

Innovation Case Study: Metropolis Project

Metropolis Project's web network's

Canadian National site: canada.metropolis.net

<https://www.internationalmetropolis2019.ca/en/>

International site:

http://international.metropolis.net/main_e.html

French International site:

http://international.metropolis.net/main_f.html

Innovation Case Study: Metropolis Project

Project Objectives

Metropolis is a cooperative, international research initiative created to examine immigrant integration and the effects of international migration on urban centres. The project aims to:

- Integrate research more systematically into policy development by creating an active network of researchers and decision makers and providing all levels of government, community organizations and business with solid information on which to anchor policy ideas and programs.
- Develop an inventory of "best international practices", identifying the most effective responses to the many practical challenges that face all countries which have significant numbers of migrants entering their large urban centres.

Strategic Aims Of Metropolis

To identify policies that are able to accommodate and manage the social changes produced by migration with minimal tension;

To balance the rights of migrants with the interests of host populations in a manner that ensures support for the policies needed to integrate immigrants;

To better understand the links between migration and economic restructuring and to propose ways to manage the interaction between these two forces;

To encourage the development of dynamic, receptive and culturally vibrant societies that attract desirable migrants and encourage them to make the most of their talents;

To foster policies that ensure fair and equal treatment and improved living standards for all members of society, thus avoiding marginalization of disadvantaged groups;

To identify policies for the protection of host societies.

Research Context

Contemporary international migration is a powerful and inescapable agent of social change that affects virtually every domain of civic and private life.

Overwhelmingly, the major impact of migration has been on cities. Large cities have always been the focal point of social, demographic and ethnic transformations -- transformations that are changing the broader society.

Greater ethnic, cultural, religious and social diversity is producing more complex interactions between migrants and host populations, as well as among migrant communities.

Innovation and creativity are needed to understand the full effects of migration, to successfully meet its challenges, to capitalize on the opportunities it presents, and to moderate the tensions it produces.

Given the importance of migration, the body of related research is surprisingly small, not spatially-focused and not "client-centred". It provides an inadequate platform for policy development.

International comparative research is needed to deepen our understanding of migration across social, cultural and economic settings and to create a menu of practical policies for international decision-making.

Research Parameters

National idiosyncrasies mask similarities in how immigration is transforming urban systems. Understanding better how immigration affects global cities in the advanced industrial world is essential for developing appropriate analytical platforms.

To support the development of practical policies:

The research uses the metropolis as the fundamental unit of analysis.

- The research examines the context in which immigration takes place: the institutions (formal and informal) which mediate the process of social change and its outcomes, as well as the newcomers' social and economic integration. It pays particular attention to social cohesion and intergroup relations.
- The research is multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary. Immigration is too complex and too dynamic to be examined in terms of discrete, stand-alone academic or policy "towers" without adversely affecting the analysis and losing track of associative effects.
- The research compares several cities within a country in order to identify national differences and control for city-specific effects.
- The research compares cities internationally. Such comparisons identify idiosyncratic economic, institutional, historical, and cultural factors, shedding light on successful policies toward newcomers and addressing broad public governance issues.

Project Scope and Organization

Nationally:

Under Metropolis, four Centres of Excellence have been established in Canada to study immigration and integration. The Centres - each a partnership of major universities - are located in Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver. They were selected by peer review in a competitive process and began operating in March, 1996. Together, the Centres provide the intellectual backbone of Canada's Metropolis undertaking. They represent innovative partnerships in the service of better policy development.

Core funding for the Centres was provided by a consortium of federal departments and agencies including:

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Health Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Canadian Heritage (Multiculturalism), Status of Women Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Correctional Service of Canada

Strategic issue identification and advice on studies are obtained through structured, regular contact between the research and stakeholder communities. At the national level, federal departments connect with the Centres through an Interdepartmental Committee, through ex officio participation by Metropolis representatives on the Centres' management boards and through direct contact between policy developers and researchers. At the regional level, each Centre has constructed management bodies and consultative structures that include provincial and municipal representation, NGO's, service providers and private sector participation. The Province of Quebec has played a particularly active and important role in identifying policy issues and organizing the consultative structure.

Annual national conferences involving researchers and policy makers are convened by the Centres in rotation. In addition, policy-research seminars are organized on specific policy topics with a view to identifying key challenges, existing knowledge and research gaps. The seminars and conferences are intended to focus research on public policy issues, to establish research priorities and to aid in the construction of an active policy-research network.

Research results are communicated to decision-makers, to stakeholders and to the interested public in a variety of ways, including the Internet, interactive discussions, videos, reports and seminars.

Internationally:

The Metropolis Project is based on the premise that there is a common set of urgent, migration-related issues - centered on large cities - that must receive systematic research and policy attention. The Metropolis partners recognize that comprehensive policy regimes are not transferable across different political and sociocultural settings. They strongly believe that elements of such regimes and best practice techniques can be exchanged to mutual benefit.

The international partnership currently includes public and private institutions from Canada, the United States, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, New-Zealand, Switzerland, Israel and Argentina. Discussions are underway with Portugal, Spain and Greece. In addition, the European Commission (EC), the OECD, UNESCO-MOST, the Migration Policy Group (MPG) and ERCOMER (the European Research Centre on Migration & Ethnic Relations) participate actively in the Project. The EC is supporting ERCOMER in establishing a European arm of the Metropolis International Secretariat and UNESCO-MOST is hosting the meetings of the Metropolis International Steering Committee.

Metropolis features high profile, annual conferences hosted by partner countries. The inaugural conference to identify international strategic directions was held in Milan, Italy, November 13 to 15, 1996. The second conference, focussing on city research and best practices, took place in Copenhagen, Denmark, September 25 to 28, 1997. The third conference, emphasizing integration, will be hosted by Israel November 30 to December 3, 1998. The fourth conference

will be co-hosted by Canada and the United States in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in November 1999.

The international conferences bring together senior political figures, leading researchers, members of the policy community and other stakeholders. They provide a focal point for identifying policy challenges, for assessing the state of knowledge and for planning new studies; a venue for unveiling "state of the art" research commissioned by Metropolis; and an opportunity for equipping decision-makers with the practical options they need to manage immigration and to successfully integrate newcomers as full and equal members of society.

Papers presented at the annual conferences are published in journals of proceedings and communicated to the policy and research communities in various ways, including the Internet via a national and international network of Metropolis websites.

In addition to the annual conferences, seminars and working groups were initiated in 1997 with a view to promoting comparative international research and energizing the network of decision makers and researchers. The resulting body of work is accessible through publications and via the Metropolis Network.

Sources:

Metropolis Project's web network's Canadian National site:

<https://www.internationalmetropolis2019.ca/en/>

Note: the next two links are no longer supported

International site: http://international.metropolis.net/main_e.html

French International site: http://international.metropolis.net/main_f.html