



National Immigration Council (NIC)

Speaker biographies

April 7th-8th & April 21st, 2021 | Virtual Meeting

Iain Reeve

Associate Director, Immigration
The Conference Board of Canada

Iain joined the Conference Board of Canada in 2020 as the Associate Director, Immigration Research. He is responsible for managing the Board's immigration research agenda, engaging the National Immigration Centre membership, and contributing to public and policy debates about immigration in Canada and beyond. Before joining the Conference Board, Iain worked at Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, spent time as a research consultant, and worked in the labour sector in British Columbia.

Iain has a PhD and MA in Political Studies from Queen's University. His dissertation work was a comparison of provincial and federal approaches to immigrant selection and settlement policy and programs in Canada. His broader research interests included Canadian political and public policy institutions, fiscal federalism and the division of powers, and the comparison of international approaches to immigration and diversity. In recent years, Iain has become increasingly interested in research on the economic outcomes of newcomers to Canada, and the role of immigration in Canadian economic and labour market policy.

Jo-Leen Folz

Network Officer
The Conference Board of Canada

Jo-Leen is Network Officer for the Council on Corporate Aboriginal Relations, Centre for the North and National Immigration Centre. Jo-Leen works closely with the Directors of each Centre in key functions such as business development, client relationship management, website maintenance, agenda building and coordination of research Centre and Council meetings. In addition to her roles within the three Centre's, Jo-Leen is an active member of the Health and Wellness Committee, Human Resources Committee and on the Steering Committee for the Council Community of Practice at The Conference Board.

Jo-Leen is a college graduate with over 15 years of work experience in office administration and project coordination.

Yilmaz Dinc

Senior Research Associate, Immigration
The Conference Board of Canada

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Yilmaz E. Dinc is a Senior Research Associate in the Board's Immigration team. He brings a decade of experience in applied research, along with his passion for inclusion, to drive thought leadership on immigration.

Before joining the Board, Yilmaz worked on research and cross-country projects with a focus on immigration and workforce development, most recently as the Research and Evaluation Manager of Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council, and before in the United Nations Development Programme's global private sector hub.

Yilmaz holds an MSc degree in global politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science and earned his PhD in strategic management from Yeditepe University in Turkey.

Sarah Wayland

Senior Project Manager
Hamilton Immigration Partnership

Sarah Wayland is Senior Project Manager for the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council. From 2013 to 2018, she was the creator and leader of Global Hamilton, the City of Hamilton's immigrant attraction and retention initiative. A dual US-Canadian citizen, she earned her PhD in political science from the University of Maryland. She has worked as an independent researcher focusing on various social issues, especially immigration-related, and her clients have included foundations, nongovernmental organizations, and all levels of government. From 2005 to 2014, she served on the board of Hamilton's largest settlement agency, including as Secretary and President.

Dr. Zhixi Zhuang

Associate Professor
Ryerson University

Dr. Zhixi Zhuang is a Registered Professional Planner and an Associate Professor at Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning. Her research focuses on ethnocultural diversity, migration and cities, and ethnic entrepreneurship and placemaking. Specifically, she explores the lived experiences of immigrant and racialized communities and their strategies for cultural recognition and social and economic integration. Her research addresses the impacts of global migration on municipal policy and governance, and sheds light on equity-based approaches to planning with diversity.

Anna Triandafyllidou

Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration
Ryerson University

Anna Triandafyllidou is an internationally recognized sociologist and migration policy expert whose interdisciplinary research focuses on the governance of migration and asylum; the management of cultural diversity, nationalism and identity issues; and overall, the contemporary challenges of migration and integration across different world regions.



Prior to her CERC at Ryerson University, Triandafyllidou was based in Florence, Italy, where she held a Robert Schuman Chair at the European University Institute and directed the Cultural Pluralism Research Area as part of the European University Institute's Global Governance Programme. Since receiving her PhD from the European University Institute in 1995, she has held teaching and research positions around the world, including the London School of Economics, the College of Europe in Bruges, and the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche in Rome. She has served as a national expert on migration policies for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and has acted as project evaluator for ministries and foundations, such as the European Commission's Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs and the European Parliament.

Over the past 15 years, Triandafyllidou has built an influential body of work, with research that has become the standard reference among both academics and policy-makers. She has conducted stakeholder-engaged research with immigrant and refugee communities, settlement organizations and government, among others. She has coordinated 30 international research projects in these research fields and has published more than 160 articles in refereed journals and chapters in collective volumes, six authored books and 25 edited and co-edited. She has been the Editor-in-Chief of the [Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies](#), [external link](#) since 2013. Anna also chairs the IMISCOE Editorial Committee and is a member of the IMISCOE Board of Directors.

Her recent edited volumes include: *Routledge Handbook on the Governance of Religious Diversity* (Ed., with T. Magazzini, Routledge, 2020); *Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe* (Springer, with S. Spencer, 2020); *Handbook of Migration and Globalisation* (Ed., Edward Elgar, 2018); *The Problem of Religious Diversity: European Challenges, Asian Approaches* (Eds. with T. Modood, Edinburgh University Press, 2018); *Multicultural Governance in a Mobile World* (Ed., Edinburgh University Press, 2017); *Global Governance from Regional Perspectives* (Ed., Oxford University Press, 2017).

She is the author of *Rethinking Migration and Return in Southeastern Europe: Albanian Mobilities to and from Italy and Greece* (Routledge, with E. Gemi, 2021); *What is Europe?* (with R. Gropas, Palgrave, 2015), *Migrant Smuggling: Irregular Migration from Asia and Africa to Europe* (with T. Maroukis, Palgrave, 2015) and *Immigrants and National Identity in Europe* (Routledge, 2001).

She has recently edited two Special Issues: Beyond Irregular Migration Governance: Zooming in On Migrants' Agency, *European Journal of Migration and Law*, 2017, and Complex and Dynamic Integration Processes in Europe: Intra EU Mobility and International Migration in Times of Recession, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (with Hans-Jörg Trenez, 2017). She also coordinates two blogging spaces: [Pandemic Borders](#), [external link](#) and [Global Extremes](#), [external link](#).



Oliver Pryce

Project Coordinator, Rural Employment Initiative
Newcomer Centre of Peel

Oliver Pryce is the project coordinator for the Rural Employment Initiative project, which is offered by Newcomer Centre of Peel, located in Mississauga. He has been collaborating with Rural communities throughout Ontario, designing and implementing attraction and retention strategies on newcomer- relocation from the GTA. During the last 10 years Oliver implemented and managed several face-to-face and e-mentoring programs to support Internationally Trained Professionals. As an immigrant, he understands the barriers faced by newcomers and is very passionate about implementing strategies to assist them overcome these barriers and achieve their career goals in Canada. He is an Ontario certified teacher, who holds an undergraduate and master's degrees in Education and Business Administration. He emigrated from Jamaica in 2009, where he served as an administrator and professor at Montego Bay Community College for more than 15 years. As an educator, he is passionate about curriculum design, quality assurance and accreditation.

Elizabeth Kaminsky

Policy Analyst
IRCC

Elizabeth Kaminsky is a policy analyst in the Settlement and Integration Policy Branch of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Elizabeth works on labour market integration policy for newcomers to Canada and two regional immigration programs: the Atlantic Immigration Pilot and the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot. She has well rounded operations and policy experience spanning over ten years in the field of immigration and settlement at both the provincial and federal level. She has an M.A. from Ryerson University in Immigration and Settlement Studies where she completed her major research paper on the evolution of advocacy in the Ontario immigrant settlement sector.

David Cashaback

Senior Director, Settlement and Integration Policy
IRCC

David joined Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) Settlement and Integration Policy branch in August 2020 and serves as the senior director, Horizontal Policy and Programs. Prior to that, in IRCC's Immigration Branch, he served as director in three positions, covering family reunification, temporary resident policy and programs and, most recently, federal economic policy and programs (including the international student program).

David graduated with a PhD in comparative politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and holds degrees in political science and Russian language and literature from York University and the University of Ottawa.



Steve Reynolds

Executive Director
Regional Connections Inc.

Steve Reynolds is Executive Director at Regional Connections Immigrant Services, where he has worked in the settlement sector since 2007. He is also vice president of the board of the Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO) and co-chair of the Pembina Valley Local Immigration Partnership's Local Partnership Council. At Regional Connections, Steve supports the work of 78 dedicated staff working out of 4 office locations in rural Manitoba – Winkler, Morden, Altona, and Dauphin. Together, Regional Connections has helped welcome thousands of newcomers to rural Manitoba by providing settlement, employment, language, and community connections services with a unique focus on developing community and stakeholder partnerships. Regional Connections also supports the work of the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) in Altona/Rhineland and the Morden Community Driven Immigration Initiative (MCDII) in Morden.

Kathryn Dennler

Research Associate, Immigration
The Conference Board of Canada

Kathryn Dennler joined the Immigration Knowledge Area at The Conference Board of Canada in March 2021. Kathryn brings to The Conference Board of Canada a long-standing dedication to immigration issues. She has worked on immigration as a researcher, educator, and service provider for over fifteen years and across five countries. In 2020, Kathryn earned a PhD in Geography at York University, where she focused on how contemporary immigrants to Canada cope with uncertainty about the future. Kathryn is passionate about bringing people together to develop leading practices that respond to the everyday impacts of immigration systems.

Outside her work for The Conference Board, Kathryn is an avid reader of fiction. She also likes to spend time in the great outdoors - in the forest, in a lake, in the sea, or, ideally, in a forest near a large body of water.

Ather Akbari

Professor
St. Mary's University

Ather Akbari is a professor of economics at Sobey School of Business in Saint Mary's University, Halifax. His research interest is mainly focused on economics of immigration and he has published extensively in academic journals in his field of research. His work on immigration is often cited in the news media. He has also conducted several research projects for the federal and provincial governments and is currently involved in a research project on behalf of the Government of New Brunswick to study the impact of provincially administered economic immigration programs. Some of his previous work has been cited in The New York Times, Washington Post and The Economist magazine.



Michelle Nguyen

Research Technician, CERC
Ryerson University

Michelle Nguyen is a researcher at the Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) program in Migration and Integration at Ryerson University. She holds a BA in International Development Studies and History from Trent University and an MA in Immigration and Settlement Studies from Ryerson University. Before joining the CERC, she interned with the Migration Policy Research division at the International Organization for Migration in Geneva, where she contributed to several chapters of the World Migration Report 2020. Her research interests include policy and media discourses on migration, migrant agency, Canadian immigration history, and Vietnamese diasporic communities. She is now working on research projects exploring migrants' decision-making on where they live and why they voluntarily stay for extended periods of time in non-gateway cities in Canada. Outside of her research, Michelle has held various leadership roles to develop conference programming, organize cultural events, and mentor youth with the goal to empower and mobilize the Vietnamese student community to address civic engagement and social justice issues throughout North America. She currently sits on the Board of Advisors for the United Vietnamese Students' Association of Eastern Canada.

Tony Fang, Ph.D.

Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Cultural and Economic Transformation
Memorial University

Tony Fang is the Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Economic and Cultural Transformation at Memorial University of Newfoundland and an adjunct Professor with the University of Toronto. Currently he holds the J. Robert Beyster Faculty Fellowship at Rutgers University and sits on a World Bank's Expert Advisory Committee on Migration and Development. Prior to joining Memorial, he was the Director of Master of International Business Program at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. He served as the President of the Chinese Economists Society (2012-13) and the Domain Leader at CERIS, Ontario Metropolis Centre (2009-12). He was a visiting professor at Harvard University and NBER, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, City University of Hong Kong, University of Macau, Tsinghua University, Fudan University, and Southwest University of Finance and Economics. In 2017, he was made a Fellow of Royal Society of Arts (FRSA).

Professor Fang has a Ph.D. in Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management from the University of Toronto. His areas of research interest encompass issues of immigration, diversity, and cultural changes, high performance workplace practices, pension, retirement policy and the ageing workforce, minimum wages and youth employment, union impact on wages, innovation and firm growth, pay equity and employment equity. He has published in such journals as *Strategic Management Journal*, *Industrial and Labor Relations Review (Cornell)*, *Industrial Relations (Berkeley)*, *British Journal of Industrial Relations (LSE)*, *Relations industrielles/Industrial Relations*, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *International Migration*, *Canadian Journal of Economics*, *Canadian Public Policy*, *China Economic Review*, *Review of Development Economics*, *Asian Economic Papers*, *Journal of Economic*



Psychology, Journal of World Business, Asian Business and Management, Journal of Labor Research, IZA Journal of Labour Policy, IZA World of Labour, International Journal of Manpower, Journal of Management History, and Social Indicators Research. He has also received 15 research awards from SSHRC and 5 research grants HRSDC.

Manikantan P Chandrasekharan

Rural Employment Initiative Participant
Sault Ste. Marie

My name is Manikantan P Chandrasekharan (Mani). I was born in a coastal town in the state of Tamil Nadu on India's southern tip named Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin). I completed my bachelor's degree in Manufacturing Engineering from BMS college of Engineering in Bangalore, India and my post-graduation in Computer Integrated Manufacturing from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

After completing my post-graduation, I returned to India and joined Autoliv, leader in automotive safety systems. After the spinoff, I was moved to Veoneer, leader in automotive safety electronics. In the same year, I decided to complete my course on Project Management and was certified as a Project Management Professional by Project Management Institute.

The advantages of better education for my children, better work-life balance, better air to breathe, multi-cultural environment and better prospects for me and my wife led to my decision to move to Canada. I then started my process of applying for permanent residency through express entry. I received my ITA in January of 2019 and my CoPR in June 2019 and I did my soft-landing in Toronto in July 2019.

After finding a residence to stay in Mississauga with the help of my friends, I decided to bring my family to join me, and they arrived in August 2019. My wife could get a job immediately and she started to work at a senior living community as a recruiter. I landed in a Project Management job in an automotive company in February 2020.

I had approached the Newcomer Center of Peel (NCP) in October 2019 and they explained me of the opportunities that existed in the Rural and Northern community of Ontario. They also gave me the opportunity to participate in a job fair organized by them wherein I could meet various prospective employers and government representatives who gave insights of their community and job opportunities. I also learnt that the cost of living was much lesser in comparison with bigger cities like Mississauga. This led to my decision to move to the Northern community.

NCP shared my resume to City of Sault Ste Marie and Mr. Paul from the city helped me in forwarding my resume to my current employer Heliene. After joining Heliene in March 2020, I received help from Sault Career Community center to find an accommodation. The city also helped me by providing free bus pass for 12 rides and other goodies by which I felt most welcoming. My family moved to Soo in June 2020.



We found a school for my children closer to our residence. My family enjoys exploring various trails and beaches that are in close proximity to Soo. Although the winter is harsh in the north, the air with much lesser pollution, smaller time to commute has encouraged us to stay in Soo.

In my opinion in-order to attract more talents, the city could consider the settlement of the whole family instead of just a member of the family. For example, in my case, after moving to Soo, my wife still could not get an opportunity that matches her profile, we did not get any assistance on referring to a family doctor and help in getting admission to a school for my children.

Tetiana Miminoshvili

Immigration Experience
Morden Manitoba

My name is Tetiana Miminoshvili and I am from Ukraine. I am 30 years old, my family and I landed in Canada in July, 26 in 2020 via MPNP program. I live in Morden, Manitoba and working as a programming manager in a library. I can speak 4 languages: English, French, Russian and Ukrainian.

My education:

- Master Degree in Philology , 2010 – 2011 Major: French and Language & Literature Donetsk National University, [Ukraine]	- Bachelor Degree in Philology , 2006 – 2010 Major: French Donetsk National University, [Ukraine]
Master of Business Administration , 2015 – 2016 Swiss Montreux Business School, [Switzerland]	

I am overcoming the challenges of settlement in Canada and this is something I went through with deep personal experience.

I am sure I can give a lot of motivation, support, and enthusiasm to those who are coming to our community and to Canada as well. I can inspire and fill with positive promising energy other newcomers and immigrants.

