



REPORT ON THE MID-TERM REVIEW

of the Second Phase (2002-07) of the
Metropolis Project Canada

APRIL 2006

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL OF CANADA

Canada

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Introduction and Executive Summary

Established in 1995, the Metropolis Program currently supports five university-based research centres on immigration and integration. The program is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and a consortium of federal departments and agencies led by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). The total budget for the second phase of the Metropolis Project (2002-07) is over \$7.8 million.

When the second phase was launched in 2002, it was stipulated that a review of the centres' progress would take place after three years and that, sometime thereafter, an evaluation of the overall achievements of the program would be carried out.

In 2005, a committee of five experts was mandated to conduct a mid-term review and to make recommendations to SSHRC management regarding continuation of funding to the centres for the remainder of the second phase. The committee was also asked to make recommendations on the upcoming summative evaluation and on a possible third phase for the project.

The committee was unanimous in concluding that, overall, the centres had produced significant outputs and were successful in reaching their objectives. The committee therefore recommended continuing funding to all five centres. The following summarizes the main elements of the review.

Framework of the Review

The mid-term review was conducted according to the principles set out in the Results-Based Management and Accountability Framework (RMAF) submitted to SSHRC in July 2005. An integral part of this was the committee's review of each centre's annual reports.

While the review did provide the committee with sufficient information to make final recommendations, the members would have preferred to assess comprehensive reports from the centres that addressed the full three years of Metropolis phase 2. The fact that the annual reports of the centres were not organized according to the review criteria proposed in the RMAF also made it difficult for the committee to find all the information it needed.

For the summative evaluation, the committee recommended that each centre be required to submit one report on the second phase and that, for this purpose, SSHRC and CIC provide the centres with clear instructions.

The committee also considers that there is a need to better define the outcomes expected of the Metropolis centres. In particular, the RMAF's treatment of policy outcomes should be refined. In the committee's view, the current criteria rely too heavily on quantitative analysis. The committee recognizes the importance of quantitative data in many areas, and our comments below stress the importance



of better quantitative reporting in a number of areas. But in the case of determining the partners' views of the policy impact of the centres' work, the committee believes that the framework of the RMAF needs to be refined to facilitate more qualitative judgements. For example, the centres might be asked to describe in detail the implications for policy making of several research projects. The community partners (i.e., NGOs, government and private organizations) could then be asked to comment on these reports.

Outputs

Overall, the committee formed a positive assessment of the contributions of the five centres. While the centres differ in the challenges they face, the priorities they have established, and the mix of contributions they are making, members of the committee agreed that the program as a whole is making an important contribution to the field. Moreover, the program seems to be striking a reasonable balance between contributions to fundamental research and knowledge on one hand, and responsiveness to community concerns and policy issues on the other.

In the area of research, the committee concludes that, taking into account the financial resources invested, the centres have carried out (or are carrying out) a respectable number of research projects. However, the committee is impressed by the need to strengthen pan-Canadian and transnational dimensions of the research program. Metropolis-sponsored research tends to focus more on regional issues and settlement than on national immigration issues. The committee definitely recognizes the relevance of the centres' research for the federal partners. But it also identifies a need to compile and analyze the findings of almost ten years of research in terms of its impact at the national level. The committee is also convinced that the research contributions sponsored by the Metropolis Project would be strengthened by a stronger comparative dimension. Canadian research would be enhanced by more explicit comparisons with similar issues in other countries; and the Canadian experience would in turn enrich research understandings elsewhere. In short, the committee underlines the importance of raising awareness of Metropolis' research beyond Canada.

With regards to the training outputs, the committee was impressed with the accomplishments of the centres. Each centre sets aside an appropriate portion of its budget for training. Students are well integrated into research projects and dissemination activities. The internship programs in place at some centres are excellent ways to promote student success. In addition, Ryerson University's new master's program offers an excellent example of a new training initiative the introduction of which was facilitated in part by the Metropolis Program.

Finally, the committee considers that the networks established by the centres represent the strongest contribution flowing from Metropolis funding. In many cases, researchers associated with the centres derive much greater research funding from other sources. The key value-added element of the Metropolis Project is the support for networks. These networks have helped to establish a culture of collaboration among the diverse actors interested or involved in



immigration issues (i.e., universities, government departments and agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private sector organizations). The centres have built trust among all levels of government and NGOs, and have become a valuable source, for them, of new research knowledge.

It is also apparent to the committee that the centres have made remarkable efforts to design dissemination activities that are relevant to a wide variety of audiences. Researchers affiliated with the Metropolis Project continue to provide expert advice in public debates on immigration issues. The committee also notes the impressive scope and diversity of community involvement in the centres' knowledge transfer activities.

Third Phase of the Metropolis Project

As part of its mandate, the committee was asked to comment on a potential third phase for the Metropolis Project. As noted above, the committee judged that pan-Canadian research, comparative research and transnational research collaborations were three aspects that needed improvement.

The fact that the centres are regionally based may lead them to produce research that is more regionally focused. There are a number of ways in which the centres might broaden their research horizons. For example, the centres might be asked to collaborate by funding strategic research teams made up of researchers from across the country to work on specific projects of national scope. Given the diversity of Canada's regions, the committee recognizes that pan-Canadian research must take into consideration regional specificities. Nevertheless, it is the aspects of the research that have a national focus that likely best address the concerns of federal organizations.

A more far-reaching solution would be to eliminate regional research centres and have SSHRC organize a call for proposals that would be similar to the Community-University Research Alliances program (CURA). In such a competition, SSHRC could insist on a strong national component for each project. A CURA program focused on immigration issues would allow researchers to build a research team, composed of researchers from across Canada, that would work in a specific area. For example, a team could submit a CURA proposal that would address economic issues that are currently being studied by each centre. A CURA would emphasize how important it is for researchers and their partners across Canada who are interested in the economic aspects of immigration to work together.

Finally, the review committee wishes to highlight the importance of the *Journal of International Migration and Integration* (JIMI) and the contribution that the Metropolis Project has made to it.



Recommendations

The mid-term review committee made the following recommendations:

- Continue funding to all five Metropolis centres until March 31, 2007.
- The centres should undertake more pan-Canadian research collaboration.
- The centres should strengthen comparative research and transnational research ties and collaboration. Such an approach would raise awareness outside of Canada of Metropolis immigration studies and establish links with researchers in other countries who are working on immigration issues.
- Each centre should submit a single report for the summative evaluation that is based upon clear instructions from SSHRC and CIC about what topics and issues should be covered in the report.
- The partners (SSHRC and CIC) should define more clearly the policy outcomes expected from the Metropolis centres.
- In addition to the recommendations included in the Results-Based Management and Accountability Framework (RMAF), the committee considers that the summative evaluation should be refined to incorporate more qualitative assessments of the policy contributions of the centres' work.
- Continue support for the *Journal of International Migration and Integration* (JIMI).



Description

Background

In 1995, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) was invited by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to enter into a partnership to support the national Metropolis Project. The goal of the program is to support research and public policy development on population migration, cultural diversity and the challenges of immigrant integration in cities in Canada and around the world. The second phase of the project was launched in 2002 and will end in March 2007.

The Metropolis Project Canada is funded by SSHRC and a consortium of federal departments and agencies led by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which also coordinates many activities through the Metropolis Secretariat. Participating departments include Canadian Heritage, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Status of Women Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada, and Statistics Canada. Other departments, such as Public Works and Government Services Canada, the Department of Justice, the Rural Secretariat, Industry Canada, and the Public Service Commission have also contributed periodically to the Metropolis Project in its second phase.

The program, which in Canada is organized as five regional Centres of Excellence, is built upon collaborative partnerships among all three levels of government, academic researchers and community organizations. The five centres are:

- Montreal Centre for Research on Immigration, Integration and Urban Dynamics (IM; <http://im.metropolis.net/>);
- Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS – Toronto; <http://ceris.metropolis.net/>);
- Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration (PCERII; <http://pcerii.metropolis.net/>);
- The Vancouver Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis (RIIM; <http://riim.metropolis.net/>);
- The Atlantic Metropolis Centre (AMC; <http://www.atlantic.metropolis.net/>).

The first four centres named above received funding in the program's first funding cycle (1995-2002), with the Atlantic Centre coming on board during the second cycle (2004-2007).



Budget

The total budget for the second phase of the Metropolis Project is \$7,881,059 over five years. The federal consortium is planning to invest \$4,773,000 in the second phase, while SSHRC's will contribute about \$3,108,000. At the end of phase two, each centre should have received \$1,703,696 with the exception of the Atlantic Centre, the budget of which is estimated at \$1,066,275 over 39 months.

Governance

The Metropolis Program employs a multi-tiered system of governance. The **federal** level consists of the following:

- the **Interdepartmental Steering Committee (IDSC)**, which provides overall strategic direction;
- the **Interdepartmental Working Committee (IDWC)**, which promotes sharing of program, research, and policy information among the five regional centres, within the federal government and with other levels of government in Canada;
- the **Project Team** (housed at CIC), which acts as coordinator for the Centres and funders, promotes the program nationally and internationally, and acts as a secretariat for both the Steering and the Working Committees.

At the **international** level, the **International Steering Committee** provides general strategic direction to the international component of the program, which has its own, separate funding arrangement. This component involves policy-makers and researchers from more than 20 countries. This committee's main activity is to organize an annual conference which serves as a forum for senior government officials and key academics to share concerns in comparative policy research seminars. The International Steering Committee is currently co-chaired by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the University of Amsterdam.

At the **centre** level, a mix of representatives—federal, provincial, municipal, private-sector and NGO—sit on research, management and advisory boards and provide strategic and policy direction.

All five centres, working closely with government and community partners, devise and support research and knowledge mobilization activities in the economic, social, educational, health, citizenship, political/public participation and justice domains that are targeted by the overall program.

The five Canadian regional centres involve the participation of more than 20 universities and several hundred affiliated researchers, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students.



Mid-Term Review

Timelines

The program guidelines and the Terms and Conditions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SSHRC and CIC stipulate that a mid-term review is to be conducted in the third year of the award, with funding for years four and five conditional on a satisfactory mid-term review.

In November 2004, SSHRC contracted Dr. Natalie Kishchuk to produce a results-based management and accountability framework (RMAF) for the second phase of the Metropolis Project. Dr. Kishchuk recommended conducting the mid-term review and the summative evaluation in the fourth year of the renewal phase (FY 2005-06). The final version of the RMAF was submitted in July 2005.

In September 2005, SSHRC, in consultation with CIC, established a five-member review committee composed of the following members:

- Dr. Keith Banting (Chair), Queen's University;
- Dr. Nancy Foner, City University of New York;
- Dr. Susan Forbes Martin, Georgetown University;
- Dr. Claudio Bolzman, Université de Genève;
- Dr. Nadia Auriat, UNESCO.

The committee members read and evaluated the annual reports during the course of fall 2005, then met in Ottawa on January 20th and 21st, 2006. During the first day, the committee spoke with representatives from each of the regional centres via videoconference and teleconference in order to gather further information about their activities. On the second day, the committee reached consensus on the issue of continuation of funding and formulated its final recommendation.

The Committee's Mandate

Following the recommendations of the RMAF, the committee was asked to make recommendations regarding continuation of funding for the five regional centres solely on the basis of their "outputs." The committee's decision was based on:

- reviewing each centre's annual reports for 2002, 2003 and 2004;
- reviewing each centre's summary report on the second phase (to read these reports, follow the hyperlinks in the "Background" section above to each centre's website);
- interviewing each centre's representative;

The committee was also asked to make recommendations on the design of the summative evaluation and on a potential third phase for the Metropolis Project.



Finally, the committee's mandate included producing a report on the performance of each regional centre.

Review Criteria

The committee assessed the centres' outputs in five areas: training, academic research, policy knowledge, community and NGO capacity, and networking.



Reports on Each Centre

1. Atlantic Metropolis Centre (AMC)

Recommendation

The review committee recommended to continue funding for the Atlantic Centre. Overall, the committee concluded that the centre had done a good job of organizing itself and starting up operations and that it had already been able to meet some of the objectives of the Metropolis Project.

Training

The committee considered that the Atlantic Centre has made considerable effort to integrate students into the centre's activities.

A significant number of students are involved in ongoing research projects which should lead to a number of quality theses. A series of initiatives also encourage students to participate in Metropolis Project activities. This includes: (a) allocating funds for hiring students, (b) encouraging affiliated institutions to offer awards for student participation in Metropolis-related projects, and (c) making funds available for students to attend workshops and conferences. The committee also recognized the centre's encouragement of teachers to incorporate immigration issues into their course descriptions and objectives.

With respect to improvements, the committee recommended that the AMC give careful consideration to creating an internship program for students. It also judged that the centre could better integrate students into its governance structure by increasing their participation on several committees.

Academic research

The committee concluded that, in its first year of operation, the AMC has sponsored a diverse range of scholarly activity. The committee noted in particular the impressive number of publications that address some aspect of gender. It considered that the participation of researchers affiliated with the AMC in a wide range of Metropolis activities at the local, national and international levels, also demonstrates the centre's contribution to the advancement of knowledge. The committee encouraged the AMC to maintain the high-quality peer-review process that it has established.

Since one of the centre's stated goals is to "enhance recognition of the rich history of migration and of cultural diversity in Atlantic Canada," the committee recommended that the centre compile and publish a volume of basic information about immigration to Atlantic Canada. This could include both demographic and historical facts and trends about immigration to the region. Such a collection, in



the committee's view, would be an important resource for academic researchers, non-governmental organizations, and community organizations.

The committee encourages the AMC to design and undertake more studies that compare its own region with other maritime regions in Canada and coastal regions in other countries (including the U.S.A.) that must contend with challenges similar to those faced in Atlantic Canada.

Finally, the committee recommended that, in future reports, the Atlantic Centre should make more explicit the links between a project and its domain (e.g., economics, education, health). This recommendation follows from the fact that research projects must fall within one of the research domains established by the federal partners at the beginning of phase two of the Metropolis Project, but that the committee found that it was not always clear how some AMC-sponsored projects are relevant to their domain.

Policy knowledge

The committee found the AMC has taken important steps to establish ongoing consultations with the three sectors most involved in policymaking: government, NGOs and researchers. To stimulate policy-relevant research, in 2004-05 the centre initiated a number of meetings with government departments and agencies and NGOs that are particularly involved with immigration-related policy issues. In these matters, the committee judged that the AMC's approach and strategies effectively strengthened its community ties and promoted valuable dialogue among the three major policy sectors.

The committee recognized the value of a range of AMC-organized events, in particular the national conference, held in November 2004, called "Immigration and Outmigration: Atlantic Canada at the Crossroads." It also acknowledged that the centre has produced a number of reports and working papers that may be of interest to policy makers.

Finally, the committee stressed the importance of working closely with federal partners to develop research projects that will yield policy-relevant knowledge. It also encourages the AMC to continue working on the creation of a "Working Papers" series.

Community and NGO capacity

The committee judged that increasing community and NGO capacity was the least developed part of the AMC's 2004-05 work plan. The committee recognized that it was too early to reasonably expect concrete outputs of this type. However, the committee was encouraged by the participation of one of the AMC's co-directors in the national survey on NGOs' assessment of working with the Metropolis Project. Learning from such involvement should help the AMC to further develop and improve its workplan.



The domain briefs presented on the centres' websites provide examples of how networking is already stimulating research—in, for example, education, gender, and health and well being—that will be both relevant and useful to community groups and NGOs and that have led to several reports on policy issues.

In conclusion, the committee noted that the AMC has already integrated NGOs into its activities and research work, and that the relationships thereby developed will likely lead to outputs relevant to community-based organizations.

Networking

The committee recognized the substantial challenges faced by AMC, which must operate in four provinces and in two languages. Despite the geographical challenges faced by the maritime provinces, the AMC was able to put in place infrastructure to ensure the sustainability of their network. The committee judged that, during its first year of operation, the AMC successfully built up a network of researchers, government agencies and NGOs as well as developing international collaboration by networking with the Asia Pacific Migration Research Network (APMRN). It has also developed strong ties with universities in Germany, Norway, and Finland.

As shown in Appendix 1 of the AMC's first annual report, in 2004-05 it organized several networking activities. Appendix 4 also demonstrates that the centre created and maintained ongoing connections with all levels of government and a range of NGOs.

The committee noted that over time the Atlantic Centre should strengthen its links with other Canadian provinces and international organizations. Finally, while recognizing the challenges involved, the committee underscores the importance of ensuring better representation of the Atlantic region as a whole, and encourages the centre to improve collaboration with the Memorial University of Newfoundland and with the province of Prince Edward Island.

2. Montreal Centre for Research on Immigration, Integration and Urban Dynamics (IM)

Recommendation

The review committee recommended continuing funding to the Montreal Centre for Research on Immigration, Integration and Urban Dynamics (IM). Overall, the committee judged that the centre (a) has produced highly regarded scientific research, (b) has created many opportunities for student training and, above all, (c) has become an outstanding source of research knowledge—as shown by the quality of its network—for many government and non-governmental organizations.



Training

The committee, which was very impressed by the number of opportunities that the Montréal Centre offers students, considers the centre's contributions to training to be outstanding.

The committee noted the extensive integration of students into the centre's governance structure as well as the high level of student involvement at all stages of decision-making. The committee was impressed by the number of internships offered at the Montréal Centre and the number of theses produced by students affiliated with the centre. The committee considered that students are well integrated into the research projects. The centre has provided students with extensive opportunities to participate in different Metropolis Project activities, such as the conferences, workshops, and research projects described in Appendix 2 of the centre's annual report for 2005.

The committee did consider, however, that in future reports the centre should demonstrate more effectively its contributions to curriculum development.

Academic research

The committee found the academic research outputs of the centre to be of high quality and impressive quantity, with 243 excellent peer-reviewed articles published by members of the centre since 2002.

The committee noted that the centre has 70 affiliated researchers of whom 50 are currently actively working on Metropolis projects. The centre has ongoing projects in five research domains and has established a statistical observatory. In addition, the centre made successful efforts to reorient its work for the second phase of the Metropolis Project in accordance with recently established federal government priorities. The committee also applauds the substantial number of presentations made by Montréal Centre researchers at various workshops and conferences.

Finally, in light of its general emphasis on greater transnational research and collaboration, the committee recommends that the centre investigate the possibility of working with the French Institut national d'études démographiques (INED).

Policy knowledge

The committee found that the Montréal Centre's research results are highly relevant to the policy community. This is hardly surprising, as policy makers are both integrated into the centre's governance structure and substantively involved in its dissemination activities.

The centre clearly has in place infrastructure that ensures great responsiveness to the concerns and perspective of policy makers. For example, 11 of the 19



representatives that sit on the centre's "Partners' Council" (*Conseil des partenaires*) are from the public (government) or voluntary (NGO) sector.

The committee also noted the participation of the Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes (TCRI) and of the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'immigration (MRCI).

Community and NGO capacity

The committee's comments about policy makers and government representatives also apply to non-governmental and community-based organizations. Representatives of such organizations are involved in decision making about all aspects of the centre's activities. As do the government organizations, the NGOs have voting members on the Partners' Council.

The committee noted that the number of NGO representatives participating in the centre's research projects has steadily increased over the years. Thus, while in 2002-2003, 24 NGOs were directly or indirectly involved in projects of the Montréal Centre, this number increased to 60 in 2003-04 and to 73 in 2004-05.

Furthermore, community-based organizations contributed significantly to the design of the centre's dissemination activities. The committee judged that the high level and quality of involvement on the part of these community partners indicates that the centre has been very successful at producing research results that are useful for the partnership as a whole.

Networking

According to the committee, the greatest value-added of support from the Metropolis Project is the centre's networking capacity. Over the years, the Montréal Centre has become an important "knowledge broker" that brings together academia, government departments and agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The centre's network includes organizations at the local, provincial, national and international levels. As the previous sections on policy knowledge and community/NGO participation make clear, the centre's activities involve the active participation of representatives from all sectors.

The committee also found that the centre was very good at leveraging financial support from sources other than the federal partners, with more than \$2 million raised since 2002. This success demonstrates the enthusiasm created by the centre and the partners' commitment to sustain and promote the centre's research and dissemination activities.



3. Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS – Toronto)

Recommendation

The review committee recommended to continue funding for the Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS – Toronto). Overall, the committee found the Toronto centre's outputs to be of high quality. Committee members were particularly impressed with the training opportunities made available to students.

Training

The committee judged that the infrastructure put in place for, and the training opportunities available to, students are excellent. In 2004-05, CERIS launched annual awards for graduate student research. These \$500 awards, awarded by competition, recognize high achievement in research undertaken to fulfill graduate program requirements or to prepare and deliver a conference paper.

The graduate student award process appears to be a professional undertaking. The committee is confident that it will provide graduate students with good experience in putting together research proposals as well as provide useful support for their projects. It also noted that CERIS has provided support to graduate students presenting at the national and international Metropolis programs.

A committee of graduate students associated with CERIS was formed to develop a sense of community among graduate students, plan student-run workshops and seminars and provide a forum to informally review and discuss their research. The committee appreciated this initiative and encourages the centre to maintain it as it was not clear in the 2004-05 report that the committee is still active.

The committee commended CERIS on its contributions to the development of courses and course materials on immigration and settlement, including the Web-based EMPIRICAL program.

Above all, the committee was impressed with Ryerson University's launch of a Master of Arts program in Immigration and Settlement Studies. In this connection, it would be useful to see, in future reports, a list of course offerings and degree requirements for this M.A. program and, in particular, how the program balances a focus on the Canadian situation with an awareness of the theoretical and applied work done in and about other countries.

Academic research

Researchers associated with CERIS have been active. The centre's annual reports include some of the final reports of its externally funded research projects, and they are generally well documented and well analyzed.



Surprisingly, however, the annual reports show that, with the notable exception of the “justice” domain, a relatively small number of publications in peer-reviewed journals have resulted from this significant amount research activity. The committee noted the contrast with other centres in this regard. It was difficult for the committee to determine the extent to which the contrast reflected, on the one hand, greater difficulties in getting researchers to report their publications and, on the other, the actual numbers of peer-reviewed publications. Whatever the explanation, the committee believes that the centre should play a more active role in ensuring that the research it sponsors contributes, not only to policy debates, but to scholarship in the field.

The committee highlighted the importance and usefulness of *World in a City*, a volume of original essays published in 2003 by the University of Toronto Press. The volume, which contains contributions from fifteen scholars, drawn from each domain in which CERIS is active and from each of the participating universities, examines the nature and extent of the many challenges in accommodating the steady flow of immigrants to Toronto.

The annual reports also show that CERIS-affiliated researchers have delivered an impressive number of conference and seminar presentations: 165 since 2002. These presentations addressed the centre’s identified research domains and its externally funded research projects. Research teams working in each domain have hosted workshops and seminars on issues relevant to their research, often inviting experts from outside Toronto to present their research findings. CERIS publishes a working paper series, which, according to the list published in the last annual report, included 37 publications.

The 2000 review noted the need for more comparative international studies, but CERIS has undertaken few such projects and therefore still needs to address this issue. For example, one area of great interest to CERIS is the experiences and life trajectories of the children of immigrants. Since American researchers are doing a great deal of work on this topic, it is important for CERIS researchers to network with their US counterparts and to compare their respective studies in order to place the results of Toronto-based studies in a fuller perspective.

The CERIS request for proposals process is highly professional. The actual request for proposals is well thought out and includes useful “frequently asked questions.” The annual research retreat appears to be a useful way to set priorities in accordance with policy and practitioner needs. However, it is not clear how CERIS evaluates the quality of the actual products of the RFP program.

Policy knowledge

CERIS clearly places a high priority on its contributions to policy debates. The committee judged that CERIS’s workshops and seminars are effective ways to spread policy knowledge; that consultancies, as described for the “justice” domain, should be continued; and that the *Policy Matters* publication series is a



useful and effective way to inform the policy community about the centre's research findings.

However, in reading the reports included in the annual report, the committee sensed that some CERIS researchers were perhaps not fully aware of the constraints facing policy makers or of how the policy-making process actually works. This is an area in which the Centre might be able to help make improvements so that the new policy knowledge CERIS develops can be maximally effective. In this connection, the excellent feedback process described in the report on services for speakers of Mandarin (Modern Standard) Chinese could serve as a model for other projects.

Community and NGO capacity

The committee found it difficult to measure or assess outputs relevant to community and NGO capacity. It is not yet clear just how CERIS's Partnership Advisory Council will fulfill the functions envisioned for it. Discussions on this issue appear to be ongoing. The committee strongly recommends that CERIS clarify its mandate.

The committee noted that the profiles of CERIS-funded projects for 2005 (Appendix A-6 of the 2004-05 report) indicate that many projects include community partners: for example, a project on Cambodian refugee women includes the Canadian Cambodian Association of Ontario as a partner; similarly, a project on immigrant children in treatment involves as partners three different children's centers.

Network

The committee judged that CERIS takes seriously the importance of networking with other Metropolis centers. One measure of this is the significant number of research projects undertaken in collaboration with other Canadian research centers. Participation in national Metropolis conferences and other activities is another. The committee considered that the annual research retreat organized by CERIS is one indicator that partners are well integrated into its network.

4. Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration (PCERII)

Recommendation

The review committee recommended continuation of funding for the Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration (PCERII). The committee appreciated the detail and high quality of the Prairie Centre's annual reports. In its comments, the committee highlighted the training opportunities for students that the centre has made available as well as its academic outputs, both direct and indirect.



Training

The Prairie Centre has done great work in training students by involving them in the centre's activities, sponsoring theses, and by providing opportunities for them to gain experience with NGOs and government agencies.

The committee noted that about half the centre's funds are allocated to pay student assistants. It noted that most theses produced are master's theses and that many of these are in policy or policy-related areas which, given the objectives of the centre, is most appropriate.

Eleven doctoral dissertations are in progress at the Prairie Centre, including several in sociology, the academic discipline mostly closely associated with contemporary immigration studies in North America and also the discipline with the largest relevant literature. Ideally, there would be more theses in other social science disciplines, but the committee understands that only a few of the centre's affiliates are economists or political scientists. It would be desirable for the centre to recruit more faculty members from these departments in order to generate a more diverse range of theses and dissertations.

The committee considers the Prairie Centre's internship program to be a model to follow. The program enables University of Alberta undergraduates to volunteer over a six-month period with various agencies in Edmonton that serve immigrants. The committee did suggest that the centre consider expanding the internship program to other universities and other cities.

Academic research

There is no doubt in the minds of the committee members that the Prairie Centre has made substantial efforts to report on research undertaken by researchers who are directly or indirectly involved with the centre. Overall, the centre has produced research of high quality.

PCERII affiliates have published an impressive list of 18 books and 122 articles and given 223 presentations. The committee did note that most of the publications appear in Canadian journals and most of the papers were presented at academic conferences in Canada. The committee therefore recommends taking steps to make the centre's work more visible internationally—in the US and Europe in particular—by publishing and presenting more in these countries.

The committee encourages the Prairie Centre to consider publishing a major book—along the lines of the volume on Toronto, *The World in the City*, edited by Anisef and Lanphier—that will provide a historical and demographic overview of immigration to the Prairie region as well as analyses of specific immigrant groups that are particularly important today. The committee also encourages explicitly comparative projects that seek to analyze and understand similarities and differences in immigrant experiences and policy responses in different Canadian regions. The committee further suggests that the centre conduct research that compares the Canadian Prairie region with the American Great Plains region, for



the latter contains many emerging destinations for immigrants that are becoming important foci for research.

The committee commended the Prairie Centre's involvement with the *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, a high quality journal of international scope.

Policy knowledge

According to the information provided in the annual reports, the Prairie Centre is performing well in this area.

A major innovation since the last major review has been the establishment of a "Working Paper" series to speed up dissemination of research results. Nineteen working papers have been published since 2003. The committee noted that the working papers covered a wide range of topics, ranging from second generation Canadians' performance in the labor market to explaining the educational aspirations of youth from visible minorities.

The Prairie Centre's newsletter, *Notes from the Prairie Centre*—of which eight have been published since 2003—is an important vehicle for disseminating information about the centre's activities. The newsletter includes profiles of research ongoing at the Centre, announcements of conferences and workshops, and news from research affiliates and community partners.

The committee judged that the research findings of the centre are indeed relevant to policy making and that the centre makes remarkable efforts to inform governmental officials of its work through publications, but also through frequent participation in roundtables, workshops and conferences on the part of centre affiliates.

Community and NGO capacity

It was difficult for the committee to discern how involved community and NGO based researchers have been in generating research papers and reports, and in giving presentations. A review of the conference papers and research publications produced by the centre suggests that interactions with community- and NGO-based researchers in seminars, conferences, workshops and other meetings have influenced many of the topics selected, issues addressed, and questions asked. Furthermore, representatives of NGOs are funded to attend, or present papers at, regional, national and international Metropolis conferences or workshops. The committee also noted that, where appropriate, grant applicants are required to consult with community groups before applying for funds and to participate in conferences organized by NGOs.

Networking

Taking into consideration the inherent geographical challenges, the committee finds that the centre's activities have indeed led to the development of strong,



sustainable networks of researchers, NGOs, community organizations, and policy communities. The centre clearly encourages policy makers and representatives from community-based organizations to participate in its activities and governance.

Also, the committee emphasizes the importance of the centre maintaining its Brown Bag Lecture series, which is excellent vehicle for expanding the scope of its networks. It is, however, desirable that the lectures series be expanded beyond Edmonton and Winnipeg.

5. The Vancouver Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis (RIIM)

Recommendation

The review committee recommended the continuation of funding for The Vancouver Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis (RIIM). The committee considered that the strongest aspect of the centre were the training outputs and the international component of its network.

Training

The committee considers training outputs to be a strong component of the Vancouver Centre's activities. It is evident that students are given opportunities to fully participate in research projects and in dissemination activities.

More than half the centre's research funding is allocated to research assistantships. Students are not only asked to collect data and prepare bibliographies but are also encouraged to contribute to the writing of both working papers and peer-reviewed articles.

Students are also strongly encouraged to participate in national and international conferences. They are invited to the centre's annual retreat and to the policy research symposia the centre organizes.

The committee was impressed with the centre's international relations which also provide excellent exchange opportunities for students. The Visitors Program enables students to visit, and to participate in activities organized by, international partners in Hambourg, Bonn, Shanghai and Malmo.

The committee also praised the workshop that the centre organized for graduate students about to defend their theses.

Academic research

The centre has produced research of very high quality. The "request for proposals" form is well designed. The committee commended the centre's idea of the "research retreat" as well as its practice of presenting ongoing research to policy makers so that their comments can be incorporated into the final versions



of papers and other vehicles for research communication. The centre reports 40 articles, five books and 21 book chapters published or accepted for publication, as well as 50 presentations. However, the committee also noted that, contrary to the practice followed at some of the other Metropolis centres, the Vancouver centre reported only on activities that it funded directly.

The committee also noted that the researchers of the Vancouver Centre participate in a great number of dissemination activities, both national and international in scope.

Given the committee's general concern to encourage transnational collaborations, members were pleased to note that RIIM's Pacific Rim location has led the Vancouver Centre to do considerable work with scholars from Asia and Oceania (China, Philippines, New Zealand, etc.). The committee suggests that the Vancouver Centre could improve and expand collaboration with Canadian scholars and centres outside British Columbia.

The committee noted that the centre has performed very well in some research domains (e.g., economics, housing), but could improve its performance in others (e.g., social). This concern is related to issues of governance and networking raised below.

Policy knowledge

The committee considers that the Vancouver Centre has generated research results that are indeed relevant to policy makers. And the centre has established an infrastructure that ensures it is responsive to policy issues.

The Vancouver Centre's annual retreat offers policy makers excellent opportunities to influence the centre's research agenda and to learn about its ongoing research. This annual retreat should be continued.

Research results are also presented to and discussed with policy-makers at policy research symposia. The centre undertakes considerable preparatory work to ensure that the one-day symposium will serve the needs of the participants. The centre's Design Committee decides on the thematic of the symposium; those attending—up to 45 individuals—are chosen from among the centre's partners.

Finally, the centre has published a very good Working Papers series. Again, the committee commended the work undertaken prior to the publication of the working papers, since it ensured a rigorous review of potential publications. Authors are asked to position their research within a larger policy context as well as to respond to concerns or recommendations from those who reviewed their papers.

Community and NGO capacity

Just as with policy knowledge, the committee found that the Vancouver Centre's research findings are relevant to the non-governmental and community sectors. It



is clear to the committee that the centre has made considerable efforts to involve representatives of community-based organizations in the design of research projects and dissemination activities.

Members of NGOs are invited to participate in both the annual retreat and in the research symposia. They are invited to comment on working papers and articles.

The committee considered it noteworthy that researchers affiliated with the centre are frequently approached by local NGOs to conduct research on their behalf.

Networking

The committee judged that the Vancouver Centre has been successful at establishing and maintaining its network. Also, the international component of the network confers additional value on the research and dissemination activities that the centre undertakes.

However, the committee noted RIIM's own concern that the burden of administration of the Vancouver Centre rests mainly on the shoulders of the two co-directors. The committee suggests a review of the centre's governance structure in order to spread the responsibilities among the different domain leaders. The committee considers it essential that the centre recruit a more complete set of strong domain leaders, ideally with budgetary responsibility, to help invigorate research in several domains in which it has lagged recently. Also, the committee considers that the centre would have benefited from greater involvement on the part of the University of Victoria.

