

Local Immigration. So what?

5 Mar 2024 / Tara Bedard, Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership

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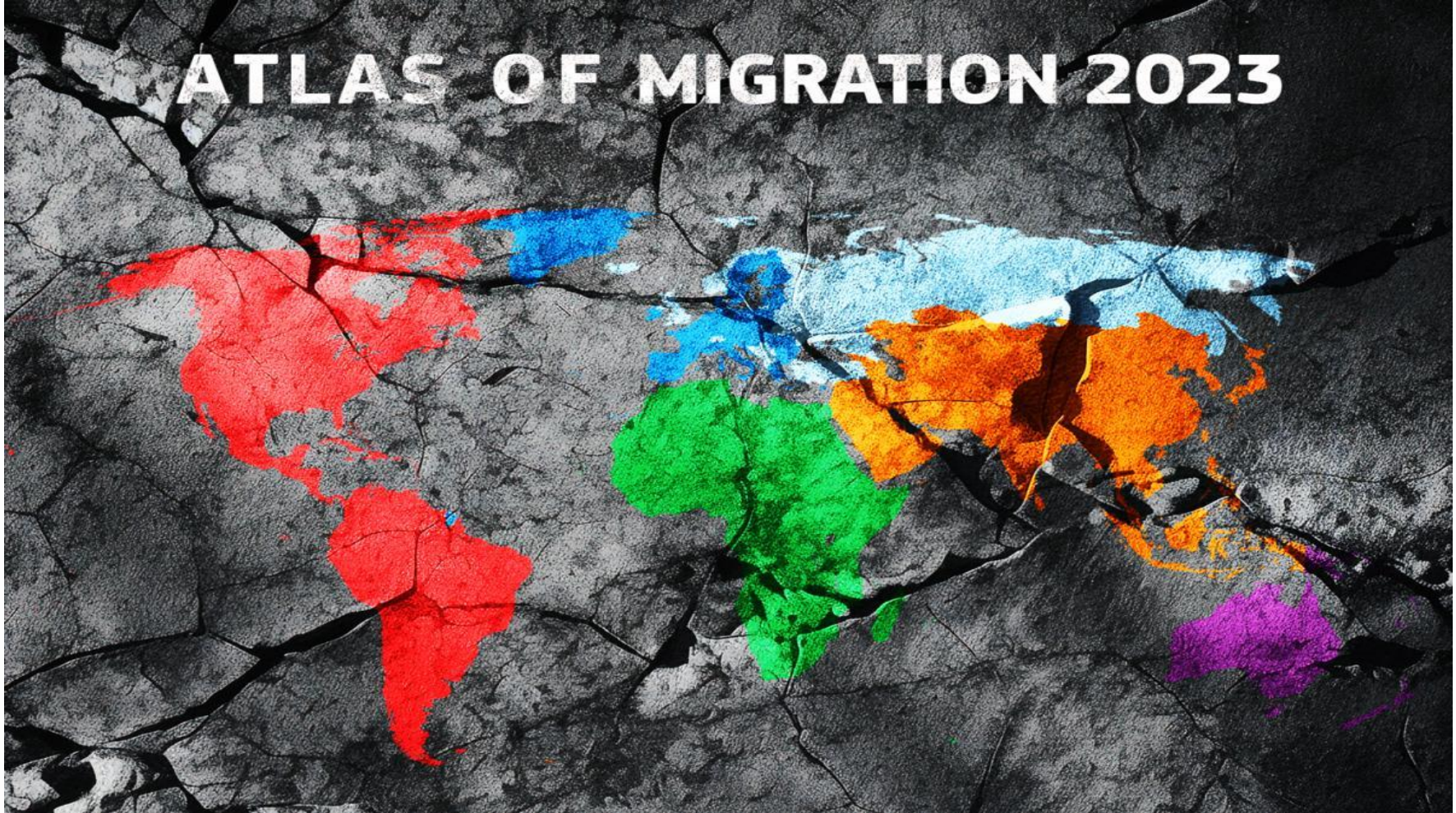
Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



IMMIGRATION
PARTNERSHIP
WATERLOO REGION

What happens globally, impacts locally



Immigration is Nation and Community Building

Then

1500s onwards – French and British colonize and settle parts of Canada

1800 onward – first Mennonite families settle Kitchener and Waterloo

Now

Canada – managed approach to permanent migration

Annual permanent resident levels for economic, family, refugee categories

Temporary migration for study and work

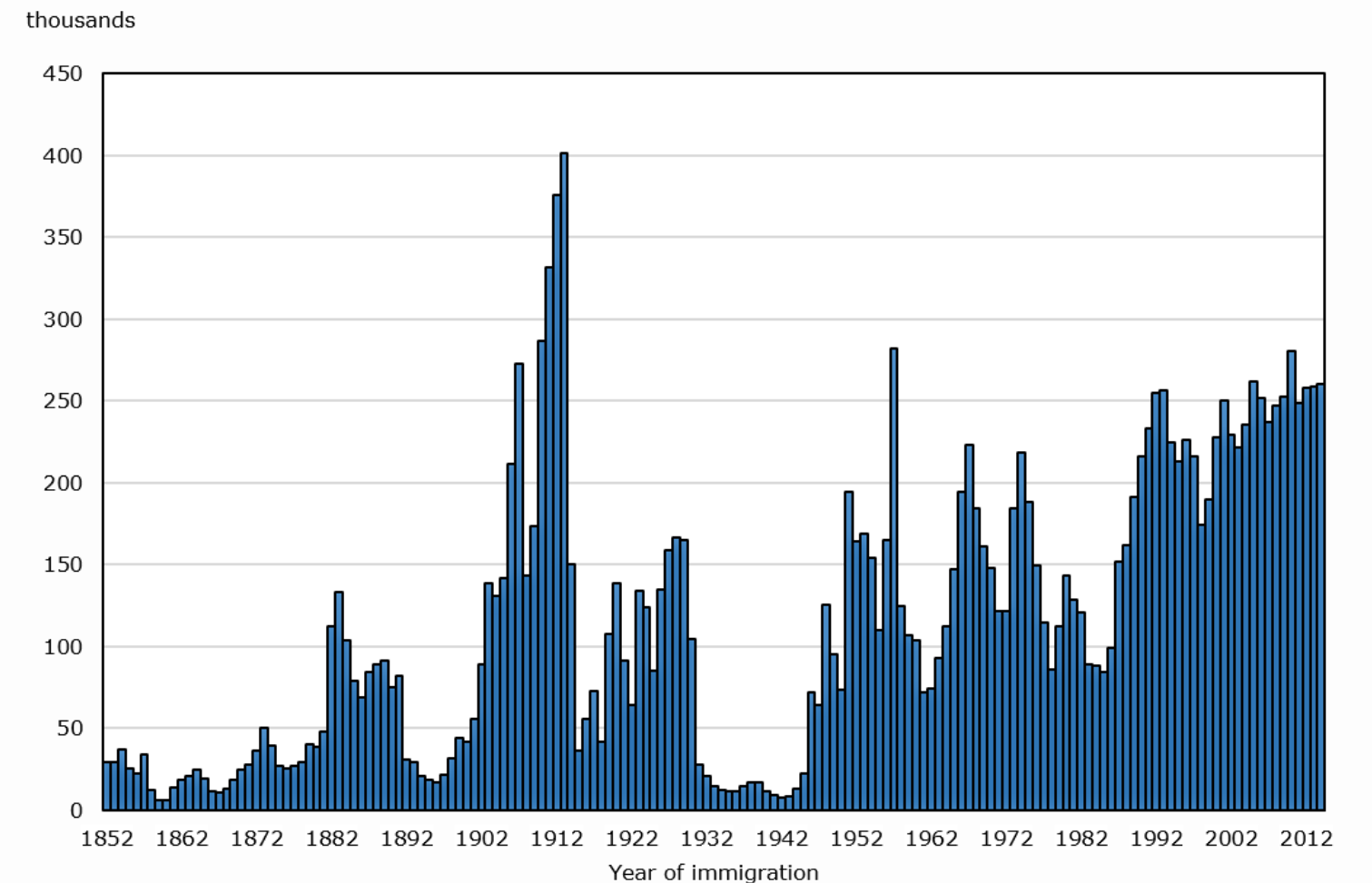
Immigration components of humanitarian response to global conflict

From 1990s, relatively stable permanent migration

Last 10 years, significant permanent and temporary migration growth

What makes us special: refugee resettlement

Chart 1
Number of immigrants who landed annually in Canada, 1852 to 2014



Sources: From 1852 to 1979—Employment and Immigration Canada, 1982. For 1980—Immigration Statistics, Immigration and Demographic Policy Group, Catalogue no. MP22-1/1980. From 1980 to 2014—Immigration Refugees Citizenship Canada.

Immigration By the Numbers

Levels: Canada (2014-2024) v Waterloo Region (2015-2022)

- Permanent residents
 - Canada: 285,000 – 471,550 (65% increase)
 - Waterloo Region: 3,321 – 9,533 (187% increase)
- Temporary residents
 - Canada: 650,000 – 2,500,000 (285% increase)
 - Waterloo Region: 13,015 – 69,255 (432% increase)

Waterloo Region in Census 2021

- 25.4% of the population were immigrants (147,190 / 585,000 people)
 - 45% economic immigrants
 - 27% sponsored by family
 - 28% refugees (compared to 15% nationally)
- Plus 22,270 temporary residents counted (significant undercount).
- Recent immigrants were the biggest source of population growth at 53.5% (first time ever)
- 22.1% of all immigrants were previously refugee claimants or on work/study permits
- 62.5% of recent immigrants were born in Asia
- 27.5% of the population was racialized

Local Immigration: So What?

When we don't care

- Apathy
- Prejudice and racism
- Precarious housing, health and employment
- Poverty
- Isolation
- Lack of safety
- Lack of social cohesion

- Outmigration – fewer residents, businesses, employees, volunteers, donors and more

When we care

- Welcoming
- Social connectedness
- Belonging
- Safety
- Wellbeing
- Civic engagement
- Volunteering
- Charitable giving
- Population and economic growth
- Entrepreneurship and job creation
- Arts, culture, community vibrancy

So What Do We Do? The Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership

Working together since 2006

A multi-faceted partnership initiative bringing together immigrant and community service, business, post-secondary, municipal, ethno-cultural and other organizations.

Includes a Leadership Council and three Steering Groups: Settle, Work and Belong.

Our Vision: Immigrants reach their full potential and contribute to a thriving, prosperous community for everyone.

Our Mission: We work together to create the conditions for immigrants to succeed and help build a welcoming, dynamic community.

We achieve this through convening, shared leadership, collaboration, learning, community engagement, public education and advocacy.



Immigration Partnership Council

Catalyst for Policy, Systems and Community Change

Research on perceptions of immigration, immigrant experiences, systems change

Raise awareness of the benefits of immigration and immigrant experiences across systems

Build partnerships and connectedness across systems

Advocate for change with government and systems

Collaborative leadership of humanitarian crisis responses

Shared stewardship of community investments



Settle

Build Responsive Services and Reduce Transitional Hurdles

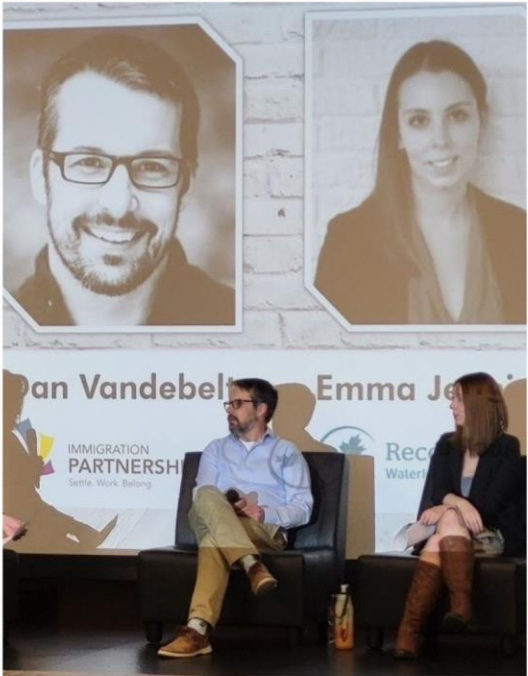
Improve immigrant & community service connections and collaboration

Improve access to affordable and appropriate housing

Improve access to appropriate health and mental health care

Improve access to education and language learning opportunities

Population focus: refugees, refugee claimants, international students, migrant workers



Work

Foster Inclusive Workplaces and Meaningful Employment

Engage employer to build awareness and connections to immigrant talent

Provide education and networking for employers to provide meaningful work opportunities to immigrants

Incubate concepts for responsive services and programming for employers and job-seekers

Advocate to remove barriers to employment experienced by immigrants



Belong

Strengthen Community Welcoming and Belonging

Build community support for immigration

Build connections, capacity and influence of ethno-cultural leaders

Help municipalities and others to champion welcoming, inclusion and belonging for immigrants and others

Increase community capacity for anti-racist change



Ready 1 Million: How You Can Help Build Community Through Immigration

- **Learn and be curious**
 - Follow @ImmigrationWR, @KW Multicultural, @YMCAThreeRivers, @ReceptionHouseWR @COMPASSRefugeeCentre
 - Watch world news, participate in cultural festivals and observances, try new foods
- **Be a welcoming and supportive neighbour**
- **Donate**
 - Cash
 - <http://www.wrcf.ca/immigrationpartnership>
 - the organizations above
 - Goods
 - Food
 - Welcoming kits
 - Household goods
- **Advocate for change**
- **House**
 - Rent your property to newcomers, even if they can't check all the boxes
- **Health**
 - Bring refugee and newcomer patients into your practice
- **Communicate**
 - Interpretation and translation for those in need
- **Hire**
 - Hire immigrants with diverse global experience
- **Volunteer**
 - Help immigrants with language learning, tutoring, professional mentoring and connections, transportation, family support and more



Building Community Through Immigration

For more information contact:

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