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The 'Good Enough' Multicultural City: Managing Diversity in Toronto

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Divided Cities

Governing Diversity
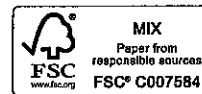
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The 'good enough' multicultural city?

Managing diversity in Toronto

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Toronto enjoys a global reputation as a liveable and diverse multi-cultural city. In contrast with many of the other cities under consideration in this volume, such a generalisation seems reasonable, even if in need of qualification. Despite its origins as an outpost of the British Empire – its dominant white Anglo-Saxon Protestant character once led people to refer to it as 'the Belfast of Canada' (Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005: 670) – the city has emerged in the post-Second World War era as a fundamentally well-functioning polity that embraces its own diversity. Toronto's official city motto is 'Diversity is Our Strength'. Unlike other cities under consideration here, there are no walls between neighbourhoods, no communities divided in parallel societies through long-standing and intractable conflicts, and there are no ethno-racial or religious ghettoes or townships. As with English Canada in general, Toronto has experienced an anxious search for identity, a collective need for reassurance that it is considered by others to be a 'world-class city'. It is this very cultural lacuna, this sense of openness and possibility in which everyone is an immigrant, along with the associated impossibility of any claims to cultural hegemony among the communities of Toronto, that conditions the possibility for rich civic solutions to those tensions that inevitably arise across the city. Where no ideology or creed can claim hegemony and where representation is balanced by justice and the rule of law, politics is

the pragmatic, incremental, and often messy process of coming to collective decision. Our central claim is that it is precisely this style of accommodative and pragmatic incrementalism that characterises how Toronto deals with settlement and immigration as 'the good enough multicultural city'.

In this chapter, we provide an outline of how political actors in contemporary Toronto have come to recognise the conflicts and respond to the challenges of living with increasing diversity. In so doing, we argue that the particularity of the Toronto experience, and the roots of its relative success in expressing and managing difference, reside in a dynamic interplay among three modes of collective action crossing state and societal boundaries in the city. First, local political and economic elites have practised a self-reflexive construction of multiculturalism as a core component of Toronto's *civic identity*. Second, municipal administrators and community organisations have partnered to institutionalise this identity through *policy innovations*, facilitating progress for newcomers or at least limiting their exclusion and marginalisation. Third, efforts at multilevel collaboration among federal, provincial, and municipal representatives have evolved an *inter-governmental framework* to support multiculturalism through investment and regulation.[1] To characterise Toronto from the perspective of settlement and integration as a 'contested city' is to misrecognise the way politics and governance have been operative in the city. As we shall see, Toronto has its share of prejudice, ethno-racial discrimination, and inter-community tensions that are incipient sources of conflict. The fact that these have not erupted into matters of contestation is testimony to the range of interventions that have taken place at all levels of the polity. In making this argument, we must be clear that Toronto has not 'figured out' multiculturalism. Rather, our position is that Toronto's multi-pronged engagement with diversity meets a standard of civic commitment, institutional innovation, and policy performance that is usefully labelled 'good enough'. In the good enough city, structural conflicts rooted in the economy or demography do not disappear, but their destructive impacts on community are mitigated through strategic intervention. Conflicts are constructed politically as challenges: complex and urgent, but amenable to pragmatic problem-solving on the part of efficacious organisational actors and a mobilised citizenry.

Toronto's success as a good enough multicultural city relies on the daily hard work of complex networks of people as well as the vigilance of those whose institutional and associational positions allow them to monitor conflicts and take action.

The chapter is organised in three parts. We begin with a contextual discussion of multiculturalism in English Canada, underscoring how issues of diversity and the management of ethno-racial conflict increasingly find their most profound expression in the country's largest metropolitan centres, where the overwhelming majority of immigrants choose to settle. Analyses of Canadian multiculturalism must now link national and urban scales, and we make the connection by exploring how the ideals and federal frameworks of Canadian multiculturalism actually play out on the ground in cities through *intercultural practices* that variously engage diverse communities and residents in immigrant settlement work. This section introduces our own theoretical and empirical extension of approaches to multiculturalism in the context of innovative urban institutional and community practices – a theme which we extend throughout the chapter. Reviewing controversies surrounding the decentralisation and devolution in federal immigration policy, the second section of the chapter uses the concepts of recognition, redistribution, and representation to interpret several decades of diversity work in Toronto. Tracking innovations across municipal administrations, civic networks, and inter-governmental relations, we conclude that the city's overall performance has been good enough. Of course, the viability of Toronto's pragmatic and incremental approach is always an open question, dependent on the goodwill and motivation of multiple actors. The chapter's closing section points to an uncertain future in a shifting political and policy environment.

Multiculturalism in Canada – national policy, local practice

Canada is a country long viewed as an exception to the now-familiar 'crisis of multiculturalism' trope (Biles, Burstein and Frideres, 2008). One of the world's most diverse nation-states, Canada has been an immigrant society open to new arrivals from a wide range

of places and cultures. It is often held up as a model of a vibrant multicultural nation-state, managing a complex equilibrium between diversity and unity. The Canadian ideal of multiculturalism places ethno-cultural diversity at the heart of society and envisions a political community where all citizens, no matter their origins, can express their traditions or values without discrimination as long as these practices do not infringe constitutionally protected individual rights. While there have been critical accounts of the multicultural vision and immigration experience, revealing their racist and classist strains (Henry and Tator, 2009; Triadafilopoulos, 2012), a Canadian nation-building narrative has evolved not simply about accommodating multiple identities, but celebrating such differences as a source of cultural vitality and economic productivity.

Canada's approach to multiculturalism emerged in the early 1970s, as immigration flows to Canada grew rapidly and began to include substantial numbers of non-Europeans. In this period, the federal government officially overhauled an outdated image of Canada as a British colony, asserting a revamped national identity more in tune with the country's cultural make-up and responding to new political movements. The 1971 federal multicultural policy statement set out the principals and goals: the recognition and accommodation of cultural diversity; the removal of barriers to participation by new Canadians; the promotion of intercultural exchange and acquisition of official languages. From its origins as public policy, multiculturalism was envisaged as a matter of co-operation, collaboration, and communication among various communities as a project of civic nationalism as well as the granting of collective rights to specified communities. The 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms affirmed the national value of multiculturalism and extended protections against discrimination through affirmative action for racial and cultural minority groups. In 1988, the Mulroney Conservative government legislated the commitments with passage of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act.

While Canada receives relatively few refugees and asylum seekers (20,461 in 2012 – see CIC, 2012), it is among the countries with the highest levels of immigration. Over the past three decades, Canada's immigration profile has shifted to predominantly non-white immigration from the Global South. This has led to a series of settlement and integration challenges. Economic outcomes among recent newcomers, especially racial minorities, have been declining. They have been working in occupations below their skill levels and experience, despite having higher levels of education than earlier immigrant cohorts (Sweetman and Warren, 2008). Unemployment rates for recent immigrants (those arriving after 2001) now hover around twice that of Canadian-born residents, while income levels of university-educated immigrants are less than half that of their Canadian-born counterparts. A further challenge is that immigrant settlement has become overwhelmingly metropolitan. In recent decades, two-thirds of all newcomers to Canada landed in the three largest cities – Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver (FCM, 2011). There has been a significant increase in racial minorities in the largest Canadian cities, and a growing spatial concentration of immigrants in high-poverty neighbourhoods (Heisz and Macleod, 2004; Walks and Bourne, 2006). While researchers agree there is not yet evidence of ethno-racial ghettos in Canadian city-regions (Walks, 2014), the problems of social exclusion are evident as newcomers find themselves isolated not only from economic opportunity, but also other forms of civic and social engagement crucial to the sense of belonging (Andrew et al., 2008). Political representation at federal, provincial, and municipal levels in the large Canadian cities dramatically under-represents visible minorities (Andrew et al., 2008). The immigrant settlement sector is called on to deliver comprehensive and customised services to increasingly diverse population groups. Added to these factors, immigration to Canada has taken place in an increasingly securitised global environment, which has resulted in a hardening of borders and an essentialisation of political identities (Nesbitt-Larking, 2015).

The federal government has not been passive in the face of these trends and forces. Beginning in the 1990s, Ottawa introduced significant adaptations to the multicultural framework. A major thrust involved governance arrangements, specifically federal decentralisation of immigration policy authority and responsibility to the provinces, with new opportunities for consultation with municipalities, employers, and settlement sector organisations (Bradford and Andrew,

2011; Seidle, 2010). Given the centrality of multiculturalism to Canadian politics and policy, it is hardly surprising that these shifts in authority and responsibility attracted considerable attention from both diversity scholars and immigrant settlement networks (Stasiulis et al., 2011). Official federal discourse proposed that greater provincial responsibility and community involvement could better align settlement services with regional and local labour markets, while also facilitating immigrant access to provincially controlled social programmes and municipal services crucial to integration. But larger questions remained about whether provincialisation or localisation constituted an appropriate response. Two quite divergent responses emerged.

Those scholars critical of neoliberalism saw in decentralisation an offloading of federal responsibilities for Canadian well-being and unity either to weakly equipped local actors or to power-building provinces ready to divert resources away from immigrant needs toward other regional priorities, resulting in a patchwork of services across the country, threatening pan-Canadian citizenship rights (Kent, 2010: 1; Richmond and Shields, 2004; Scott, 2003).

Certain liberal scholars regarded the same decentralisation and devolution differently through the lens of the *new localism,* focusing on a mobilised civil society ready to emerge from the shadow of the central state (Broadbent, 2009; Stren and Polèse 2000). Guided by the subsidiarity principle, the new localism privileged the informal knowledge of residents over the technical knowledge of governments. They argued that decisions about resources and services should be made by representative community networks and municipal bodies, expressing direct citizen engagement. Advocates of the new localism called for a 'double devolution' moving federal authority downwards, through provinces to local communities (External Advisory Committee, 2006).

From national multiculturalism to local interculturalism

The critique of neoliberalism and celebration of new localism are polarised. Supporters of each tend to talk past one another. In Canadian multicultural debates, a middle ground has emerged

(Kymlicka, 2003; Sandercock, 2004), connecting multiculturalism at the level of the nation-state (constitutions, institutions, laws) with interculturalism at the level of the individual citizen (knowledge, dispositions, practices). Arguing that the multicultural state must be built and maintained through intercultural citizenship, Kymlicka suggests that Canadian policy and practice have drifted apart (Kymlicka, 2003: 156). The result is a multicultural state wherein groups live a kind of parallel co-existence with insufficient interaction or opportunity for mutual learning. 'The state', Kymlicka observes 'has become more just, inclusive and accommodating, but inter-group relations remain divided and strained' (Kymlicka, 2003: 156). National laws, principles, and symbols are not sufficiently embedded in the day-to-day interactions of individuals and routines of organisations (Sandercock, 2004).

Kymlicka emphasises the need for citizens to practice their intercultural skills to 'become comfortable dealing with diversity in his or her individual interactions' (Kymlicka, 2003: 158). The focus should be on pragmatic problem-solving among neighbouring groups in localised settings, grounded in everyday challenges that immigrants face in adapting to their new societies including employment and educational opportunity, affordable housing, and transportation. By focusing efforts on feasible goals, different groups build trust through the small victories of tangible joint solutions. While local interculturalism may appear prosaic, its significance resides in the opportunities for dialogue and engagement that give meaning to the high ideals of national multiculturalism. Given the overwhelmingly urban nature of immigrant settlement in Canada, it is in the largest cities where intercultural problem-solving most needs to happen (Richmond and Omvidar, 2003).

From this perspective, we recast the polarised debates about the 'local turn' in Canadian multicultural policy. Beyond the optimism of the new localism and the pessimism of the critique of neoliberalism, a pragmatic set of questions arises about intercultural relations. Are municipal governments, on the front lines of immigrant settlement, implementing their own diversity agenda to recognise newcomer needs? Are local institutions available to engage immigrant organisations and host communities in removing obstacles to

inclusion in housing or labour markets? Are federal and provincial governments adequately representing diverse communities in their efforts to find policy solutions? Put simply, the lines of contestation in large-scale immigration and integration in cities such as Toronto are those to do with the politics of recognition (cultural, symbolic, and status-related matters associated with racism, discrimination based on ethnic group, and associated policy challenges in civic spaces including workplaces, housing, and schools); matters of economic equity and redistribution (job-related and credential-related challenges of income, workplace equity, and ethno-racial inequality); and ethno-racial representation (the degree to which ethno-racial minorities are present as candidates, elected officials, public servants, and activist citizens). In practice, of course, the individual challenges – and the opportunities – are interdependent and mutually reinforcing (Fraser, 2000, 2007). The consequences of growing economic inequality among ethno-racial groups accentuate a range of social problems and cultural exclusions. Newcomers most in need of community support and political representation lack the resources or networks to ensure voice, opportunity, and rights. Viewed relationally, then, recognition, redistribution, and representation enable analyses of whether localised policy and governance deliver greater responsiveness to diversity or mask a withdrawal from state responsibility that intensifies the vulnerability of newcomers (Richmond and Omvidar, 2003).

Interculturalism in Toronto – the 'good enough' city

Canadian scholarship on immigration has emphasised both the complexity of settlement and integration challenges in cities as well as the limited resources available to municipal governments in responding through recognition, redistribution, and representation (Poirier, 2006). However, there is mounting evidence that this conception of the passive municipality is outdated. Recent research emphasises local agency in immigration matters (Good, 2009; Tossutti, 2012). Municipalities in Canada are repositioning themselves for experimentation and innovation in local interculturalism.

Toronto is the Canadian leader in local activism for immigrant

settlement and integration. It receives around a million new residents through immigration each decade. Figures from the 2006 census reveal that 18 per cent of the population of the City of Toronto had lived in the city for less than a decade; and between them the population spoke in excess of 140 different languages (City of Toronto, 2013)[2]. The 2011 Census of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011) identifies 264 ethnic origins among the 5,521,235 residents of Metropolitan Toronto. Of these, 2,314,530, or 41.8 per cent of the population, have a mother tongue other than English or French, Canada's two official languages. Toronto is also a racially diverse city, with 47 per cent of its population as visible minorities in 2011 (Canada as a whole had a visible minority rate of 19.1 per cent in 2011). The largest visible minority communities in Toronto are South Asian, Chinese, and black.

Toronto has been recognised for its proactive adaptation of services and structures to immigrants and to ethno-cultural diversity (Good, 2009; Siemiatycki, 2008; Stasiulis et al., 2011). The driver has been twofold – on the one hand, the sheer depth and breadth of the city's population diversity, and on the other hand, the way in which city leaders have positioned this diversity as central to both civic identity and a global economic strategy for international tourism and capital investment. 'Nowhere else in the world' the City of Toronto proclaims 'do so many people from so many different cultures, different ethnic backgrounds, different religions, races, creeds, colour, sexual orientation, live together in peace, harmony, and mutual respect' (cited in Siemiatycki, 2008: 23).

Over the past two decades, a coalition of local actors has mobilised around a common civic purpose linking economic prosperity, immigration, and city-building. Toronto's expression of multiculturalism seeks to embed diversity principles across mainstream services, strategies, and institutions rather than target separate supports for newcomers. The cumulative impact of this system-wide approach has been the institutionalisation of several venues for practising local interculturalism, creating spaces for policy innovation in matters of recognition, redistribution, and representation. Three institutional contexts have been central to the evolution: first and foremost, the City's municipal bureaucracy; second, formalised partnerships

among the municipality, civil society organisations, and business networks; and, finally, intergovernmental frameworks for policy alignment and service coordination.

Recognition – municipal outreach

As Dippo and his colleagues (2012), and many others, indicate, the daily life of immigrants and ethno-racial minorities in Toronto's civic spaces and public life is characterised by an overall conviviality and tolerance. However, there is also a large literature on the negative and racialised experiences of Somalis, Arabs, Pakistanis, Jamaicans, and other minority communities in Toronto, and acts of racism remain a daily potential for non-white minorities (Abu-Laban and Gabriel, 2002; City of Toronto, 2003; Henry and Tator, 2009; Stasiulis, 1989; Viswanathan, 2009; Walks and Bourne, 2006). Large-scale immigration into Toronto has, throughout its history, created identifiable and often impoverished neighbourhoods, with associated inter-community tensions. Regent Park is an area of intensive social or public housing which was built in the 1940s and has become home to many new immigrants. A mix of Jamaican and South Asian immigrants settled a suburban area of clustered high rises referred to by its major street intersection as Jane/Finch. In both settings, major challenges of settlement and integration have arisen, and tensions have flared among various communities. However, incipient conflicts over the use of public space and quality of life issues have been confronted by a complex of civic actors. In the case of Jane/Finch, from the early 1970s, over 30 grass-roots community associations, supported by politicians, community activists, and charitable organisations have come together to foster dialogue, improve the quality of life and to instill community pride. In the early 2000s, Regent Park was dealing with a range of destructive issues, including drug-related crime and gang activity. Under the leadership of Mayor David Miller, the community underwent a major and on-going process of revitalisation.

There have been some high profile incidents of racialisation and even racism among Toronto's leaders. In 1995, the Mayor of Markham (a municipality within Metro Toronto), Carole Bell, made

a speech in which she made veiled, negative reference to the large Chinese heritage population (Good, 2009: 122). Bell's comments mobilised both supporters and detractors. Other recent Mayors of Toronto, notably Mel Lastman and Rob Ford, have made racially controversial remarks. At the level of community representation, both Goodewardena and Kipfer (2005) as well as Viswanathan (2009) make reference to ethno-racial minorities being managed and regulated, rather than truly represented. For these scholars, attempts to consult and include immigrant communities routinely fail to listen and respond to their needs adequately (Galabuzi, 2010).

Despite the absence of elected officials from among the ethno-racial minorities of Toronto, a particular local dynamic of civil society pressure, political responsiveness, and bureaucratic capacity has facilitated immigrant recognition in the city. Political leaders have responded to advocacy from a robust civil society network of identity-based groups and settlement agencies, and in so doing, have directed the municipal bureaucracy to design and deliver 'an impressively broad range' of diversity initiatives and inclusive policies (Siemiatycki, 2008: 42). Dating back to the 1970s, the local state in Toronto has demonstrated leadership internally in mandating its own inclusive workplace and externally in facilitating the broader public and private sectors to make progress. Four strategies distinguish the local state's approach to equity and diversity (Ramkhalawansingh, 2012).

First, the City maintains dedicated institutional structures that lead, connect, and monitor. Overall direction comes from the Diversity Management and Community Engagement Unit (DMU), which is part of the City Manager's Office in Toronto. It works with a range of diversity-related advisory groups to inform city departments and agencies on policy matters, notably employment equity and human rights. The DMU was particularly active in responding to the anti-Muslim backlash that took place immediately following the events of 11 September 2001. Its coordination and advocacy complements the work of officials across a range of City of Toronto departments and agencies.

Second, these units and offices regularly update their diversity knowledge base through data collection and commissioned research to guide service planning. Such 'equity audits' have tracked the

under-representation among civic staff of ethno-cultural and racial minorities, resulting in the promotional opportunities through goals and timetables for hiring, and diversifying citizen appointments to agencies, boards, and commissions (Good, 2005: 269; Ornstein, 2000). The City of Toronto also has a multilingual information service, Access Toronto, as well as a Human Rights Office, housed in the Human Resources Department. The city's Race and Ethnic Relations Advisory Committee liaises with the city's ethno-racial communities and acts as a consulting body, linking the broader community to elected officials and municipal bureaucrats.

Third, multiple advisory bodies and task forces tap the experience and expertise of immigrant communities. These bodies have a long history and cover a range of issues, ranging from a 1980s Task Force on Contract Compliance to make municipal grant programmes and procurement processes responsive to the changing demographics, to the current network of permanent advisory committees that promote diverse voices in civic affairs such as the Race and Ethnic Relations Committee, the Working Groups on Immigration and Refugee Issues, and the Working Group on Language Equity and Literacy Issues. The first Immigration and Refugee Issues Working Group was chaired by future mayor David Miller. Supporting this advisory structure, the municipal administration also funds ethno-cultural organisations through its Access and Equity Community Grants Program (Siemiatycki et al., 2003).

Finally, the City has developed action plans and leadership platforms to promote newcomer inclusion across all programmes and policies. The City has created a series of diversity-related policies including the Workplace Human Rights and Harassment Policy (December 1998); the Hate Activity Policy and Procedures (December 1998); the Employment Equity Policy (May 2000); and the Multilingual Services Policy (February 2000). The 2003 Plan of Action for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination aimed to 'act upon the City's multiple roles as policymaker, employer, service provider, grants provider, regulator, and purchaser of goods and services to ensure an equitable society' (City of Toronto, 2003). A series of initiatives were launched for economic participation, public education and awareness, accountability, and civic engagement. The

City's Immigration and Settlement Policy Framework, adopted in 2001, was designed to attract newcomers and enable them to participate in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the city. It identified priorities in six key areas: economic integration, intergovernmental consultation and collaboration, service access and equity, planning and coordination, advocacy and public education, and building community capacity and civic participation (City of Toronto, 2001).

Most recently, in 2010, the Toronto Newcomer Initiative used action-research projects to identify problems of immigrant access to transit, child care, cultural institutions, and recreational facilities (City of Toronto, 2013). In response, the City Council passed a Toronto Newcomer Strategy with an administrative secretariat to build partnerships between City programmes and settlement services, and to support a Newcomer Leadership Table co-chaired by the City's Social Development, Finance and Administration Division, the United Way Toronto, and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants. Membership includes some 20 organisations from across civil society and the three levels of government. Through this network, discussions have emerged about developing an immigrant charter for Toronto, modelled on those already in place for environmental sustainability and public health.

Clearly, Toronto's municipal administration has made efforts to reduce barriers that impede immigrants' access to city services, civil service employment opportunities, and representation through agencies, boards, and commissions. However, immigrant recognition cannot be managed or mandated by City Hall. On the one hand, the federal and provincial governments control jurisdictional authority and policy resources, and, on the other, NGOs in both the settlement sector and business community are vital players in shaping newcomer destinies. Looking beyond the municipal bureaucracy, Toronto has also been Canada's key testing ground for innovative partnerships in addressing aspects of economic inequality and risks of labour market exclusion for immigrants.

Redistribution – civic engagement

Issues of poverty and inequality among ethno-racial and immigrant communities in Toronto continue to inform public discourse. Each year Toronto receives over 75,000 immigrants, many with high levels of education or work experience. They expect that their skills will be productively harnessed in meeting local labour market demand. However, unemployment and underemployment of skilled immigrants has become a major problem in all Canadian cities. Research catalogues numerous labour market barriers: lack of foreign credential recognition; lack of networking opportunities with employers; ineligibility for certain employment-related services; and lack of targeted training programmes to bridge gaps in qualifications (Reitz and Banerjee, 2007). More broadly, racial discrimination and inadequate access to affordable housing, transportation, and childcare have been cited as contributing factors (Galabuzi, 2010; Hulchanski, 2007).

There is little doubt that the economic needs of immigrants and ethno-racial minorities are substantial in Toronto. The analyses and data provided by Reitz and Banerjee lay out the range of economic inequalities and disparities (2007). The City of Toronto-commissioned Ornstein Report of 2000 discovered that newcomers to Toronto were taking a decade longer than previous immigrants to achieve the same income as Canadian-born residents and that poverty was racialised (Good, 2009: 62).

While the immigrant population of Metro Toronto is widely dispersed, and in this respect indexes generalised community recognition, economic necessity has opened up certain parts of the city to new immigrants of limited resources. As Walks points out (2014), poorer and more recent immigrants tend to be concentrated in what he refers to as 'isoburbs': areas of high-density and inexpensive rental housing that becomes home to mixed ethno-racial populations. It is also the case that immigrants are substantially under-represented in the more affluent neighbourhoods. In this way, economic inequality can trigger a politics of community division that correlates with the growth of localised crime and gang issues.

While necessarily incomplete, given the magnitude of the challenges, the City of Toronto has responded to the challenges of poverty and

inequality among immigrant and ethno-racial minority groups. To begin with, the multiple policies and programmes described above, increased municipal spending on diversity initiatives. Among the key responses to the Ornstein Report of 2001 was the establishment in 2002 of the City of Toronto's Plan of Action for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination. Related to this, in 2004, the city also made a substantial increase in its budget for immigrant communities, from C$ 400,000 to C$ 773,000.

It is, however, in the area of promoting multiculturalism and diversity as a city identity that various actors in the city have come together to leverage good will, financial resources, and volunteerism into a series of opportunity-expanding initiatives. In Toronto, there is substantial private-sector support for multicultural initiatives through community organisations such as the Maytree and Laidlaw foundations. Maytree was behind the launch of the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) and the Funders' Network on Racism and Poverty. The business community in Toronto plays a leading role in the Toronto City Summit Alliance (TCSA), which emerged in 2001. The TCSA developed TRIEC to create economic opportunities for immigrants through collaborative planning (Birrell and McIsaac, 2006; Bramwell and Wolfe, 2014). TRIEC's leadership includes private-sector employers, occupational regulatory bodies, universities and community colleges, immigrant serving agencies, and all three levels of government. Over its first decade, TRIEC achieved considerable success in matching skilled immigrants with employment opportunities through various tools and strategies (TRIEC, n.d.). It manages an impressive mentoring partnership, delivers sector-specific job fairs for newcomers, and educates employers about the benefits of organisational diversity. TRIEC's Inter-governmental Relations Committee further supplies a meeting place for representatives from federal, provincial, and municipal governments to identify priorities for collaboration (Atlin, 2011).

TRIEC has demonstrated that the perceived risk of hiring immigrants can be mitigated through civic education, face-to-face communication, and relationship building. Some critical observers have pushed TRIEC to expand its focus beyond skilled immigrants

to champion broader diversity challenges in Toronto such as racial discrimination and the underrepresentation of minorities in positions of leadership in the economy, society, and government (Fong, 2009). While TRIEC has resisted these overtures, its key sponsor, the Maytree Foundation has mobilised elsewhere around broader diversity challenges. In 2008, it created DiverseCity with the ambitious goal of changing 'face of leadership in the Greater Toronto Area' (DiverseCity, n.d.). Emphasising that the issue is not a lack of qualified candidates, but rather the lack of sufficient networks to access leadership, DiverseCity works on strengthening the knowledge base, nurturing community leaders, and supporting civic participation.

Representation – community mobilisation

There have been few efforts to represent new immigrants at the municipal level, and Toronto has been no exception. In certain political systems, non-citizens are entitled to vote in local and municipal elections provided they meet minimal residence requirements. This has not been the case in Toronto, and non-citizens remain voiceless at the local ballot box. Siemiatycki (2011) reported that across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), in the 2010 municipal election, the number of visible minorities constituted 40 per cent of residents, but a mere 7 per cent held municipal council seats, a substantial and negative disproportionality (Siemiatycki, 2011: 12). As he said: 'the City of Toronto continues to elect municipal councils which do not reflect the City's own official slogan: "Diversity Our Strength". Just five of Toronto's 45 council members are visible minorities, and it would require four times that number to achieve statistical equity' (2011: 12). Moreover, Siematycki indicated that while Chinese, South Asian and black communities had some – if minimal – representation, Arab, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian and West Asian communities had no representation on the GTA councils.

Elected office is not the only form of representation, and communities mobilise more generally to engage in political protest. In their account of the rise of political mobilisation against the creation of an enlarged Toronto (the so-called 'megacity') in 1997, Siemiatycki and

Isin explain how the movement was disproportionately led by 'white, British-stock Toronto,' (1997: 87) 'while newer Torontonians stood on the sidelines' (1997: 89). While the anti-megacity movement of 1997 was largely a white, British-heritage movement, Siemiatycki and Isin also point out that new immigrant groups mobilised their own social movement in response, which they called New Voices for the New City, comprised of 63 distinct ethnic associations. As they pointed out: 'Paradoxically…the creation of the megacity of Toronto – condemned for undermining local democracy – stimulated unprecedented civic mobilisation among immigrant and visible minority communities' (1997: 90). New Voices for the New City included activists who worked as staff in the exiting municipalities. They parlayed these bureaucratic positions into a renewed dynamism around access, equity, human rights, and anti-racism initiatives.

In the early 2000s, a coalition of ethnic community groups across Toronto came together as the Alternative Planning Group (APG) for advocacy and capacity-building around issues of racism, (mis)-representation and inclusion. The groups included the Chinese Canadian National Council – Toronto Chapter, the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, the Hispanic Development Council, and the African Canadian Social Development Council. Soon recognised by the City of Toronto as a viable community forum, City government began to partner with APG and to provide financial resources to support its operations. In 2003, Toronto immigrant community leaders came together to form the Elections Equity Coalition, which organised a debate among the mayoral candidates to address issues related to ethno-racial minorities and immigrants.

Overall, Toronto's diversity leadership across the ranks of elected officials, bureaucrats, and other community leadership positions has been disappointing (DiverseCity, n.d.). In the provincial and municipal public services, despite considerable investment in employment equity and workforce diversity, racial minority leadership in Toronto remained under 5 per cent. Similar results were reported in the corporate sector in representation in executive positions and on corporate boards. More encouraging, municipal agencies, boards, and commissions reported racial minorities as close to one-third of appointments, the highest percentage found in any of the sectors

examined. Guided by such disappointing results, DiverseCity has followed up with a series of imaginative leadership projects covering the public, corporate, and voluntary sectors (DiverseCity, n.d.). For example, 'DiverseCity Onboard' connects qualified candidates from visible minority and under-represented immigrant communities to the governing bodies of agencies, boards, and commissions and voluntary organisations in the GTA.

Through TRIEC and DiverseCity, municipal officials joined forces with business and civil society actors to expand opportunities for newcomer employment and engagement. Much of the activity has proceeded through community-driven, project-based work focused on specific priorities, expressing the problem-solving orientation of local intercultural practice. More broadly, ethno-racial community groups have mobilised for inclusion in governance and responsiveness from politicians. Toronto's efforts at newcomer representation thus span civil society, the economy, and government (Siemiatycki, 2008: 44).

Conclusion

Our analysis has explored Canadian multiculturalism through a multi-scalar governance perspective that brings into focus intercultural challenges and responses at the urban level. On the basis of fostering community-based and institutionally leveraged support for intercultural initiatives around the management of diversity in Toronto, we have seen evidence of both the enhancement of civic identity and the institutionalisation of policy creativity. Of course, the problems of recognition, redistribution, and representation continue. In judging the city's diversity agenda to be good enough, we underscore the provisional and conditional nature of success. Toronto's interculturalism remains work in progress.

Importantly, reinforcement of the local efforts has come through the integration of service coordination and policy alignment in multilevel governance collaborations (Burr, 2011). Under the Martin federal Liberal administration in 2005, the federal and Ontario governments signed the landmark Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) that brought the three levels of government together

to work on immigration challenges (CIC, 2008). In addition to an infusion of C$ 920 million in new settlement-service funding for Ontario, the agreement recognised the role community organisations play in the settlement-service sector, and proposed including them in the policy discussions (Biles, 2008). It also included a Canada-Ontario-Toronto Memorandum of Understanding on Immigration and Settlement, acknowledging the specific challenges facing Toronto in relation to the magnitude of immigrants landing in the city, and the municipal–community track record in developing innovative responses. A series of local immigration partnership councils (LIPs) was established to 'provide a collaborative framework for, and facilitate the development and implementation of, sustainable local and regional solutions for successful integration of immigrants to Ontario' (CIC, 2008). In 2009, Toronto was allocated seventeen LIPs targeting neighbourhoods with high numbers of newcomer residents where the problems of exclusion and poverty were most pronounced. The creation of thematic working groups within each council emphasised municipal–community collaborations and comprehensive settlement planning (Burstein et al., 2012).

However, federal political realignments have recently altered the local policy context. The current Conservative federal government combines support for official multiculturalism with three developments in governance style that are antithetical to the local collaboration required to promote intercultural solutions to challenges of diversity and integration.

First, a neoliberal economic strategy depends upon a supply-side orientation toward economic stimulation that emphasises unfocused tax cuts and deregulation. Such measures have the effect of deepening existing inequalities while ignoring those who are not already economically successful, and so entrenching the poverty and unequal access to economic opportunity of ethno-racial minorities and new immigrants.

Second, the Harper government has taken a range of measures to control the flow of information and to tighten leadership at the apex of power. This has included measures of censorship, control of government information, and the suppression of data and views opposing government policy. Clearly, such approaches are incom-

patible with community-based problem-solving. In 2011, federal–provincial disputes about the funding model brought to a close the COIA and in 2012, the federal government unilaterally restructured the geographic coverage of Toronto's LIPs. The seventeen LIPs were folded into four regional councils, an amalgamation that stripped the model of much of its neighbourhood-based focus that many saw as its unique value (Bejan and Black, 2012).

Finally, the government has presided over a securitisation of Canada's borders, immigration regime, and citizenship rituals in recent years, while seeking to reinvent and promote a British-Canadian heritage that downplays multiculturalism and celebrates instead Canada's military history, monarchical traditions, and British connection. A range of policy outcomes has been associated with these developments including restricted immigration, citizenship tests that insist on adherence to 'Canadian values', increased border controls, denial of rights to certain classes of immigrants, biometric surveillance, and other associated measures.

It is still unclear how these federal reorientations will impact the challenges of diversity and integration across Toronto in the months and years to come. The work of municipal leaders, community activists, and others has established strong community bonds in Toronto, and for the moment, despite the challenges, a general atmosphere of conviviality exists to support collaboration and co-operation and to keep open channels of communication. However, a history of racist exclusionism and community division still haunts Toronto, and the maintenance of a good enough diversity management system requires the active and continued positive collaboration of all partners, notably the federal state, which, while it has formal constitutional control over immigration, cannot hope to govern adequately without the collaboration of provincial partners and increasingly, as we have seen, the active, multifaceted and detailed collaboration of the large city regions, Toronto being first among them.

Notes

1 Canada is a federal state in which the provinces exert considerable constitutional autonomy in their areas of jurisdiction, and in which there are numerous and complex fields of concurrent jurisdiction between the federal and provincial orders of government. Cities, including Toronto, are subordinate to the provinces and possess no independent constitutional authority. Toronto is governed under a range of Ontario provincial acts, notable among them The City of Toronto Act, 2006. In an era of globalisation in which city regions have been developing into primary motors of economic and social development, the absence of any autonomy for a complex urban conurbation such as Toronto represents a major challenge to governance, particularly since Toronto's fortunes are dependent upon the evolving state of federal–provincial relations.

2 The City of Toronto is the largest subdivision of the Census Metropolitan Area of Toronto (CMA or Metro Toronto). The CMA is made up of 23 census subdivisions, the largest of which are the City of Toronto (2,615,060), Mississauga (713,443), Brampton (523,911) and Markham (301,709) (Statistics Canada, 2011a). The CMA is part of a somewhat larger entity known as the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The GTA incorporates most of the existing census subdivisions of the CMA, but adds a further 6, including Oshawa and Burlington.