

NEW GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE TO ATTRACT IMMIGRANTS TO CANADA'S SMALLER COMMUNITIES BY LEIGH A. LAMPERT



On February 1, 2008, the government of Canada launched a new initiative aimed at attracting immigrants to Canada's smaller communities. Dubbed the "Tool Box of Ideas for Smaller Centres", this joint initiative between municipal, provincial and federal governments, as well as several partners within the various communities, focuses on attracting immigrants to Canada's smaller communities and in supporting their settlement and integration after they arrive.

This new initiative includes a guide for communities which will assist them in attracting immigrants and helping them settle. It is intended to assist communities in developing their own immigration strategies while partnering with other levels of government as well as private sector entities.

This initiative is rooted in requests by several communities for assistance on immigration-related matters including the attraction of newcomers to Canada.

This new guide contains information on immigration and employment, as well as recommendations relating to building support, reducing barriers for newcomers and the creation of "welcoming communities".

Covered in the "Tool Box" are topics including business and employment opportunities; goal-setting; consensus-building, community involvement; housing and other services; diversity; safety; health and leisure.

The new "Tool Box" encourages creativity within communities, in terms of developing strategies to attract and retain immigrants. Funding for this new initiative was provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, to the tune of more than \$1.4 billion over five years.

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