of literacy in the family by teaching parents literacy tools. The Association for New Canadians (ANC) is running a similar program through the daycare/childminding, where parents and children are engaged in a Mother Goose style literacy program.
- Assessment is an area of concern. Some teachers have found that the results of the CLBA and the CLBPT are not equivalent. Some assessors have gone back to using the CLBA which they feel to be more accurate. However, the CLBPT is cheaper and less time consuming.
- Assessment seems to be similar at all centres. There is continuous assessment, through a combination of formal and informal testing. Teachers create their own tests based on the material taught in class.
- Continuous intake presents challenges for assessment of students. There are always some students in the class who have not covered all the material on the test.
- Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Canada Certification was discussed. Most of the teachers were quite interested, but seemed discouraged by the amount of data that had to be collected.

- Teachers talked about the challenges of trying to keep clients in school so that they can get to CLB level 5 which, according to most studies, seems to be the minimum level at which students can successfully study at university or attempt college courses.
- The perennial problem of qualification recognition was also discussed, as were the problems of getting students jobs commensurate with their education, skill level, and experience.
- ESL in the K – 12 system was discussed briefly. There are various arrangements in each province.
  - (viii) In New Brunswick: each child receives forty hours of one on one tutoring.
  - (ix) In Nova Scotia: there is no access to ESL training in schools outside Halifax.
  - (x) In Newfoundland and Labrador: there are itinerant teachers who travel to the different schools in the city. One high school has a full time ESL teacher.
- The Association for New Canadians provides transportation to kindergarten children so that parents can stay in school full-time. No other province in the region offers this service.

### **Enhanced Language Training Initiative**

**Facilitator: Yasmin Ojah – Saint John YM-YWCA**

Enhanced Language Training (ELT) programs offer labour market levels of language training and job-specific language training to adult immigrants to help them enter and remain in jobs commensurate with their skills and qualifications. The Enhanced Language Training (ELT) initiative was launched to provide higher levels of language training, including job-specific language training. ELT also provides bridge-to-work assistance, including mentoring, work placement and other assistance in accessing the labour market. Key points stemming from this discussion are outlined below.

- ELT focuses on higher-level language and provides a bridge to work, allowing students to fill the gap from LINC to employment.
- The program is versatile and adaptable and can be adjusted to fit students changing needs. This is important due to diversity of students.
- The program is unique in New Brunswick, where LINC is limited to CLB 1-3. They are looking at extending the program and adding levels 4-5. The challenge facing New Brunswick relates to having three centres in the Province, hence are higher costs associated with managing multiple locations. It was noted that New Brunswick would like to see funding increased for ELT
- Computer literacy tests should be standardized. MAGMA has developed testing which is based loosely on the LINC program. Students are tested on a range of computer software, which takes about twenty minutes to complete. Also, the instructor can tailor testing sessions to the different CLB levels. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) noted that ELT should include a computer training component.

- It was noted that there is a need to find tools to help instructors determine the right approach for dealing with different computer literacy and language levels.
- It was noted that the Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC) has developed an excellent computer literacy curriculum which can be downloaded from the HILC website.
- There was a discussion surrounding possible expansion of the LINC program for January. ELT programs might have to be adapted to offer the same CLB levels as LINC.
- There was a discussion of the ELT program at The Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA) in Halifax. There is a focus on marketing in order to lower employer apprehensions. It was noted that the program has a high success for obtaining future employment (80%).
- There was a question whether CIC can subsidize work placements. A CIC representative indicated that it involves labour market integration which falls under provincial jurisdiction.
- There was an update on programs in Halifax, Nova Scotia, including the New Beginnings Program, Healthcare Program, and Engineering Program.
- It was agreed that the Data Collection Questionnaire was a lot of work. CIC noted they would like to know what fields are most difficult. Representatives from the SPO community were wondering why the government requires this information, and were concerned about how the information is used. The CIC representative asked that all representatives from the SPO community send an email outlining the issues with the questionnaire.
- It was noted that the National ELT Conference is planned for November 2006 and will provide the opportunity to share the ELT curriculum and to discuss initiatives across Canada.

## **Employment**

### **Facilitator: Eileen Kelly-Freake – Association for New Canadians NL**

The Employment roundtable discussion allowed each participant to present best practices and challenges they have experienced in their respective associations with regard to finding and securing employment. This provided an opportunity to learn about and share key initiatives occurring in the region.

- Provincial government success in recruiting PNPs has resulted in increased challenges for the present NGO employment services. In PEI, over 20 families arrived from China during August and September through the PNP and the local employment service has only two staff members.
- In New Brunswick, especially in the Moncton area, most jobs require bilingualism. This is very difficult for newcomers who do not have either French or English prior to arriving in Canada, as they only receive instruction in one language.
- It was noted that low level benchmark English students want jobs. Participants from all provinces had similar experiences with this, as local economies improve and the need for workers increases. The level of English required for work, especially in the service sector, is still high. If these students do find employment, it can be difficult to keep them in language school.
- MISA now has one employee dedicated to all reporting, workshop facilitation, data entry, and initial client meetings. Clients are then directed to specific counselors based on services required.
- MISA has worked with local associations of international professionals to streamline the credential assessment process. One example was an association of internationally trained engineers that has worked with the Association of Professional Engineers of Nova Scotia (APENS). The result has been that following an interview, internationally trained engineers may have to complete as little as one exam, then one year of training. This training can be three months of sector-specific ELT, followed by a nine-month paid internship. A similar partnership for the medical profession is being funded by Health Canada.
- MISA has a new online pre-employment training called New Beginnings Online. The program is intended for those who live outside of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), or who cannot attend regular class. Participants must be CLB level 5 or higher.
- HILC has developed a program for language training in the workplace. They can work one-on-one, and also have classes for up to eleven students. The time commitment is three hours per week for twelve weeks. During this time, HILC stays in contact with the employer and provides follow-up.

- The ANC in Newfoundland is developing a Cultural Sensitivity initiative for Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHP) in partnership with Health Canada and funded under IEHP Program. Resource handbooks/ kits are being developed, along with presentations. These resources will be available and used in introductory workshops for new physicians coming into rural communities, and to the communities in preparation for the new physician's arrival.
- The ANC is also working on a Foreign Credential Recognition project funded by HRSDC to help promote streamlined integration of international workers into the provincial labour market. The research phase of the project focusing on skills, barriers, and incentives is intended to engage and connect four key groups: immigrants, employers, service providers, and the province.
- The ANC highlighted a key strategic alliance known as the Coordinating Committee on Newcomer Integration (CCNI). The purpose of CCNI is to help promote the integration of newcomers in the labour market and the larger community. Further discussion followed on the value of developing community partnerships.
- All representatives recommended that there is a need for more staff resources to be allocated for employment services.
- It was recommended that every effort be made for participants to continue to keep in contact. Sharing information, best practices, and lessons learned is important as agencies must continue to build strategic alliances and partnerships within our communities.
- It was recommended that the roundtable discussions continue to be scheduled at the beginning of future conferences, as they provide increased opportunities for networking.

## **Managers**

### **Facilitator: Kevin Arsenault – PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada**

The Managers roundtable discussion provided the opportunity for Executive Directors to discuss issues and concerns affecting all program areas. Key points stemming from this discussion are outlined below.

- It was noted that settlement conferences are of key importance for sharing information between NGOs in each province. Provincial funding has been increasing and in some cases is now equal to Federal funding.
- In Prince Edward Island (PEI), coordinating resources and services for PNPs is difficult, particularly when the organization doesn't know when PNPs are coming.
- In PEI, language training for newcomers is a concern. Given that there are limited seats available, it is imperative that newcomers learn English in a one year time period.
- In New Brunswick, it was noted that more emphasis must be placed on recruitment and funding. It was also noted that there are more newcomers on the waiting list than in the language classes.
- In Newfoundland and Labrador, there are only a few PNPs, so these issues are not affecting operations at the Association for New Canadians (ANC).
- In Nova Scotia, PNPs are now turning up at settlement agencies seeking service. The need to see people quickly after they arrive was stressed.
- Funding issues were discussed in all provinces. In New Brunswick, funding for assessments ran out in July/August. This poses a problem due to the fact that funding was budgeted for the entire year.
- A primary concern involved the impact of long wait lists for services. The wait list delays are discouraging to immigrants who are waiting for services and language training.
- Funding for RAP had been reduced because social assistance rates in New Brunswick have decreased. A similar situation has occurred in Prince Edward Island.
- With new settlement funding coming, the need to make timely decisions in the region is crucial.

## DAY 2: Wednesday, September 20

### OPENING COMMENTS AND WELCOME

Introductions: Bridget Foster



Bridget Foster, Executive Director for the Association for New Canadians, welcomed delegates to the Annual Atlantic Settlement Conference and acknowledged the efforts of the planning committee, funders, partners, and staff in preparing for the event. She highlighted the overall theme of the conference: *Knowledge Mobilization: Making the Most of Who and What We Know*, noting the importance of collaboration, and the tremendous opportunity over the next few days to address key settlement, inclusion, and integration issues.

Mrs. Foster provided an overview of the conference agenda, outlining the scheduled workshops, plenary, and concurrent sessions. She noted that these sessions would include speakers from the Federal and Provincial government departments, settlement service providers and other partners. Mrs. Foster concluded with an acknowledgement of the tremendous advancements in immigration that have been made in the Atlantic region and the significant efforts of our government partners.

### **Hon. Paul Shelley, Minister - Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador**

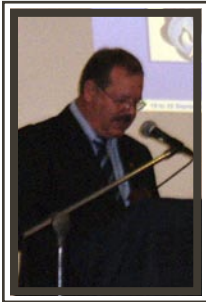


The Honorable Paul Shelley, Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, extended a warm welcome to the delegates on behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. He noted that this week was proving to be a productive week for discussions on immigration, as Newfoundland and Labrador recently held its first Immigration Symposium two days prior to the conference. He went on to note the importance of events of this nature for building awareness and momentum.

Minister Shelley outlined the importance of immigration, both for enriching our culture and addressing skill shortages, an aging population, and declining birthrates. He reiterated the important work of Immigrant Service Provider Organizations, such as the Association for New Canadians (ANC), and acknowledged the importance of this work in helping immigrants settle in their communities. In this regard, Minister Shelley acknowledged that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador had recently committed funding to the ANC in order to support additional ESL, employment and public education programming. He went on to note the significant contribution that immigrants make to our region and country as well as the many benefits associated with living in Atlantic Canada. He noted the importance of planning and community partnerships in any strategies designed to attract and retain newcomers. In relation to this, he discussed activities of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as they move towards the development of a Provincial Immigration Strategy.

Minister Shelley concluded by noting that attraction and retention is critical to any long term strategy and, indeed, the four provinces are collaborating on initiatives to promote the region and see increased settlement.

### **Mayor Wayne Ruth, Town of Kippens and President – Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities**



Mayor Wayne Ruth brought greetings on behalf of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities (NLFM). He acknowledged the efforts of the Association for New Canadians (ANC), the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), and the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) in pulling this conference together.

Mayor Ruth began with a brief history of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities. He noted that there is increased interest among municipalities in terms of attracting and retaining immigrants. He commented on the broad recognition of the importance of immigration, particularly for rural communities. In terms of integration into rural communities, Mayor Ruth noted that collaboration is key and with the right mix of individuals and commitment from the community, integration can be very successful. He added that agencies like the Association for New Canadians (ANC) are crucial to guiding communities in the integration process.

Mayor Ruth indicated that municipalities are becoming increasingly involved and are an important partner. He noted that he had recently spoken at the Immigration Symposium, and commented on the NLFM Municipal Symposium, which provided an excellent opportunity to expose municipal leaders to the immigration strategy. Mayor Ruth concluded by noting that newcomers bring skills and new economic opportunities to the province, and it is important to be more inclusive, provide jobs and be appreciative of different cultures. He added that Newfoundland and Labrador was founded on immigration and indeed it has much to offer prospective immigrants.

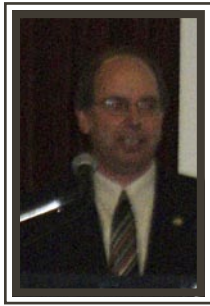
### **Ron Ellsworth, Councillor - City of St. John's**



Councillor Ron Ellsworth brought greetings on behalf of the City of St. John's. He noted the appropriateness of the conference venue, referencing his affiliation with the Pius X Parish Council and how pleased the council was to have an immigrant service provider organization lease the space.

Councillor Ellsworth commended Minister Shelley for his strong leadership role in immigration. He noted that Atlantic Canada is very open to receiving immigrants and, indeed, is a wonderful place to settle. Councillor Ellsworth concluded by acknowledging the interest and commitment of the City of St. John's in relation to immigration and commended the ANC for the efforts in organizing the conference.

## **Tony Brothers, Director General - Citizenship & Immigration Canada Atlantic Region**



Tony Brothers, Director General, Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), brought greetings on behalf of the Federal Government including his colleagues Rick Comeford at the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), and Edna Hall at the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH). Mr. Brothers began by noting the theme of the conference, and how the next few days will provide the opportunity to become informed about settlement and integration issues. He commented on how pleased he was to have the opportunity to make his first speech as Director General in his home province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Brothers indicated that Minister Solberg recently met with four provincial ministers to discuss opportunities and challenges present in immigration and settlement services. He noted that Minister Solberg announced the federal commitment to provide additional funding for settlement services and CIC has allocated \$77 million in additional funding over the next two years. He added that this increase in funding is meant to address some of the challenges in the region in order to improve services for newcomers.

Mr. Brothers added that he recently visited various service provider organizations (SPO) in the Atlantic region, including the Association for New Canadians (ANC), Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA), and Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC), among others, and was amazed at the amount of work they are able to accomplish. He noted that he will be visiting SPOs in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island in the coming months.

Mr. Brothers stressed the importance of cooperation between government organizations at all levels – Federal, Provincial, and Municipal. He noted that the sharing of information and best practices among settlement groups is crucial to foster awareness and improve services, and this conference over the next few days enables the opportunity to do just that. Mr. Brothers concluded by acknowledging the efforts of the Association for New Canadians, partners, funders, and other stakeholders for contributing to this year's conference in support and development of settlement services for newcomers.

This plenary session was designed to provide an update on programs and issues that are important to the settlement sector in Atlantic Canada. In order to set the tone for the plenary, Ken Hicks provided a statistical overview of the Demographic Trends in Atlantic Canada. This was followed by program, project, and policy updates on various immigration and settlement programs. Full copies of most presentations can be found on the ANC website.

### **Demographic Trends in Atlantic Canada**

**Ken Hicks, Manager of Modeling & Technical Analysis – Department of Finance, Newfoundland and Labrador**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Ken Hicks began his presentation by providing an overview of the natural population change in the Atlantic Provinces, noting that while the current population is relatively stable, fertility rates remain low. He also noted that out-migration is continuing and in order to address these issues, the Atlantic Provinces should focus on attracting more immigrants. He commented, however, that the lack of job opportunities makes it difficult to attract immigrants to the region.

Mr. Hicks then provided an overview of other demographic trends occurring in Atlantic Canada. He noted that the population is aging rapidly in the Atlantic region and there is also an increase in the number of retirees. He added that the fifty plus age group is increasing and there is a labour supply challenge associated with this, as there are fewer workers to take over jobs that become available. Mr. Hicks ended his presentation by reiterating the above-noted issues and concluding that the need to attract and retain immigrants to the region is imperative.

### **What's New with the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)**

**Ron Parent, Manager – Refugee Programs Delivery, Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Ron Parent, Manager, Refugee Programs Delivery, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), provided an update on the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). He began with an overview of the National RAP Inventory, citing that the objective was to undertake a program wide inventory of RAP practices and health care interventions for Government Assisted Refugees (GAR). The inventory highlighted similarities and differences in programs across the country and highlighted innovations designed to respond to the high need and vulnerable GAR population.

Mr. Parent provided an overview of the issues that were identified by the RAP inventory and noted a variety of recommended improvements to the program, including:

- Increasing income support to match increases in provincial assistance rates, as well as to provide support for basic household needs such as winter clothing, and the inclusion of maternity and newborn allowances.
- Improving Interim Federal Health coverage to help GARs with greater medical needs.
- Providing more information in advance to help SPOs be better prepared for GARs with medical concerns. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) are working on a pilot project to provide overseas needs assessment for Karen refugees.
- Increasing the quality of RAP services. This includes increasing funding for basic services plus the addition of the *Life Skills* program, which will be put in place for November 1<sup>st</sup>. Other suggested improvements to RAP services include:
  - (xi) Extending RAP beyond six weeks;
  - (xii) Extending the length of stay allowed in temporary accommodations;
  - (xiii) Developing resources for specialized programming; and
  - (xiv) Moving towards a client centred approach to case management.
- Improving support for GAR children. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is considering a project to examine the needs of children and youth, and they are planning to conduct a reassessment of the services currently being offered.

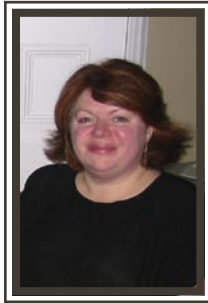
The RAP inventory also indicated the need for better coordination and collaboration between federal and provincial partners. Mr. Parent indicated that in February 2007, they have planned a meeting of CIC and SPO staff from across Canada in order to focus on issues and concerns with RAP. This meeting will provide the opportunity to exchange promising practices, provide training opportunities for staff, and give SPOs and federal partners the opportunity to consult on the future of RAP.

Ron Parent concluded by commenting on two programs designed to improve the quality and success of RAP, the *Training Needs Assessment* and *Health Issues Training*. The former will focus on the training needs of CIC and SPO staff working in RAP, and make recommendations to the curriculum, while the latter is designed to help staff deal with the identification, prevention, and management of communicable diseases.

## **The Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program**

### **Joy Baldwin, Manager – IFH Program – Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Joy Baldwin, Manager of the Interim Federal Health (IFH) program discussed changes and offered delegates an overview of the program. Interim Federal Health (IFH) provides eligible clients with access to health services that contribute to optimal health outcomes in a fair manner. Ms. Baldwin explained the recommendations of the 2004 audit of the IFH control framework, noting the need to update IFH program authority, to improve management framework and create a succession plan, to implement technological innovations, and to enhance program analysis and policy capability.

Ms. Baldwin went on to describe the program priorities noting that establishing a governance/accountability framework and enhancing program analysis and policy capability were key. The primary focus of the presentation was on the current and ongoing status of the IFH program.

Ms. Baldwin concluded her presentation with a discussion of the policy priorities and considerations. She noted that while the IFH program has a number of problems, the main priority was to expand policy and research capacity to facilitate timely policy decisions that are fiscally responsible and respond to the current needs of clients, thus contributing to successful integration.

## **Immigration as part of the Atlantic Population Strategy**

### **Tony Brothers, Director General – Citizenship and Immigration Canada Atlantic**

Tony Brothers, Director General, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), provided an overview of the Atlantic Population Strategy, which addresses three key areas: youth retention, repatriation, and immigration. His presentation focused on the immigration part of the strategy, which includes the development of an Atlantic Population Table.

Mr. Brothers provided details of the population table, which includes membership from Provincial and Federal governments. He noted that the table is designed to help Federal and Provincial governments' pool resources regionally, and to provide better coordination between the provincial and federal programs.

Mr. Brothers provided information on joint initiatives that are currently under development. These initiatives focus on four areas:

#### **1) Attraction and Promotion**

- Developing joint promotional material for international fairs and other marketing opportunities.
- Fostering a Team Atlantic Approach in International Immigration fairs.
- Developing a Pan-Atlantic page on the CIC website portal.
- Working more closely with CIC's network of visa officers.

## 2) Research

- Developing and implementing a comprehensive work plan on research needs specific to our region.
- Building on the services that are currently available.

## 3) International Students

- The importance of international students in universities and colleges in Atlantic Canada.
- The need to increase and facilitate the utilization of international students in the local economy.

## 4) Retention and Integration

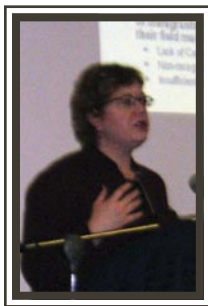
- The importance of Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) in the retention of immigrants.
- The need to improve settlement services and provide a welcoming environment for immigrants to settle.

Tony Brothers commended Minister Solberg for his commitment to immigration. He concluded the presentation noting that the increases in funding, combined with the short and long term objectives of the Atlantic Population Table, will help address some of the problems facing the region. He stressed the importance of collaboration noting that working together can increase the number of immigrants who move and stay in Atlantic Canada, thus, adding to the economic, cultural, and social vibrancy of the region.

### **Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR)**

**Natasha Pateman, Manager – FCR – Human Resources and Skills Development Canada**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Natasha Pateman, Manager of Foreign Credential Recognition, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), provided an update on the Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) initiative. Foreign Credential Recognition is the process of verifying education, training and job experience obtained in another country and comparing it to the standards established for Canadian professions and occupations. Ms. Pateman provided an overview of the FCR Program, which funds projects to bring about systemic change in credential assessment and recognition process. The program provides strategic and financial support to provinces, partners and stakeholders to develop foreign credential assessment and recognition processes that are fair, accessible, consistent, and rigorous in targeted occupations and sectors. These occupations include professions such as engineering, medicine, and nursing, among others.

Ms. Pateman highlighted the importance of FCR noting that attracting and retaining the best talent, as well as ensuring they reach their full potential, is critical to the country's long-term economic success and prosperity. She announced the commitment of funding to support FCR, noting that the program has a \$68 million funding allocation over the next six years. She noted the complexities of the program, in that FCR has problems similar to other programs, where some lack consistency from one region to another. This makes it challenging for newcomers to fully integrate into the community.

Ms. Pateman concluded the presentation by highlighting the need for collaboration among jurisdictions. She indicated that it is crucial to have effective partnerships among settlement agencies in order to further develop and foster the recognition of foreign credentials in Canada.

### **International Credential & Competency Assessment & Recognition (ICCAR) Atlantic Approach**

**Philip Bélanger, Senior Consultant – Multiculturalism & Immigration, New Brunswick**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Philip Bélanger, Senior Consultant, Multiculturalism and Immigration, New Brunswick, provided an overview of the Atlantic International Credential and Competency Assessment and Recognition (ICCAR) service. He noted that an ICCAR Atlantic approach focuses on the Atlantic region and enables all related stakeholders to play a significant role in establishing a common standard approach in the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials. Mr. Bélanger noted that having an effective ICCAR service is critical to the integration of immigrants.

Mr. Bélanger indicated that Atlantic Canada is the only region that does not currently have government mandated foreign credential recognition service. In June 2005, the Council of Atlantic Deputy Minister's of Education (CADMED) established a steering committee on Foreign Credentials and Competency Assessment and Recognition (FCCAR). The purpose of this committee was to facilitate recognition of credentials, while focusing on a participative model, where all stakeholders work together to improve labour market and academic integration into Atlantic Canada. Based on research in other Canadian regions, consultations, and environmental scans, the steering committee assessed three potential options for an Atlantic approach and determined that a hybrid model would be the best approach. He noted that a proposal was developed and submitted by CADMED to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) in April 2006.

Mr. Bélanger noted that a participative model will serve to develop quality recognition and portability across Canada, it will increase consistency of credential and competency assessment through the development of common practices, and will enable partners to undertake and share research in order to facilitate the assessment of qualifications both in Canada and overseas. Mr. Bélanger concluded by noting that in order to facilitate the recognition of foreign credentials, the Atlantic region must focus on coordination from each province, and the participative model will provide the opportunity to make accurate and timely recognition decisions in respect to each provincial jurisdiction.

## **Action Plan Against Racism**

### **Mary Farrell, Manager – Action Plan Against Racism – The Department of Canadian Heritage**

Mary Farrell, Manager, Action Plan Against Racism Initiative, Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH), provided an update on the Action Plan Against Racism. The Action Plan Against Racism addresses diversity in Canada and the Canadian population, and focuses on minimizing racism in Canada. The Action Plan Against Racism highlights the importance of strength and social cohesion and creates federal leadership on the fight against racism. She indicated that twenty federal institutions have already included inclusive hiring and, thus, have improved access to communities.

Ms. Farrell highlighted some statistics surrounding racism in Canada. A survey completed in 2002 provided the following information: 36 percent of visible minorities experienced discrimination; 64 percent of visible minorities experience discrimination at work; and 40 percent experience discrimination at a store or bank. Also, the survey concluded that visible minorities and aboriginals earn 30- 40 percent less than the average Canadian; and unemployment rates for visible minorities are two times higher than the average Canadian.

Ms. Farrell noted that four key departments: The Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH), Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), Human Resource Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and Justice Canada have developed initiatives to address gaps in existing programs. The initiatives focus on law enforcement, workplace discrimination, youth integration, as well as the promotion of institutional change within public institutions, and are designed to remove systemic barriers and address race-based issues in the justice system. Ms. Farrell announced that this information will be highlighted in the *Annual Report on the Operation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act*.

## **The Metropolis Project**

### **Madine VanderPlaat, Co- Director and Laure Lafrance, Projects Coordinator & Communications Officer - Atlantic Metropolis Centre**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Madine VanderPlaat, Co-Director, Atlantic Metropolis Centre (AMC) and Laure Lafrance, Projects Coordinator and Communications Officer, Atlantic Metropolis Centre (AMC), provided an update on the Atlantic Metropolis Centre activities. Ms. Lafrance delivered the presentation, beginning with an overview of Metropolis. She noted that Metropolis is an international forum for comparative research and public policy development surrounding population migration, cultural diversity and the challenges of immigrant integration in cities in Canada and around the world.

Ms. Lafrance provided updates on two initiatives currently underway at the Metropolis Centre. The *Cross Domain Project* is the study of the social networks of immigrant men and women in four communities, one in each Atlantic Province. The objective of this initiative is to identify

the types of existing networks and see how these can help to retain immigrants within Atlantic Provinces. She noted that the initiative focused on four communities: the Lebanese community in Halifax, the Francophone African community in Moncton, various cultures in Charlottetown, and immigrants from the Indian subcontinent in St. John's. The second initiative, the *Diversity Digital Research Archive*, is a regional inventory of research, reports, resources and studies on immigration, integration and cultural diversity from governments, academics and NGOs. The inventory will provide a comprehensive review of English and French materials in Atlantic Canada pertaining to Atlantic Canadian immigration and diversity issues.

Ms. Lafrance concluded with an overview of how the Atlantic Metropolis Centre (AMC) can work with settlement agencies in the region. The AMC helps to provide an Atlantic voice, identify research priorities, facilitate access to learning and research, facilitate access to federal funding, develop a regional database and virtual library of Atlantic research and resources, facilitate a holistic approach to attraction and retention of immigrants, as well as help to promote linkages across provinces and jurisdictions in the Atlantic region.

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Following a lunch break, the afternoon's concurrent sessions consisted of six presentations which were designed to provide updates on policies and programs from various regions, as well as provide the opportunity for delegates to share information relevant to settlement organizations.

## GETTING YOUR MESSAGE OUT Patrick Brownlow, Communications Consultant

In his presentation, "Getting Your Message Out," Pat Brownlow, Communications Consultant, provided an overview of strategies to assist NGO's in responding to media requests, conducting interviews, preparing press releases and media advisories, among other activities.

Areas of discussion focused on media and event planning, preparing media advisories and press releases, as well as techniques for working with the media. Mr. Brownlow defined important terminology and reviewed various media approaches including: establishing contacts with local media, developing a strategy or communications/media plan, engaging work term students who can help prepare plans, and utilizing call in shows, newspapers, local cable programs, etc. Mr. Brownlow concluded his presentation with information on media etiquette, and some cautions for dealing with media or speaking in public.

**AAISA SETTLEMENT PRACTITIONERS' TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION**  
Fariborz Birjandian, Executive Director – Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Fariborz Birjandian, Executive Director, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), delivered the presentation “Settlement Practitioners Training and Accreditation Program.” This comprehensive program aims to foster professionalization in the settlement sector and to increase recognition of the process of settlement and integration. The program is for service delivery staff of settlement agencies in Alberta, and is managed by the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA).

Mr. Birjandian noted that the training and accreditation program was first implemented in 2000. Since then, the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) has made a variety of enhancements. Mr. Birjandian outlined the training modules of the program, noting that settlement practitioners must complete all modules in order to become accredited. Upon successful completion, professionals are formally recognized and acknowledged for their training, skills, and experience in the settlement sector. Highly successful candidates are recognized as leaders in the settlement field, and are eligible to become a qualified AAISA mentor.

Mr. Birjandian noted that since 2004, seventeen settlement professionals have received accreditation. He concluded by noting the program objectives for the future, which includes continuing development of program components as well as the opportunity to share the model with other provincial and national partners.

**ENHANCED EMPLOYABILITY ESSENTIAL LANGUAGE SKILLS (EEELS)**  
Dean Sexton, Enhanced Language Training Instructor – Holland College

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Dean Sexton, Enhanced Language Training (ELT) Instructor, Holland College, provided an overview of the Enhanced Employability Essential Language Skills (EEELS) program developed by Holland College. The goal of the program is to help newcomers develop advanced language skills, essential skills, as well as life and employability skills. Participants in the program are provided with opportunities to demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills. Additionally, they are familiarized with cultural and civic expectations in the community and workplace. Participants also gain exposure to a variety of post secondary trades and technical programs available through Holland College, as well as meaningful bridge-to-work experience.

Mr. Sexton pointed out that the development of the EEELS program consisted of three phases. Initially, a curriculum consultant was hired to design the curriculum for the program. Upon completion of the curriculum development, the program began with an intake of sixteen students.

The final phase of the program was an evaluation process. Following this, Mr. Sexton's provided an overview of both challenges and successes of the EEELS program, concluding with a discussion of both the EEELS program as well as the various other Enhanced Language Training programs being offered across the country.

#### OVERVIEW OF CIC'S INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Bruce Scoffield, Director, Operational Coordination – Citizenship and Immigration Canada

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Bruce Scoffield, Director, Operational Coordination, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), provided an overview of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) operations abroad. The overseas mandate of CIC is to process applications of all those who want to come to Canada including permanent residents, temporary students, visitors, provincial nominees, temporary workers, family class applicants and adoptees. Overseas operations at CIC include a staff of 1500 located across the globe in 91 points of service.

Mr. Scoffield took the audience through a typical day for an overseas office. In 2005, for example, these offices processed 1.4 million applications. Of the 262,000 immigrants who arrived in Canada in 2005, 74 percent were government sponsored and there is a strong commitment to reunite spouses and dependent children. However, with an increase in applications being received each year, a backlog has been created and currently, there are some 700,000 applications awaiting processing. Mr. Scoffield stressed that it is very frustrating for these applicants, and for the officers trying to predict processing times for applications.

Mr. Scoffield provided statistical information on the approval rates and average processing times for skilled workers, Provincial Nominees, Family Class, Government Assisted and Privately Sponsored Refugees. He noted that the number of PNP applications has increased from 1641 people in 2000, to 12,740 in 2005.

Mr. Scoffield concluded noting that the increasing number of PNP applications has negatively affected the number of economic and family class immigrants. He added that when unexpected events happen such as the Southeast Asian Tsunami in 2004, there is priority processing for these people, even though the total number permitted still remains at 250,000. Because of this, numbers in other classes must be deferred and juggled for the emergency applicants.

There was some discussion related to how Government Assisted Refugees are destined to particular provinces as well as a discussion on family reunification.

## EMPLOYMENT CAFÉ – LET’S TALK JOBS

Moderators: Sabreen Mowlaii & Randolph Crocker, Association for New Canadians

The session “Employment Café: Let’s Talk Jobs” was a series of roundtable discussions focusing on issues and challenges associated with finding employment in Atlantic Canada. The goal of the session was to share information and offer recommendations that would be useful to newcomers, service provider organizations, and employers.

The participants were invited to join a roundtable discussion with representatives from various stakeholder groups. This interactive session generated much discussion on the issues associated with finding employment and also addressed issues and concerns of newcomers, employers and counselors from service provider organizations. Some of the recommendations brought forward include:

- The need for continued efforts in support of Foreign Credential Recognition;
- The importance of employment supports and programming available for newcomers;
- The importance of language fluency;
- The need for cultural sensitivity training in the community; and
- The value of strategic volunteering/ work placement;

Following the discussion, there was a brief opportunity for all the participants to share information from each roundtable.

## SOME ‘HOW TO’S’ FOR USING EVALUATION IN PROGRAM PLANNING AND REVIEW

Bea Courtney, Past President – Canadian Evaluation Society, NL Chapter

Bea Courtney, Past President of the Canadian Evaluation Society, delivered a session entitled “Some ‘How To’s’ for Using Evaluation in Program Planning and Review.” The session was designed to provide tips and techniques for conducting program evaluations. Ms. Courtney noted that evaluation begins at the program planning stage; therefore it is important to evaluate a program before it is implemented. Evaluations are indicators which help determine any problems or issues with a program, before, during, or after it is implemented, and take the form of surveys, questionnaires, interviews, or other existing literature.

Ms. Courtney provided some recommendations on the use of evaluations. She noted that questionnaires should be written using simple language. It is also important to provide a safe environment where respondents are comfortable. Ms. Courtney noted that analyzing results can be easier by grouping the results according to common factors. She suggested when designing evaluations it is important to consider each question and determine its importance, knowing that each question needs to be analyzed using time and resources.

The session also provided opportunity for input from participants on the use of evaluations. Ms. Courtney concluded by distributing a handout to the participants. The overall message of the presentation highlighted that evaluation is neither a goal in and of itself, nor a judgment, but rather an important tool to be used skillfully and thoughtfully to produce results.

**ARAISA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The ARAISA Annual General Meeting was held on September 20<sup>th</sup> 2006, at 5:00-6:00 pm, following the afternoon's concurrent sessions. A new Board of Directors was elected including:

<b>Executive</b>	
Bridget Foster President	Pamela Garland Treasurer
Gerry Mills Vice President	Joy MacDonald Past President
Robert Boghen Secretary	

<b>Members-at-Large</b>	
Eileen Kelly-Freake	Barbara Miller
Megan Morris	Anne Guy
Lisa Bamford	Judy MacIntyre
Richard Campbell	Kevin Arsenault
Claudette Legault	Dean Sexton

## DAY 3: Thursday, September 21

PROVINCIAL IMMIGRATION PANEL: NEW INITIATIVES & PROMISING PRACTICES  
Moderator: Claudette Legault, Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association

The Provincial Immigration Panel was designed to provide an update on immigration as well as to inform delegates regarding new initiatives and promising practices occurring in Atlantic Canada.

### Province of New Brunswick

#### **Philip Bélanger - Senior Consultant, Multiculturalism and Immigration**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Philip Bélanger delivered an update on immigration in New Brunswick. Commenting on the province's Prosperity Plan, he noted that a key aspect was its 'investment in people' approach, which was instrumental in helping to establish the province's Immigration and Repatriation Secretariat. Mr. Bélanger then addressed several priority issues facing New Brunswick, noting that attraction and promotion were key.

Following this, he highlighted a series of immigration accomplishments for New Brunswick. He noted specifically that in 2005, there was a 50 percent increase over the average number of immigrants received under the Provincial Nominee Program, with the expectation that this number would significantly increase in 2006. In addition, Mr. Bélanger commented on the important role the province played as a partner with CIC regarding off-campus work for international students. He noted that settlement and multiculturalism activities remain under the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Training, however, they will eventually be transferred to the Secretariat.

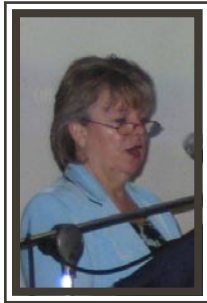
Mr. Bélanger then provided an update on the variety of projects sponsored by the provincial and federal governments including the *Enhanced Language Training Program*, the *Diversity Awareness Program*, the *Multicultural Youth Leadership Forum*, among others. Following this, he offered a brief review of the pan-Atlantic *International Credential and Competency Assessment and Recognition (ICCAR)* project.

In his conclusion, Mr. Bélanger spoke about the on-going development of settlement services in New Brunswick. He noted several key determinants, including language fluency, higher education, and public/ employer awareness, as influencing the provision of settlement services in the province.

## **Province of Nova Scotia**

### **Elizabeth Mills - Executive Director, Nova Scotia Office of Immigration**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Elizabeth Mills provided delegates with an update on the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration as well as the province's Immigration Strategy. Launched in January 2005, the strategy focuses on welcoming and embracing immigrants by recognizing the important contributions they make to Canadian society. Ms. Mills noted that the strategy was designed to engage and work with partners in the attraction, integration, and retention of immigrants, with a goal to improve retention rates and to significantly increase the number of immigrants to the province by 2010.

Following a review of the Department's budget and staffing, Ms. Mills offered an overview of the province's accomplishments, including a significant increase in settlement funding as well as improvements to the Provincial Nominee Program. Using a graph, Ms. Mills indicated that since 2003 the number of permanent residents had steadily increased and that the number of Certificates of Nominations issued grew by over 1400 percent. She concluded her presentation with a review of the Department's 2006-2007 priorities as well as an update on the Atlantic Ministers' meeting. In terms of priorities, she noted that Nova Scotia will focus on strengthening existing categories, expanding the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), improving settlement opportunities, and seek to establish a new agreement with the Government of Canada.

## **Province of Nova Scotia: A Registry for Service Providing Organizations**

### **Don Chisholm - Project Manager, Registry of Service Providing Organizations**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



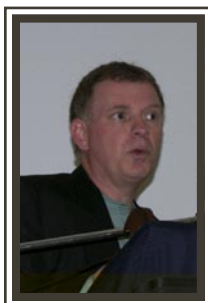
Don Chisholm, Project Manager for the Registry of Service Providing Organizations (RSPO) presented on the proposed registry. Currently under development, the registry will follow the Nova Scotia Business Registry (NSBR) model. In essence, the NSBR is a secure, online service that allows users to do business with the Government of Nova Scotia 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Mr. Chisholm noted that the RSPO is expected to reduce the time associated with submitting applications while providing a standardized application process for service providers. He also indicated that it would help reduce the 'red tape' encountered during the application process. Mr. Chisholm concluded his presentation by noting that the registry project is currently in the feasibility stage. Following this, a pilot project will be implemented to assess and evaluate the program.

## **Province of Prince Edward Island**

### **Elaine Noonan – Executive Director, Population Secretariat**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Due to unforeseen circumstances, Dr. Kevin Arsenault, Executive Director of the Prince Edward Island Association for Newcomers to Canada, was asked to present on behalf of Elaine Noonan. Dr. Arsenault began by providing statistics on settlement service funding, noting that the province has increased settlement funding by 90 percent. Furthermore, the overall number of immigrants who arrived in the province has increased and the number of PNP clients has also increased from 71 people in 2002, to 248 people in 2005.

Dr. Arsenault suggested that the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) was becoming an important tool for Prince Edward Island, noting that the province had evaluated its position regarding the program's goal. Focus shifted from nominating a high volume of immigrant investors to nominating those most likely to remain, with a particular emphasis on skilled workers. In addition, he commented on the Immigrant Connections Category within the PNP, noting that this was a good opportunity to build immigrant communities.

Dr. Arsenault also updated the delegates on settlement activities in Prince Edward Island. Specifically, he noted the *Atlantic Summer Institute on Healthy and Safe Communities* conference, the *Welcoming Communities Showcase*, as well as the *Children's Reading Program*. He discussed other issues important to Prince Edward Island, noting specifically the *Pan-Atlantic Population Table*. This stakeholder-driven committee dedicates resources for collaborative efforts on attraction, promotion, awareness, and retention, among others.

Dr. Arsenault concluded his presentation by discussing the *Francophone Settlement Worker Program* and the *Multicultural Education Program*. The former project is designed to help address settlement issues for the Francophone community, while the latter is designed to provide cultural sensitivity training and diversity education.

## **Province of Newfoundland and Labrador**

### **Nellie Burke – Director, Immigration Policy and Planning, Human Resources, Labour, and Employment**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Nellie Burke, Director - Immigration Policy and Planning, Human Resources, Labour, and Employment (HRLE), delivered a presentation entitled "Diversity, Opportunity and Growth: An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador." The presentation provided an update on the immigration activities in Newfoundland and Labrador.

In December 2004, Ms. Burke was appointed the Director of Immigration Policy and Planning. In 2005, following the release of an immigration discussion paper and province wide consultations, a report on the consultations was released. In

2006, the provincial government allocated funds to address immigration and in mid-September an Immigration Symposium was hosted.

Feedback from the consultations indicated that immigration was seen as part of the province's economic agenda. The report also indicated that there was a lack of awareness about the benefits of immigration, and it demonstrated that there is a need to promote Newfoundland and Labrador as a desirable destination. She noted the priorities for the province will focus on awareness, promotion, marketing, retention, and improving access to services. Other feedback indicated that the province needs to focus on recruitment of international students, skilled workers and entrepreneurs.

Ms. Burke also provided an overview of the accomplishments that the province of Newfoundland and Labrador has achieved in the past year, including the development of a website to promote the province and immigration as well as the development of a magazine which profiles immigrant entrepreneurs in the province. She concluded by reiterating the success of the Provincial Immigration Symposium, which took place on the two days prior to the conference, and was successful in creating awareness and generating momentum.

CANADIAN IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT SECTOR ALLIANCE (CISSA) – (ACSEI)  
Wai Young – Ottawa Secretariat, CISSA-ASCEI

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Wai Young updated delegates regarding the activities of the Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance - Alliance canadienne du secteur de l'établissement des immigrants (CISSA-ACSEI). Ms. Young noted that CISSA-ACSEI is an alliance of provincial and national settlement agencies, representing 450 immigrant and refugee settlement agencies from across Canada. CISSA-ACSEI aims to contribute to new legislation, infrastructure, policy, programs and services to help build a stronger Canada. She added that CISSA-ACSEI welcomes the opportunity to work with governments, communities, businesses, organizations, and other stakeholders in facilitating the successful attraction, retention, and integration of immigrants.

Ms. Young noted the need for a pan-Canadian settlement agency. She indicated that by 2026, it is anticipated that immigrants will make up 100 percent of Canada's new workforce, and that over the past twenty years, undervalued immigrant skills have resulted in lost revenues estimated at \$4.1-5.9 billion annually. She stressed the importance of attracting, retaining, and integrating immigrants into society.

Ms. Young provided an overview of the accomplishments that CISSA-ACSEI has achieved since its launch in April, 2006. She noted that they have opened and staffed an Ottawa secretariat, have developed the CISSA-ACSEI logo and website, and have developed internal policies, processes and procedures for the organization. She noted that CISSA-ACSEI developed a *Settlement Allocation Model (SAM) Guiding Principles* report and tabled a sector-wide electronic bulletin.

She added that the organization has initiated 120 introductions to government representatives and key stakeholders, struck eight working committees, and sent critical questions to the Liberal Party. CISSA-ACSEI also began working with the Standing Committee on Immigration and the Minister's Policy staff on common issues as well as submitted a sector brief to the Pre-Budget Consultations for the 2007 Federal Budget.

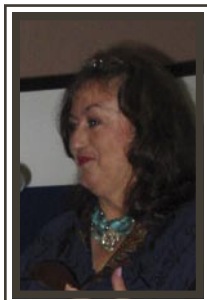
FEDERAL/ PROVINCIAL/ NGO PERSPECTIVES PANEL: EXAMINING VARIOUS SETTLEMENT DELIVERY MODELS – SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES  
Moderator: Gerry Mills – Executive Director, Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre

The session examined the successes and challenges of various settlement delivery models in Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, and Québec.

### **Province of Ontario**

#### **Elizabeth Gryte – Director Settlement Programs, Ontario Region – Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Elizabeth Gryte began her presentation by highlighting the funding allocation to various Ontario communities followed by a comparison of immigrant arrivals in rural Ontario and Atlantic Canada. Ms. Gryte highlighted the significant fluctuation in the number of immigrant arrivals across the country. By way of example, Ms. Gryte noted that from 2003-2005, the City of Toronto received 200,000 immigrant arrivals while Greater Sudbury only received 312.

Ms. Gryte then outlined the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement, which is designed to establish the framework for a long-term partnership between Canada and Ontario with respect to immigration. It defines the respective roles and responsibilities of Canada and Ontario relating to immigrants and temporary residents, and aims to foster partnerships with, and the participation of stakeholders including municipal governments, community-based organizations, minority official languages communities and the private sector in the recruitment of immigrants and temporary residents, and in the settlement and integration of immigrants. Ms. Gryte noted that Ontario would receive \$920 million over five years, with a focus on language training and settlement services. Ms. Gryte also addressed the Consultations on Settlement and Language Training in Ontario, noting that it will occur over two phases. She noted that the process will include discussions with funded and non-funded stakeholders, newcomers and target groups as well as representatives from the Greater Toronto Area and mid-size and smaller communities. Ms. Gryte concluded her presentation by providing delegates with a preliminary report on the consultations.

## **Province of British Columbia**

### **Chris Friesen – Director of Settlement Services, Immigrant Services Society British Columbia**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Chris Friesen began his presentation by commenting on immigration within a British Columbia context. He noted that a significant change in his province was occurring, with over 85 percent of immigrants settling in the Lower Mainland and 80 percent arriving from five Asian countries: China, India, Taiwan, Korea and the Philippines. He remarked that while British Columbia represented the second most popular destination in Canada, it has among the lowest per capita funding for adult ESL language and settlement services.

Mr. Friesen addressed the benefits and challenges of the British Columbia-Canada agreement on immigration. He noted that the benefits include the addition of refugee claimants to the program, and the elimination of the three year service rule. Mr. Friesen highlighted some of concerns with the BC-Canada agreement including a lack of accountability of transfer funds from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC); a lack of comparable services; and disjointed federal and provincial policy program goals.

Mr. Friesen noted five streams of the BC-Canada settlement adaptation program, which include Information and Support Services; Community Bridging Services; English Language Services for Adults; blended information and support for English Language Services; as well as Sector Support and Delivery Services. Mr. Friesen concluded by noting that Government contracting in British Columbia is undergoing a competitive open tendering process, which has a significant impact on sector with unintended outcomes. He indicated that the contracting process is currently under review by government.

## **Province of Alberta**

### **Fariborz Birjandian – Executive Director, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, Alberta**



Fariborz Birjandian began his presentation by noting that Alberta generally receives between 15,000-17,000 immigrants per year. He added that work has begun on a policy framework designed to increase immigration to 25,000. Mr. Birjandian indicated that much like British Columbia, a significant majority of immigrants settle in his province's major urban centers, i.e.: Calgary and Edmonton. He commented that for many years Edmonton was the destination of choice; over the past few years, however, Calgary has increased its arrivals and has established its name internationally.

Following his remarks regarding settlement programs in Alberta, Mr. Birjandian provided an update on the Alberta Settlement Allocation Model, noting that this model has been quite beneficial to Alberta. He also commented on the Individual Support Service Plan (ISSP), noting that the arrangement works well in Alberta as federal and provincial supports are combined.

Mr. Birjandian also noted that the province has challenges in its major urban centres. For example, in Calgary, the availability of timely services for newcomers is problematic. He suggested that a key factor in realizing success is collaboration, especially at the municipal level. Indeed, he stated that municipalities oftentimes can act in ways service providers cannot.

Mr. Birjandian concluded his presentation by highlighting some troubling statistics within Calgary. He noted that approximately 50 percent of homeless people are immigrants, and many immigrant families have difficulty finding affordable housing. He ended his presentation by suggesting that immigration and settlement services are not fund driven, rather their focus remains on helping newcomers successfully integrate.

### **Province of Québec**

**Marie-Josée Duplessis – Coordinator, Integration Committee/ Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes, Québec**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Marie-Josée Duplessis began by noting the differences between the Québec and Rest of Canada (ROC) immigration model. The key difference between Québec and the ROC is that each government share responsibility for immigration services. She also described the role that the provincial and the federal governments and NGOs play in settlement services and provided statistics regarding the allocation of funding between the Ministry of Immigration (MICC) and NGO's in the province.

Ms. Duplessis discussed the Canada-Québec Accord, noting that Québec plays a formal role in determining immigration numbers. Furthermore, the province has assumed responsibility for all integration services, with a particular emphasis on providing FSL training. She noted that the Government of Canada provides compensation for front line services and linguistic and cultural integration of permanent residents in Québec. While certain responsibilities fall under provincial jurisdictions, other responsibilities fall under the federal government.

She concluded her presentation by noting the benefits and challenges of the Québec model arguing that while the system is easier to manage and financially stable, budget cuts have been problematic.

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### IMMIGRANT YOUTH: CLOSING THE KNOWING-DOING GAP

Speaker: Barbara Miller – Director of Community Outreach Programs, YMCA of Greater Halifax/ Dartmouth

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Barbara Miller, Jennifer Thornhill, Carmen Radulescu, Mile Mitrovic, and Katheryn Bates-Khan began their presentation by providing an overview of their organization, its goals and history. Following this, the group shifted their discussion to the various issues facing young immigrants, including racism, language barriers, parental conflict, academic challenges, isolation, shifting family roles, and the need to balance cultural identities. The presentation was augmented by a video in which young immigrants recounted their experiences and offered examples of the challenges they face.

The presenters then spoke about their own experiences working with youth and discussed the Settlement Workers in the Schools (SWIS) project. Following this, participants were invited to engage in discussion regarding their own experiences in working with newcomer youth. The interactive presentation generated a great deal of discussion and it was agreed that there is a significant need for more supports to be directed to programming for children and youth.

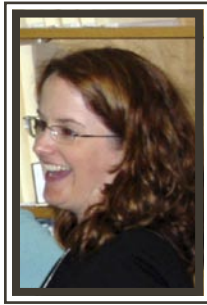
### DISTANCE PROGRAM DELIVERY PANEL WORKSHOP

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

The Distance Program Delivery Panel allowed presenters the opportunity to discuss projects designed to provide easier access to ESL and employment services in rural areas, where geographic limitations make it difficult to provide traditional ESL services. Carol Derby spoke about the *Enhanced Language Training Videoconferencing* program, Anne Kelly presented on the *Teaching Immigrants English* (TIE) program while Jan Sheppard Kutcher and Mark Larson provided an overview of the *New Beginnings Online* program.

## **Enhanced Language Training (ELT) Videoconferencing Project**

### **Carol Derby – Distance Learning Coordinator, Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre**



Carol Derby began her presentation on the ELT videoconferencing pilot program, noting that the project provides ESL classes to students outside the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) through a videoconferencing teaching environment. The project was designed to provide English classes to students beyond CLB Level 6, to increase newcomers' confidence and language skills, and to support the provincial government's goal of province-wide access to services.

The pilot program ran for six weeks at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), with curriculum developed by the Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre (HILC). Ms. Derby briefly spoke about the technology used for the project, noting that teachers were able to connect with students in four different classrooms across the province. She indicated that during the pilot project, students in Kentville, Truro, and Halifax were connected to a teacher in Halifax.

Ms. Derby acknowledged some of the challenges in using the technology, describing the lack of personal contact as noteworthy. Other significant problems include difficulties associated connecting with students, directing group work, receiving assignments and written materials, as well as more general difficulties associated with the technology.

She indicated that feedback from the pilot program was positive, noting that it can provide better access to Enhanced Language Training in rural areas. Ms. Derby also suggested that the program is beneficial, as it can increase awareness regarding the need for services outside the HRM, increase the capacity to respond to those needs, and help further develop community partnerships across Nova Scotia.

### **Teaching Immigrants English (TIE) Program**

**Anne Kelly – Teaching Immigrants English (TIE) Coordinator, Metro-Region Immigrant Language Services**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Anne Kelly began by providing an overview of the Teaching Immigrants English (TIE) program. Developed by the Metro-Region Immigrant Language Services (MILS), it is designed to provide ESL instruction to newcomers living outside the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Offering small group and one-on-one ESL instruction, the project is based on the number of eligible clients, the facilities and community support available as well as participant's language needs. She noted that the program also offers tutoring, information workshops, as well as ESL support to community organizations.

Ms. Kelly went on to describe the eligibility criteria, noting that clients must be permanent residents, convention refugees, Canadian citizens born outside of Canada, or persons nominated under the Nova Scotia Provincial Nominee Program and their families. She indicated that the project is available in various communities across the province including Halifax, Dartmouth, Sydney, Wolfville, Truro, New Glasgow, Amherst, and Bridgewater.

The project is offered to CLB Level 6 and runs from September to June. She noted that on average, three hours per week are allocated to one-on-one teaching and six hours are allocated for group sessions. Ms. Kelly concluded her presentation by noting that TIE work closely with libraries and other community organizations and has partnered with a variety of stakeholders in the province.

**New Beginnings Online – A Distance Education Program to Facilitate the Labour Market Integration of Newcomers in Small Centres and Rural Communities in Nova Scotia**

**Jan Sheppard Kutcher – Employment Unit Manager and Mark Larson – New Beginnings Online Project Manager, Metropolitan Immigrant Serving Association**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Jan Sheppard Kutcher and Mark Larson delivered a joint presentation on the New Beginnings Online program developed in partnership with the Office of Learning Technologies, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), the Nova Scotia Department of Education, and the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration. The project was developed in order to assist newcomers to Nova Scotia access jobs in their professional fields.

The presenters noted that the program has five components: job search, interview skills, working in Canada workshops, practice interview, and work placement. Both presenters noted that the project has been highly successful, averaging between 80 to 100 participants per year. They concluded by noting that 80 percent of those who successfully complete the program find work in their field or pursue post-secondary education.

## BANQUET AT BALLY HALY

On Thursday, September 21, delegates were invited to attend a dinner and an evening of entertainment at the Bally Haly Golf Club. The highlight of the evening was a performance by the Association for New Canadians multicultural voices choir.



## DAY 4: Friday, September 22

### RESEARCH FROM ATLANTIC CANADA

Moderator: Mike Clair – Associate Director, Public Policy, The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy & Development, Memorial University

The Research from Atlantic Canada plenary was designed to provide delegates with an overview of the on-going research activities in Atlantic Canada. Dr. Swarna Weerasinghe spoke first, discussing her research on racism, discrimination, and the impact on the health and well-being of immigrants, while Lloydetta Quaicoe commented on the Metropolis Cross Domain Research project which examines the role of networks within immigrant communities. Nadia Hanna concluded the plenary by reviewing the various research projects underway in Atlantic Canada.

#### **Racism and Discrimination and Immigrant Health**

##### **Swarna Weerasinghe – Domain Leader, Health and Well Being of Immigrants**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Dr. Swarna Weerasinghe began her presentation by describing some common problems facing immigrant women and how these problems can negatively affect their health. She provided an explanation of personal and systemic racism and indicated that they were having a significant impact on the health of immigrants in Canadian society. She noted that while immigrants have the highest education rate among Canadians, due to such factors as racism and discrimination, they have the lowest employment rate, the lowest income, and the least number of managerial positions. Her research suggests that visible minorities in Canada are twice as likely to suffer from poverty and to have reduced purchasing power for essential health services not included in the national health plan. The study also identified three main causes of discrimination within the Canadian healthcare system - skin colour, excess body weight, and strong accents - leading to discrimination in the form of denial, exclusion, verbal abuse, and neglect.

Dr. Weerasinghe concluded her presentation by offering recommendations, suggesting that there is a significant need to increase tolerance within the service sector by focusing on language accommodation. She also argued that in order to improve healthcare outcomes, the system has to be culturally responsive, must follow ethical guidelines, and should promote cultural sensitivity training for those working within the healthcare sector.

#### **Cross Domain Initiative: Profiles of Immigrant Communities in Atlantic Canada**

##### **Lloydetta Quaicoe – Committee Member, Atlantic Metropolis Cross Domain Research Project**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*

Lloydetta Quaicoe provided an overview of the Metropolis-funded Cross Domain Research project, which seeks to examine the role of networks within immigrant communities as well as the impact that these networks have on newcomer attraction and retention. She began by commenting on the research objectives, which are to identify existing networks and to determine how policy and

program development can foster retention of immigrants. She indicated that the research focused on four immigrant communities in Atlantic Canada: the Lebanese community in Halifax, the Francophone-African community in Moncton, various cultures in Charlottetown, and immigrants from the Indian subcontinent in St. John's.

Ms. Quaiocoe then reviewed the activities to date, noting that fieldworkers had been hired to conduct focus groups with youth and adults from each community. She indicated that the project's overall goal was to determine each community's needs and to identify available services. She then commented on the research in St. John's, noting that the data suggested that people felt isolated due to language barriers, lack of job opportunities, and acculturation issues. Ms. Quaiocoe concluded the presentation by noting that a report is expected in the spring of 2007.

### **Immigration and Integration: the Atlantic Research Agenda**

**Nadia Hanna – Policy Analyst, Department of Canadian Heritage**

*A full copy of the presentation is available in English on the ANC website.*



Nadia Hanna began her presentation with an overview of recent research occurring at the Atlantic Metropolis Centre. She noted two key research pieces: policy research focusing on social networks and an examination of the role universities play in the economic development of Atlantic Canada. She briefly reviewed each study, noting that the latter project found that academic progress for immigrants attending universities varied. She also noted that the study found that approximately 55 percent of international students decided to stay in their home community, while 22 percent decided to attend another university within the Atlantic region.

Ms. Hanna provided updates on other research activities in the Atlantic Provinces:

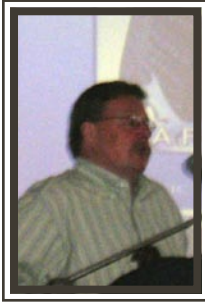
- In Nova Scotia, research analyzing the socioeconomic and demographic profiles of immigrants determined that there is a general belief that immigrants are a drain on the local economy, despite the reality that only 10 percent of new immigrants rely on social assistance.
- In Prince Edward Island, a qualitative study exploring reasons why people decide to move to and settle in the province found that underemployment and social integration are significant issues.
- In New Brunswick, research on diversity in the City of Moncton determined that there was a need to strengthen ties to economic development strategies.
- In Newfoundland and Labrador, a survey on the attitudes of employers toward the recruitment and employment of immigrants and international workers found that less than 10 percent of employers had hired a newcomer in the past. It was noted that employers saw little cost advantage in hiring newcomers.

Ms. Hanna concluded by responding to questions from interested conference participants.

It was recommended that an assessment be conducted on waiting periods for medical coverage. Ms. Hanna indicated that research of this nature is currently in the development stage. There was also some discussion regarding the attitudes of SPOs towards new immigrants.

#### CLOSING REMARKS

Ross Reid, Deputy Minister to the Premier, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador



#### **Closing Remarks – Ross Reid, Deputy Minister to the Premier, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador**

#### **Introduction by Neil Penney – Department of Canadian Heritage**

Ross Reid provided a fitting closing to the ARAISA Conference, and began by reviewing the history of immigration in Canada and the Atlantic Region as well as the increasingly important role of immigration in all provinces. He noted that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador recognizes the importance of immigration and the recent Immigration Symposium is a testament to their commitment.

Mr. Reid spoke of the tremendous contribution that immigrants make to our province, region and country, and of the important work that settlement service organizations do to create a welcoming and supportive environment. By way of example, he related a story of a young man who left Jalalabad and fled to Peshawar with 2,000,000 others, leaving his parents and family at the young age of nineteen. At 2:00 am on October 1, 1998 he arrived in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, drove four hours to the Burin Peninsula where he began his new life in Canada. Mr. Reid noted the tremendous transition and adjustment that must have been involved in this relocation. One can only imagine the fear, loneliness, excitement and struggle involved, yet tens of thousands do the same thing every day. There are so many issues that have to be addressed for immigrants and refugees: school, housing, employment, family reunification, among others and settlement agencies play a key role in easing and facilitating these transitions.

Mr. Reid noted the important messages that should be taken from the conference. He described the need to improve attraction and retention efforts in the Atlantic region. He stressed the need for community collaboration, investment and commitment. He noted that governments and societies are recognizing the importance of immigration and meeting our humanitarian commitments. Canada is committed to receiving refugees, but we cannot welcome these individuals without the appropriate infrastructure, the support of all levels of governments and a welcoming community. Having inclusive programs, services and policies in place is an important first step.

Mr. Reid described the world that exists today. It is a world of collapsing states, natural disasters, corruption, disease, and repression. It is a world that will continue to create refugees and asylum seekers. However, increases in real and perceived security threats make immigration and acceptance more difficult and lead to increased incidents of racism, intolerance, and barriers. Indeed, in times like these societies become more insular; hence, our challenges increase. He stressed that now, more than ever, we need to be welcoming as a community, and accepting of others who wish to

settle and work in Canada.

Mr. Reid concluded by acknowledging the efforts of the Association for New Canadians and commending all those who work in the immigrant settlement sector. He highlighted the significant role that these organizations play in integration. As a final comment he noted that the young man who immigrated in 1998 has become a true success story, having graduated from Memorial University, worked for the provincial government and the Association for New Canadians, served two terms with the United Nations and is now a law student at the University of Ottawa.

#### CLOSING REMARKS

Bridget Foster – President, Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies

In her closing remarks, Bridget Foster expressed her thanks to all those who helped organize the conference, the presenters and participants. She noted that the conference provided the opportunity for some very interesting discussions on settlement delivery models, research priorities, CIC and Atlantic Programs, as well as updates on immigration in each of the Atlantic Provinces. Mrs. Foster then noted that the conference was an excellent opportunity to share information on immigration issues in Atlantic Canada, and helped define a vision for immigration, while reinforcing the importance of continued collaboration.

Mrs. Foster concluded by expressing her belief that there is obvious momentum in Atlantic Canada, and that this momentum will result in significant advancements for the future. She indicated her pleasure in hosting the 2006 conference in St. John's, and wished everyone all the best in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ARAISA 2006 Annual Settlement Conference provided the opportunity for interested stakeholders, partners, and funders to have some interesting discussions on settlement delivery models, research priorities, program initiatives, and updates on immigration in each of the Atlantic Provinces. Some of the key conclusions and recommendations stemming from the conference include:

- The importance of immigration, both for enriching our culture and addressing demographic challenges in the region such as low birthrates, increased out-migration, and skill shortages.
- The importance of ARAISA and other conferences, as it provides the opportunity to share best practices, policies, and programs relevant to settlement services in Canada.
- The importance of collaboration among all stakeholders, and the need to engage municipalities, as they are key to supporting community integration.
- The importance of Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) in the attraction and retention of immigrants, as it is critical to the country's long-term economic success and prosperity.
- The importance of Non Governmental Organization (NGO) involvement in identifying research priorities for the region.
- The need to continue efforts to reduce barriers and promote inclusion and integration.
- The need to promote services to rural areas and to engage rural communities.
- The need for Diversity/ Cultural Sensitivity Training for communities, employers, and other stakeholders.
- The need for Enhanced Language Training (ELT) and targeted employment supports for immigrants.

The roundtable discussions provided the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns with various program areas relevant to settlement and integration services. The discussions highlighted a variety of recommendations including:

- Supporting the scheduling of roundtable discussions at the beginning of future conferences, as it provides increased opportunities for networking.
- Increased time for roundtable discussions.
- The importance of accurate information overseas to better prepare newcomers for their arrival in Canada.
- The importance of increased resources and programming for children and youth.
- The need for increased services for Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) clients.
- The need for a Host Conference/ working group.
- The need for standardized evaluations for the Host program workers and volunteers as well as the inclusion of a professional development component for workers and volunteers.
- The importance of inviting mainstream organizations, the public, and politicians to witness positive events and things happening in immigration.
- The importance of standardized computer literacy tests. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) noted that Enhanced Language Training (ELT) should include a computer training component.
- The need for reassessment of the Data Collection Questionnaire. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) asked that all representatives from the Service Provider Organization (SPO) community send an email outlining the issues with the questionnaire.
- The need for more staff resources to be allocated for employment services.
- The need to address wait list issues for services i.e. English as a Second Language (ESL).
- The importance of settlement conferences for sharing information between Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in each province.

# Appendices

# Appendix 1: Conference Agenda

## Day 1 – Tuesday – 19 September 2006

2:00 – 5:00 pm    **Best Practices in Financial Management**  
*Sue Thomas, Regional Program Advisor – CIC Atlantic*  
*Ann Sarka, Finance Officer – CIC Atlantic*

4:30 – 6:00 pm    **Registration and Reception**

6:00 – 7:30 pm    **Roundtable Discussions (Open Sessions)**

**Resettlement Assistance Program**

*Christy Jacquard – Saint John YM-YWCA*

**Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program**

*Irina Raduly – MAGMA*

**Host Program**

*Cindy Li – Saint John YM-YWCA*

**Settlement Workers in Schools**

*Rocio McCallum – PEI ANC*

**Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada**

*Sheila Scott – MCAF*

**Enhanced Language Training Initiative**

*Yasmin Ojah – Saint John YM-YWCA*

**Employment**

*Eileen Kelly-Freake – ANC - NL*

**Managers**

*Kevin Arsenault – PEI ANC*

## **Day 2 – Wednesday – September 20 2006**

8:30 – 9:00 am    **Registration**

9:00 – 9:30 am    **Opening Comments and Welcome**

*Introduction – Bridget Foster, President – Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies*

*Honourable Paul Shelley, Minister – Human Resource, Labour & Employment*

*His Worship Mayor Wayne Ruth, Town of Kippens and President, NL Federation of Municipalities*

*Ron Ellsworth, Councillor – City of St. John's*

*Tony Brothers, Director General – Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Atlantic Region*

9:30 – 10:00 am    **Nutrition Break**

10:00 – 12:30 am **From Immigration to Integration: What's Happening in Atlantic Canada & across the Nation**

*Moderator: Kevin Arsenault, Executive Director – PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada*

### **Demographic Trends in Atlantic Canada**

*Ken Hicks, Manager of Modeling & Technical Analysis – Department of Finance, NL*

### **Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)**

*Ron Parent, Manager – RAP – CIC NHQ*

### **Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program**

*Joy Baldwin, Manager – IFH Program – CIC*

### **Immigration as Part of the Atlantic Population Table**

*Tony Brothers, Director General – CIC Atlantic Canada*

### **Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) Program**

*Natasha Pateman, Manager – FCR – HRSDC*

### **Atlantic Centre for International Credential & Competency Assessment and Recognition (ICCAR)**

*Philip Bélanger, Senior Consultant – Multiculturalism & Immigration New Brunswick*

### **Action Plan Against Racism**

*Mary Farrell, Manager – Action Plan Against Racism – PCH*

### **Metropolis Update**

*Madine VanderPlaat, Co-Director – Atlantic Metropolis Centre*

*Laure Lafrance, Projects Coordinator & Communications Officer– Atlantic Metropolis Centre*

### **Q and A**

12:30 – 1:30 pm **Lunch**

1:30 – 2:45 pm **Concurrent Sessions**  
**Getting your Message Out**

*Pat Brownlow, Communications Consultant*

### **Settlement Accreditation/ Initial Health Services for Refugees**

*Fariborz Birjandian, Executive Director – Calgary Catholic Immigration Society*

### **Enhanced Language Training (ELT)**

*Dean Sexton, ELT Instructor – Holland College*

### **Overview of CIC's International Operations**

*Bruce Scoffield, Director, Operational Coordination – CIC*

2:45 – 3:00 pm **Nutrition Break**

3:00 – 4:15 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

### **Employment Café – Let's Talk Jobs**

*Moderators: Sabreen Mowlaii & Randolph Crocker, Association for New Canadians*

### **Getting your Message Out**

*Pat Brownlow, Communications Consultant*

### **Some 'How To's' for Using Evaluation in Program Planning and Review**

*Bea Courtney, Past-President – Canadian Evaluation Society, NL Chapter*

### **Overview of CIC's International Operations**

*Bruce Scoffield, Director, Operational Coordination – CIC*

4:30 pm **ARAISA AGM**

### **Day 3 – Thursday – 21 September 2006**

9:00 – 10:30 am **Provincial Immigration Panel: New Initiatives and Promising Practices**  
*Moderator: Claudette Legault, Executive Director – MISA*

**Province of New Brunswick**

*Philip Bélanger, Senior Consultant – Multiculturalism & Immigration New Brunswick*

**Province of Nova Scotia**

*Elizabeth Mills, Executive Director – Office of Immigration*

*Don Chisholm, Project Manager – Registry of Service Providing Organizations*

**Province of Prince Edward Island**

*Elaine Noonan, Executive Director – Population Secretariat*

**Province of Newfoundland and Labrador**

*Nellie Burke, Director – Immigration Policy and Planning*

**Q and A**

10:30 – 10:45 am **Nutrition Break**

10:45 – 11:00 am **Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance (CISSA0 – Alliance canadienne du secteur de l'établissement des immigrants (ACSEI))**  
*Wai Young, Ottawa Secretariat – CISSA-ACSEI*

11:00 – 12:30 pm **Federal/ Provincial/ NGO Perspectives Panel: Examining Various Delivery Models – Successes and Challenges**  
*Moderator: Gerry Mills, Executive Director – Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre*

*Elizabeth Gryte, Director – Settlement Programs, Ontario Region CIC*

*Chris Friesen, Director of Settlement Services – Immigrant Society of Canada, British Columbia*

*Fariborz Birjandian, Executive Director – Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, Alberta*

*Marie-Josée Duplessis, Coordinator, Integration Committee – Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes, Quebec*

**Q and A**

12:30 – 2:00 pm **Lunch**

2 :00 – 3 :15 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

**Immigrant Youth : Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap**

*Barbara Miller, Director of Community Outreach Programs – YMCA of Greater Halifax*

**Settlement Accreditation/ Initial Health Services for Refugees**

*Fariborz Birjandian, Executive Director – Calgary Catholic Immigration Society*

**Distance Program Delivery Panel**

**Videoconferencing and Beyond: ESL for Professionals in Rural Areas**

*Carol Derby, Distance Learning Coordinator – Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre*

**Teaching Immigrant English (TIE) Program**

*Anne Kelly, TIE Coordinator – Metro-Region Immigrant Language Services*

**New Beginnings Online: A Distance Education Program to Facilitate the Labour Market Integration of Newcomers in Small Centres & Rural Communities in Nova Scotia**

*Jan Sheppard Kutcher, Employment Unit Manager – Metropolitan Immigrant Serving Association*

*Mark Larson, New Beginnings Online Project Manager – Metropolitan Immigrant Serving Association*

3:15 – 3:30 pm **Nutrition Break**

3:30 – 5:00 pm **Concurrent Sessions**

**Immigrant Youth: Closing the Knowing-Doing Gap**

*Barbara Miller, Director of Community Outreach Programs – YMCA of Greater Halifax*

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*Mark Larson, New Beginnings Online Project Manager – Metropolitan Immigrant Serving Association*

7:00 – 9:00 pm **Banquet at Bally Haly**

**Day 4 – Friday – 22 September 2006**

9:30 – 10:45 am **Research from Atlantic Canada**

*Moderator: Mike Clair, Associate Director, Public Policy – The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy & Development, Memorial University*

*Swarna Weerasinghe, Domain Leader – Health & Well-Being of Immigrants  
Loydetta Quaicoe, Committee Member – Atlantic Metropolis Cross Domain Research Project*

*Nadia Hanna, Policy Analyst – Canadian Heritage*

**Q and A**

10:45 – 11:15 am **Keynote Speaker**

*Ross Reid, Deputy Minister to the Premier – Government of Newfoundland and Labrador*

**Closing Remarks**

*Bridget Foster, President – Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies*

11:15 am **Departure**

## Appendix 2: Evaluation

An evaluation form was distributed to the participants of the ARAISA settlement conference. A number of evaluations were submitted for a participation rate of 46 percent. In the first two questions, participants were asked to rate whether the conference was useful and informative. The participants were given four choices ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Overall, the conference was well received by the participants, as 98 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was informative and useful.

A summary of the results is provided below:

	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>Conference Informative and Useful</b>	45	36%	62%	2%	0%
<b>Plenary and Concurrent Sessions</b>	45	38%	60%	2%	0%
<b>Overall</b>		37%	61%	2%	0%

In the third section of the evaluation, participants were asked to rate the quality of each of the plenary and concurrent sessions **on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being most useful and 5 being least useful.**

	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Useful (1 or 2)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Least Useful (4 or 5)</b>
<b>Roundtable Discussions</b>	38	76%	18%	5%
<b>From Immigration to Integration</b>	37	57%	38%	5%
<b>Getting your Message Out</b>	17	47%	24%	29%
<b>Settlement Accreditation</b>	20	95%	5%	0%
<b>Enhanced Language Training</b>	20	50%	5%	45%
<b>Overview of CIC</b>	28	79%	11%	11%
<b>Employment Café</b>	9	44%	22%	33%
<b>Some 'How to's' for Evaluation</b>	10	70%	20%	10%
<b>Provincial Immigration Plenary</b>	38	84%	13%	3%
<b>CISSA-ACSEI Federal/ Provincial/ NGO Perspectives</b>	40	58%	35%	8%
<b>Immigrant Youth</b>	36	78%	17%	6%
<b>Distance Program Delivery</b>	21	86%	10%	5%
<b>Research from Atlantic Canada</b>	26	81%	12%	8%
<b>Overall</b>	35	69%	26%	6%
		69%	34%	12%

The fourth and fifth sections of the evaluation requested comments from the participants, key suggestions for the next year's ARAISA conference, and any other comments or recommendations.

**Some additional comments submitted include:**

*I liked the concurrent sessions idea – lot's of choice. Also, many thanks to the wonderful drivers, who not only got us where we needed to go, but waited for us, returned for us, and cared for us.*

*Thanks for all the great details i.e. baskets of snacks and goodies in the rooms, bookmarks, pins and attractions, items in nice packages, and the friendly transportation that made getting around easier. The roundtable discussion sessions on interest and work were great at the first meeting. It would have been helpful to re-convene at the end of the conference to talk again.*

*Many people across Canada to hear from...I would prefer to broaden our perspectives by inviting new speakers. Overall great! Thank you!*

*Great to meet with groups on the first night, and it would have been good to meet again. It was evident the amount of time, effort, and hard work that went in to the conference. It was appreciated. Good job! A lot of dedication and commitment shown by the ANC.*

*A downtown location would have been better. Thursday afternoon had the same sessions twice, not enough variety in choice, challenging for presenters. Thank you for your very hard work and hospitality. The entertainment last night was great! Kudos to you for having a choir.*

*The hospitality and cooperation was amazing. Thank you for the welcoming atmosphere, shuttling people all over. I really enjoyed getting brought up to date on settlement issues and concerns, meeting new people and networking with colleagues. Lovely banquet, I'm really impressed with the ANC choir. Thanks.*

*It was good to have the conference in the school and not in a hotel. It was a great idea to have newcomers involved as the choir! Thank you for the organized driving and accommodation services as well. Great Job!*

*The hotel was nice but the location was out of the way! While being picked up and driven around was wonderful, sometimes the timing was awkward (i.e. 8:00 am for a 9:00 am start time). Overall it was a very good conference and you have a lovely city!*

*Super hospitality, well organized and extremely informative. The ANC certainly gets an A+ for hosting this conference.*

**Some key suggestions for next year's conference submitted include:**

*Is there a way (to explore) of introducing or having an opportunity for mainstream public (those not working with immigration) to see the plenary, to get familiar with what we do, why, the struggles we and our clients face.*

*Instead of listening to the panelists, distribute the presentations ahead of time, get everyone to read them and have a rotation of questions and comments about the reading to the guest speakers so it is more of a dialogue.*

*Suggesting a pre or post conference workshop on competency development for settlement workers would be useful, using Calgary's model of accreditation.*

*First day hospitality: A complete lack of information prior to arrival i.e. Name and address of venue, accommodation, agenda etc. Accommodations were good but isolated. Early arrivals were abandoned for 24 hours with no money, information, transportation, food, etc.*

*The roundtables are very interesting but we could get more out of them if they would be more structured. Try to find new and informative subjects for the concurrent sessions.*

*The Immigration and Integration Plenary had too many speakers and was too long. It is best to keep that in mind for next year's conference.*

*The concurrent sessions should be a larger part of the conference. I would like more group interaction.*

*Youth session should become an annual/permanent part of the ARAISA conference.*

*Have more options of workshops at concurrent sessions. I would like CIC to speak on family reunification.*

*Have more time for questions and answers after the sessions.*

*Some immigrants to speak about their experiences and the services they received from settlement agencies would be useful.*

# *“Lean on Me”*

