

NEWS AND UPDATES

MIGRATION AND RESILIENCE IN URBAN CANADA

January 15, 2017

This is the first newsletter for the partnership. It will be sent to all partners and posted to the partnership website as soon as possible. Read on and you will learn about the steps we are taking to accelerate this process. This initial rough and ready newsletter that will be in both languages in the future will help with communication among partners as we start our research, KM, and training activities. For the moment, it will be stored in the project Dropbox. Comments and suggestions are very welcome. Please send them to me, vpreston@yorku.ca for the moment. For information about how to access the Dropbox, please contact Marshia Akbar, marshia@yorku.ca

KM Activities

We have formed a small KM committee that consists of Brian Ray, University of Ottawa, Jane Wedlock from United Way Toronto and York Region, Camila Bonifaz, the Administrative Officer, and the PI. Raymond Hyma has joined the partnership as Knowledge Broker on a short contract to work part-time with the KM committee preparing content for the website, elaborating our KM plan, assisting with hiring a permanent Knowledge Broker, and developing a limited number of research summaries. Some of you may know Raymond from his work at CERIS-The Ontario Metropolis Centre.

I am immensely grateful to everyone for taking on these crucial tasks.

Metropolis Session

Our proposal for a session about policymakers' and service providers' views about resilience has been accepted. The session is scheduled on Saturday at the moment. A description of the proposed session is attached to the end of the newsletter.

Montreal Meeting

Co-investigators met in Montreal on November 24-25, 2016 where Chedly Belkhodja and his staff, Victoria Pearson, hosted the meeting with great success. Presentations by Annick Germain and Marshia Akbar raised important questions about the concept of resilience and its utility in migration and settlement studies. Their presentations, including an audio version for Annick, are available with other information from the meeting in the project Dropbox.

In addition to providing an opportunity for people to meet and get to know each other, the decisions made at the meeting lay out a general road map for our initial activities.

Milestone Report

We submitted our first report to SSHRC on December 15, 2016. Thanks to everyone who read and commented on it, including Raymond who helped cut each section down to size. A copy is available in the project Dropbox.

City Network News

The city networks are meeting to plan their activities. Now is the moment to become involved when each partner can shape the research agenda and research program. Adnan Türegün, the Partnership Liaison, is working closely with the chairs of the city networks to help them begin their activities. Any questions about the city networks should be directed to him, türegun@yorku.ca.

Montreal

After hosting the successful inaugural meeting of the project in November, Chedly Belkhodaja, academic co-chair of this city network, is planning to convene a Montreal group of researchers and non-academic partners soon.

Ottawa-Gatineau

On December 14, 2016, the two city networks had a joint inaugural meeting and decided to work together in carrying out their activities. The academic co-chairs of the networks are Christina Gabriel and Luisa Veronis, respectively, and non-academic co-chairs will be identified soon.

York Region

Nancy Mandell is organizing the initial meeting of this network.

Toronto

John Shields has convened the inaugural meeting of the Toronto city network on January 27, 2017, where participants will discuss and begin their activities.

Kitchener-Waterloo

As the academic co-chair of this city network, Jenna Hennebry is organizing the initial meeting.

Windsor

Francine Schlosser has met with local government and NGO representatives to begin forming a city network in Windsor.

National Metropolis Conference Proposal, 2017

Investigating Resilience and Migration in Urban Canada

Presenters:

Marshia Akbar, York University, marshia@yorku.ca
Chedly Belkhodja, Concordia University, chedly.belkhodja@concordia.ca, and Florence Bourdeau, TCRI
Vera Dodic, City of Toronto,
Valerie Preston, York University, ypreston@yorku.ca
Brian Ray, University of Ottawa, bray@uottawa.ca

Short Abstract:

This workshop evaluates a social resilience approach to the determinants of migrant settlement in contemporary Canadian cities. With its emphasis on settlement as a dynamic process, resilience appeals to scholars and policymakers alike. Participants will report on current literature and critique the applicability of resilience to migration studies.

Long Abstract:

This workshop evaluates a social resilience approach to studying the economic, social and personal factors that facilitate migrant settlement in contemporary Canadian cities. Defined as the capacity of individuals, communities and systems to survive, adapt, and transform in the face of stress and shocks, (Hall & Lamont 2013), building social resilience is about helping people withstand the many events that threaten to derail settlement and promoting their capacities to emerge stronger from the systemic and individual stresses engendered through migration. Resilience is appealing because it emphasizes adaptation as a dynamic process in which overcoming one challenge may enhance a migrant's capacities to deal with future setbacks.

Presenters will outline a social resilience approach drawing on a diverse literature that ranges from investigations of child development to examinations of urban responses to disasters and economic challenges. Scholars have debated the meaning of resilience and criticized its conceptualization as an inherent individual capacity that fails to consider the social processes and structures that give rise to unequal capacities. Even though migration policy discourses emphasize the self-sufficiency of resilient migrants, there is growing evidence (Mollenkopf and Pastor 2015) that local institutional collaboration plays a critical role in successful settlement. Workshop participants will evaluate different concepts of resilience and their value for migration scholars, policymakers and service providers.