



*Governing Urban Diversity:  
Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today's Hyper-diversified Cities*

## **Urban Policies on Diversity in Toronto, Canada**

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## 1. Introduction

Dominant narratives and discourses of diversity in Toronto have for long been predominantly based on ethnic origin and immigration due to the migration history and tradition in Canada which is increasingly reliant on immigration for population and labour market growth (Wayland, 2006). However, despite the dominance of policies which target immigrants, settlement and inclusion of newcomers, and ethnic diversity, discourses related to ‘invisible’ diversities (gender, disability, age, education, etc.) are also strongly noticeable in the policy context, giving an *all-inclusive* meaning to diversity policy in Canada. The present report aims towards unravelling the dominant discourses that exist in Toronto regarding diversity and how these discourses manifest themselves in existing policies and programs.

In Canada, national and city level diversity policies are often very different, although discourses at the federal level have an important impact upon city and even community-level efforts in addressing diversity in Toronto. A number of important shifts have taken place at the federal level with regards to diversity policy in the recent years when the Stephen Harper-led Conservative Party won the 2006 federal elections. These shifts include increased decentralization of administrative and financial responsibilities, cut-backs to federal funding of social programs, introduction of conservative values in public social services (especially concerning health issues, women and newcomers), changes in the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP), and immigration policy, all of which have impacted policies at the local level (Russo, 2008; Caron and La Forest, 2009). Considering the important role of the private enterprises in the governance structure dealing with newcomer settlement and social services, these changes may strengthen the dependency of newcomers on the ‘settlement sector’.

Governance of diversity in Toronto demonstrates a number of special characteristics. First of all, a *pluralist approach to diversity* is dominant in the policy context. At the federal level policy makers have been moving away from discourses purely based on ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘ethnicity’ towards broader discourses like ‘equity’ and ‘equal access’ for everyone. Complementary to this tendency, there is a considerable effort to design policy instruments ‘to address individual uniqueness’<sup>1</sup> at the city level. This helps to recognize the complexity of individual identities in the city. Parallel to this tendency, and on the contrary to the European perception, ‘integration’ is not just used in the policy context to refer to the settlement process of newcomers. It is an inclusion process aiming towards everyone, not only newcomers, by highlighting strengths of individuals, and eliminating barriers to accessing services and to civic participation. This kind of social inclusion ‘*is about everyone and to the extent that social inclusion is facilitated for those at most risk of exclusion, it is facilitated for all Canadians*’ (Ogilvie, 2013: 17). Secondly, Toronto appears to use an *asset-based approach* towards governing its diversity. It means that governmental and non-governmental actors organize their efforts in line with benefiting from the positive contributions of diverse groups, by building on the assets in the community, and by mobilizing individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to build on them. This is opposed to focusing on the negative issues surrounding different groups and concentrating merely on their needs. However, despite the positive intentions, the tendency towards an *instrumental approach* to pluralism is also recognisable in Toronto where diversity may serve as a ‘marketable asset’ in this context (Boudreau et al., 2009: 86). Thirdly, governance of diversity represents a *comprehensive system*. Despite increasing fragmentation and decentralisation tendencies in the current governance system, there is a certain ‘interconnectedness’ between different layers of governance concerning the implementation of diversity related policies that serve newcomers and other diverse groups.

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<sup>1</sup> The focus on ‘individual uniqueness’ is about respecting multiple and complex identities of individuals rather than a third-way European approach of ‘self-responsibilization’ of citizens.

Moreover, the ‘embeddedness’ of newcomer related discourses in diverse layers of governance also helps decision-makers to develop comprehensive policies concerning diversity. It means that while each level of governance in Canada is predominantly pre-occupied with policies concerning newcomers and settlement policies<sup>2</sup>, Toronto adopts a pluralist diversity approach which encompasses a wide array of policy categories including seniors, youth, women, LGBTQ<sup>3</sup> people, the urban poor, ethnic groups, disabled people, aboriginal peoples and the homeless.

Our research involved 23 semi-structured interviews, conducted during October-November 2013 in Toronto, with selected stakeholders from diverse layers of governance (Appendix 1)<sup>4</sup>. A critical discourse analysis was conducted to find out dominant governmental and non-governmental narratives and discourses in policies for diversity/recognition of multiple voices to meet their needs; in policies to create encounter to offer opportunities for increased sociality; and policies for redistribution of resources to redress disadvantage. The report is structured around four main sections. Following the introduction, the institutional context and governance structure with regards to diversity in Toronto are explained in the second section, followed by a historical overview of national Canadian policy discourses in relation to diversity. Thereafter we provide an analysis of first hand data gathered during the fieldwork period as well as policy documents. Lastly, conclusions are drawn based on the findings of the analysis to unravel the dominant discourses in relation to diversity in policies and programs across the governmental as well as non-governmental sectors.

## 2. Overview of the political system and governance structure in Toronto

### 2.1. Organisational Structure of Canadian Urban Diversity

With over 2 million inhabitants, Toronto is Canada’s largest and most complicated metropolis, as its municipal government possesses decentralised, dense and complex interactions with other levels of government (federal and provincial) as well as local actors (Horak & Young, 2012). The City of Toronto compared to other municipalities, has a different administrative structure; and enjoys greater legislative authority, more fiscal resources, and inclusion in provincial and federal policy processes in relation to municipal and urban matters (Horak, 2007).

Within the framework of *comprehensive governance* approach, diversity is not a stand-alone policy field and is interconnected with numerous other areas such as the economy, foreign affair or education (see Figure 2.1). Our interviews confirmed the interconnectedness between diverse levels of governance both financially and structurally. Supplementary to the state actors, a wide range of non-state actors and NGOs participate on all levels of governance by passing information, critique and policy recommendations on to the administrations. Moreover, it is important to note that Canadian diversity policy tends to go beyond immigration as there exists a broader understanding of diversity which includes notions such as age, gender, ethnicity, individual needs, sexuality, etc. At the federal level, The Department of Citizenship and Immigration (CIC) is mainly responsible for the multiculturalism policy as well as the Canadian Immigrant Investor Program, which promotes the immigration of business people and their families and enables them to obtain resident status in Canada. The CIC also collaborates with the Immigrant and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB), which is an independent, administrative tribunal. The Canadian Ethno cultural Council (CEC) is also connected to the CIC. Created initially by the federal government in 1971 as a committee to provide policy advice on multiculturalism, the

<sup>2</sup> ‘Settlement’, which emerged as an important sector in the urban economy (Horak & Young, 2012), refers to the process that a newcomer passes through upon arrival.

<sup>3</sup> LGBTQ stands for “Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer”

CEC today represents the interests of more than 30 national ethno-cultural organisations. Another primary actor in the diversity policy field is the Canadian Department of Heritage, which is mainly involved in projects around cultural diversity and rights. Nevertheless, generally federal expenditures on immigration and diversity issues remain relatively low (Andrew & Hima, 2011).

The structural changes and welfare cuts initiated by the progressive conservatives in mid-1990s continued when the new Harper government implemented reforms in 2008. These reforms were in line with privileging economic objectives over other immigration goals which heightened the immigration minister's discretionary authority to hand-pick economic immigrants by bypassing the department's own lengthy and complicated selection procedures (see next section). At the provincial level, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration collaborates with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration over matters and projects related to diversity and immigration. Additionally, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Service, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment are also involved in diversity matters. The settlement services for newcomers in Ontario are co-managed whereas the federal government is responsible for the funding. Moreover, the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement includes a provision to involve municipalities in the planning and debates over immigration and settlement, which marks the first time that all three administrative levels cooperate to fulfil the needs of immigrants. At the municipal level, the most relevant Standing Policy Committee as part of the City Council concerning diversity is the Community Development & Recreation Committee, which focuses especially on social cohesion and recommends policy initiatives to strengthen local communities (Good, 2005). Public-private partnerships (PPP) play an important role in the implementation of diversity policies, particularly by linking diversity to economic advantages (i.e. the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), the Toronto Local Immigrant Partnerships (LIPs), and the Toronto City Summit Alliance). The City's business elite in particular has had increasing influence upon multilevel policy processes in recent years (Horak and Young, 2012). Lastly, the community-based sector plays a key role in implementing programs and providing services at the city as well as community levels. Non-governmental actors such as charitable non-profit organisations, private foundations, and community-based agencies are thereby highly involved in programs related to diversity matters.

## 2.2. Key shifts in national discourses to policy over migration, citizenship and diversity

Canada has a longstanding policy framework regarding immigration and a long history of welcoming newcomers. Since the very founding of Canada, which was achieved through the appropriation of Aboriginal land resources, immigration policies have been central to the production of the Canadian nation (Thobani, 2000). Evidently, in-migration has fluctuated considerably over the past century and the most significant spikes have occurred in the 1910s, the post-war immigration boom of 1950s, and later by the close of the 20th century. Within the Canadian immigration policy, two pro-dominant principles of admission can be identified namely *economic contribution*; and *family reunification*, the latter of which only came to be clearly defined in the late 1960s. The removal of national origin as a criterion of admission, and the introduction of a system, which assigned points based upon notions such as education, age, language skills, and economic characteristics of applicants, also took place in those years. The upholding of the formerly mentioned principles by the immigration policy had an important impact upon the composition of the immigrant population as it entailed that applicants from all nations, particularly non-traditional immigration source countries, had the chance of being admitted once they met the new criteria. It further allowed for the entry of refugees from non-European countries as the new strands of policy also incorporated humanitarian-based admissions (Boyd and Vickers, 2000).

The point system (entrenched in the Immigration Act of 1967-1977) classified immigration under two main categories, the independent and family classes. Subsequently selection criteria for the former category were based on levels of education and occupation and on kinship ties for the latter (Thobani, 2000). The complete overview of the dominant national policy discourse and agenda in relation to in-migration, citizenship (integration/assimilation) and diversity is provided in Table 2.1. In line with the change in the population composition of Canada and the increasing cultural diversity due to in-migration flows, in 1971 the federal government adopted a formal multiculturalism policy, declaring multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian society. The policy recognised the equal contribution and entitlement to rights, privileges and powers, of all Canadians (by birth or by choice) regardless of their gender, race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion, and further confirmed the rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada (Department of Justice, 1985). In 1988, Parliament passed the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, which provided a legal framework to guide federal responsibilities and duties with regards to multiculturalism. (Fleras & Kunz, 2001 as cited by Hyman et al., 2011).

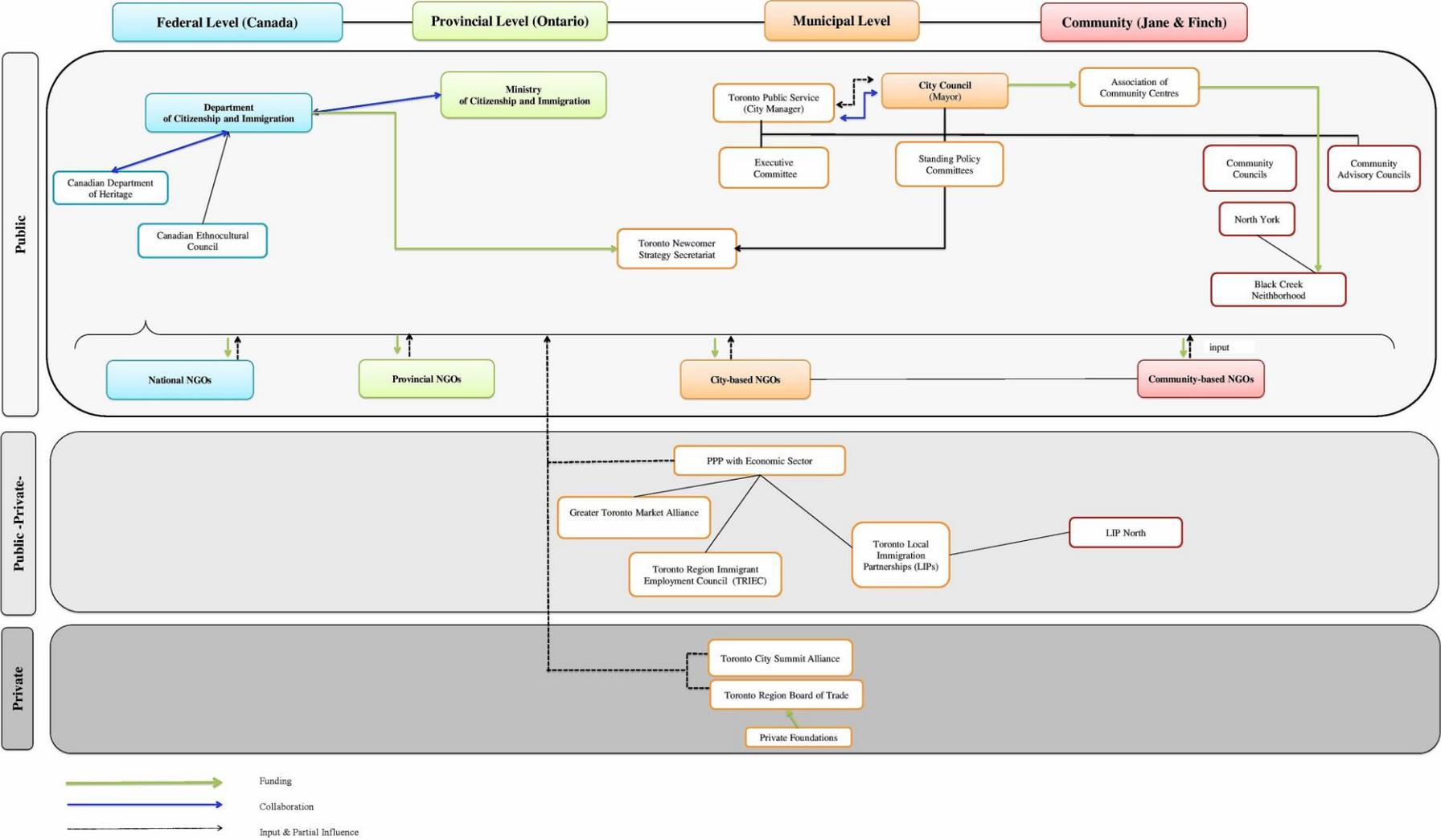
Few notions worthy of being addressed with regards to the Canadian post-war immigration policy are as follows: Firstly, special-interest groups (such as immigrant lobby groups) have evidently had considerable impact upon shaping government immigration policy (Green and Green, 1995). Secondly, prior to the 1990s, Canada adjusted in-flows based on the nation's absorptive capacity. Subsequently, immigration policy was designed with short-term goals in mind. In contrast, during the 1990s immigration policy was tailored to promote longer-term growth regardless of the perceived state of the economy at the time. (Grant and Sweetman, 2004). In the late 1990s, the Canadian government launched an extensive legislative review regarding immigration policies, which re-emphasized the objective of enriching through immigration the cultural and social fabric of Canada and further called for the reinforcement of the family class as the cornerstone of Canada's immigration program. (CIC, 1998) The recommendations within the document, particularly those in relation to the family class, sponsorship<sup>5</sup> and spousal immigration fuelled many public debates and active criticism – especially by women's organisations and female advocacy groups. Examples of proposed changes include reducing the sponsorship period from 10 to 3 years, increasing the enforcement of the sponsorship agreement, suspending the sponsorship agreement in cases where sponsors are convicted for crimes of violence and/or spousal, physical or psychological abuse, and recognizing common law and same-sex couples as eligible candidates for sponsorship (Walton-Roberts, 2004; Thobani, 1999).

In 2001, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, anti-terrorist measures and security-related policy apparatus were reinforced swiftly in Canada as well as many other states. In fall 2011, Bill C-11: The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) was passed by Parliament which evinced a considerable concern with matters related to security (Adelman, 2002). It further elevated the standards for eligibility and provided the citizenship and immigration minister with more authority with regards to immigrant and non-citizen detention. Bill C-31 received considerable criticism regarding its redefinition of the status and right of entry of permanent residents; the lack of judicial review for permanent residents and refugee claimants; the 'raise' of barriers for access to the refugee determination process; and the increased reliance on administrative discretion (Russo, 2008: 299). Furthermore, the provided for immigration law to become the focus of Canada's anti-terrorism efforts, particularly due to the fact that it allows procedural short-cuts and a considerable degree of secrecy, one which would normally not be tolerated in criminal law.

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<sup>5</sup> Sponsorship refers to a procedure which allows people to immigrate to Canada in order to join their families without having to meet the usual selection criteria. (Coté, Kérisit, & Coté, 2001)

Figure 2.1. Institutional Map of Toronto Concerning Urban Diversity (including the community level in the case study neighbourhood)



*Changes in diversity policies*

The Harper government's changes were driven by traditional values and a new economic agenda, which directly and indirectly influenced the diversity policies. These included disproportionately marginalizing women and perpetuating gender-based inequalities (Butula, 2010), decentralisation and financial cut-backs, etc. However, the shifts in newcomer policy have dominated the changes. Furthermore, the events of September 11th marked a shift towards the reinforcement and legislation of security through immigration laws. As Russo (2008) contends, the previous two decades have witnessed the reshaping of the approach towards Canadian immigration from building citizenship to importing labour resources and economic capital, to protecting state security (a shift towards thinking about diversity and order). Harper government continued to call for increased limits upon immigration. Moreover, some controversial measures were introduced to limit public health care for many refugee applicants; cut back on family reunification programs; limitations over settlement funding; cancellations of applications (Ibbitson, 2012); increasing the selectiveness in immigration process; the introduction of a new and more thorough citizenship test; the banning of veils, *burqas* and *niqabs* at citizenship ceremonies; and the introduction of additional language requirements for the citizenship applications, etc. Since 2006 deportation proceedings against illegal workers have accelerated, high profile deportation actions have increased, and the integration of security, intelligence and immigration agencies has re-emerged as a focal point in federal decision-making. In March 2008, Immigration Bill C-50 was introduced which was heavily criticised on a number of grounds; namely favouring efficiency at the expense of fairness (as it proposed reducing immigration queue by rejecting more applications to prevent further backlog), granting too much discretionary power to the Immigration Minister and creating a closed and non-transparent immigration system (See Russo, 2008). While the federal government maintains a significant steering capacity and remains partially in control over aspects of the process (such as overall levels of admissions and security regulations), provinces have increasingly become significant, autonomous players (separation of powers). Moreover, supported by the economic crisis, the Harper government implemented budget cutbacks, which had a direct impact on policy priorities for communities or neighbourhoods at the city level (Toronto Star, 2013).

***Overview of dominant policy themes***

We build on Syrett and Sepulveda (2012)'s framework to analyse Canadian diversity policies' evolution (Table 2.1). Prior to the 1960s in-migrant admissions were regulated on the basis of national origin and immigrants' rights to sponsor family members to enter Canada were hardly addressed by policy. Thus, economically motivated immigration was the sole primary immigration category defined within the highly selective policy framework. The policy type during this period could thereby best be referred to as guest-worker policy. The 1970s and 1980s arguably witnessed a shift towards a more pluralist policy discourse as the introduction of a formal 'multiculturalism' policy, the Multiculturalism Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Employment Equity Act entrenched the concept of multiculturalism within the Canadian institutional body and contributed to the establishment of a more diverse Canadian identity. Notwithstanding the recent changing trends regarding welcoming newcomers observed in policy, Canada remains one of the most hyper-diversified states in the world. The overall approach towards diversity within the Canadian policy framework over the past decades proves rather 'pluralist' as its multiculturalism policies together with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms have sought to recognize cultural difference, encourage and remove barriers towards civic participation of all societal members, and nurture a more inclusive sense of national 'Canadian' identity and a hyper-diversity of ethnicities, cultures and religions (Banting, 2010). The tone of the new wave of policies and the approach to diversity as a public relations strategy (Boudreau, 2009), put forward by the conservatives, however, may continue to pose a threat to sustaining Canada's pluralist approach towards diversity in the long run.

**Table 2.1. Summary of Core Changes Regarding Diversity and Immigration Policies**

	<b>Event/Act</b>	<b>Dominant discourse</b>	<b>Objective with regards to diversity</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>1967-1977</b>	Immigration Act	Economic contribution, Family reunification, Removal of national origin as a criterion for admission	Proper definition and addressing of family-based immigration, Removal of race and country-based immigration criteria	Significant increase in inflow from non-traditional source countries, Increase in immigrants sponsoring family members and family reunifications in Canada
<b>1978</b>	The new Immigration Act	Family reunification, Admission based on humanitarian grounds	Facilitate the reunion of residents with close family members; Fulfil legal obligations towards refugees; development of a strong economy.	Organisation of immigration into 3 categories: family class, independent class, & refugee. Significant increase in number of refugees, third-world peoples & family class. Racialization and gendering of immigration categories.
<b>1982</b>	The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms	Multiculturalism and diversity	End discrimination on a series of prescribed grounds. Entrench the concept of multiculturalism in the Constitution.	Enhancement of rights and security for immigrants, racial minorities, women, persons with disabilities, etc.
<b>1982</b>	Immigration reforms	Economic goals and absorptive capacity	The shutdown of immigration flows and tightening of standards for the independent category.	Focus on short-term economic goals and absorptive capacity concerns. Cutbacks regarding in-flows for the following four years.
<b>1986</b>	The Employment Equity Act	Equality and diversity in hiring	More open and flexible hiring of women, visible minorities, Aboriginals and persons with disabilities.	Increased equality and integration in employment.
<b>1986</b>	Immigration reforms	Immigrants' demographic characteristics for long-term economic development	Removal of the prerequisite of arranged employment for the independent category & opening up inflows.	Shift towards more long-term demographic goals. Significant increase in inflow.
<b>1988</b>	The Multi-Culturalism Act	Multiculturalism and diversity	The requirement of all federal departments to reflect over Canadian diversity and multicultural policies.	Increased emphasis upon Multi-culturalism, diversity and equality for all.
<b>2001</b>	9/11, Bill C-11: The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act	Security and anti-terrorist measures	Elevation of the standards for eligibility, Increased authority for the citizenship and immigration minister regarding to immigrant and non-citizen detention.	Increasing focus upon security and anti-terrorism efforts within immigration policy. Reinforcement and legislation of security through immigration laws.
<b>2008</b>	Bill C-50: Revisions to the IRPA	Economic contribution	Reduction of waiting periods by rejecting more applications to prevent backlog, New discretionary power granted to the Immigration minister.	Favouring of economic values over humanitarian values. Prioritisation of immigration applicants on the basis of their ability to fulfil the needs of the Canadian job market.
<b>2008-present</b>	Immigration and Refugee reforms under Harper	Security, war on terrorism, selective migration	Increased selectiveness in immigration processes. Introduction of a new and more complicated citizenship test in 2010 and additional language requirements.	Immigration system increasingly framed based on a 'vague war on terrorism'. Higher detention rates of refugee claimants (Russo, 2008).

### 3. Critical analysis of policy strategies in Toronto and assessment of resource allocations

#### 3.1. Dominant governmental discourses of urban policy and diversity

*Pluralist approach to diversity in Toronto*

In Toronto, where 50 per cent of the population is comprised of people born outside of Canada, increasing diversity has been one of the region’s most striking characteristics and a well-embraced notion in its policy practices. The rhetoric around diversity appears to occupy a considerable space in mainstream conversations held among a wide array of stakeholders in Toronto (i.e. at the City office in line with city branding strategies as Toronto’s motto ‘diversity our strength’ clearly suggests; or in management and leadership for building a strong corporate sector, or from a social equity standpoint among community-based NGOs, social service providers, academics, private foundations, etc.). Diversity policies exist at different levels of governance and address a wide array of issues, as there is a broader understanding of diversity, which does not target merely newcomers but a diverse range of groups and individuals (i.e. seniors, youth, women, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities the homeless, aboriginal peoples, etc.).

*“In Europe the issue is perceived as how do you make the other more like us, or our perception of the other more like us. Toronto and the Canadian system as a whole have come up with a different approach. In other places assimilation is about ‘leave your baggage at the door’. We [in Toronto] are our baggage. That is who we are! And how do you integrate baggage or everything we bring to life from the other places in the world that we have come from? And given that the world is now on the move, every year there are more people leaving their home country, looking for something better, how do you deal with the fact that diversity now is all about different types of baggage”?* [Respondent 14, 29 October 2013]

Using Fincher & Iveson (2008)’s analytical framework, the following 3 categories of policies (based on Iveson and Fincher, 2010) and several targeted objectives related to social cohesion, social mobility and economic performance can be highlighted in Toronto (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1. Category of diversity related policies, targeted policy objectives, and dominant discourses**

Category of policies	Examples of Policies	Targeted objective(s)	Dominant discourses
<b>Policies for diversity /recognition of multiple voices to meet their needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toronto Newcomer Initiative</li> <li>• Toronto Newcomer Strategy</li> <li>• Welcome Policy</li> <li>• Action for Neighbourhood Change (ANC)</li> <li>• Ontario's Youth Action Plan</li> <li>• Ontario’s Action Plan for Seniors</li> <li>• Aging at Home Strategy</li> <li>• Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative</li> <li>• Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act</li> <li>• Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO)</li> <li>• Employment Training for Abused/At Risk Women</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Women in Skilled Trades and Information Technology Training</li> <li>• Women of Courage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social cohesion (primarily)</li> <li>• Socio-economic opportunities and social mobility (primarily)</li> <li>• Economic performance (as a consequence)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising individual uniqueness</li> <li>• Equal access</li> <li>• Meeting the needs of everyone</li> <li>• Interconnectedness of issues</li> </ul>

<p><b>Policies to create encounter to offer opportunities for increased sociality</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation Service Plan</li> <li>• Community Gardens Program</li> <li>• Toronto Community Recreation Centres</li> <li>• Priority Centres</li> <li>• Community Hubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social cohesion (primarily)</li> <li>• Socio-economic opportunities and social mobility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing social interactions between diverse people</li> <li>• Creation of accessible and flexible community spaces</li> <li>• Increasing communication</li> <li>• Increasing accessibility to information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policies for redistribution of resources to redress of disadvantage</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Priority Neighbourhoods Strategy</li> <li>• Partners for Access and Identification (PAID)</li> <li>• Ontario Works</li> <li>• Toronto Enterprise Fund</li> <li>• Financial Literacy Strategy</li> <li>• Ontario's After-School Program</li> <li>• Pathways to Education</li> <li>• Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative</li> <li>• Micro-lending for Women in Ontario Program</li> <li>• Ontario Trillium Benefit</li> <li>• Ontario Senior Homeowners' Property Tax Grant</li> <li>• Elder Abuse Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-economic opportunities and social mobility (primarily)</li> <li>• Economic performance (primarily)</li> <li>• Social cohesion (as a consequence)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broader approach to diversity</li> <li>• Access to services</li> <li>• Increasing opportunities</li> </ul>

*Dominant diversity discourses in the core policies*

Earlier it was noted that diversity in Canada cannot be treated as a stand-alone policy theme given that it is very much integrated into various fields addressed and supported by different layers of government. In general, the social services in Canada are to a large extent contracted out to the charitable, non-profit sector. Notwithstanding the dependence of Canadian agencies upon government funding which creates the risk of “*becoming purely government contractors taking on a specific piece of work the government wants you to do and doing it exactly how the government wants you to do it!*” [Respondent 13, 25 October 2013] as one settlement worker rightfully contends, the involvement of non-profit and social enterprises has brought about a tremendous opportunity for identifying needs at the local level, building strong foundations for collaboration among different non-governmental and governmental stakeholders, and creating resilience in social service provision especially in times of austerity and financial constraint. The *embeddedness* of diversity in practice across various fields is another factor contributing to this effort. As stressed by the director of Social Policy Analysis and Research at the City of Toronto;

*“It is more powerful when it [addressing diversity] is actually embedded and expected within natural course of your work. There is the dedicated staff to move some of these pieces but it is much more powerful and on some level more difficult to eliminate. Because when you set up a structure it is an easy target politically if we are going through cost reductions”.*  
[Respondent 9, 17 October 2013]

Subsequently at the city level, access and diversity-related issues are addressed through practices launched and supported by different divisions ranging from social services including Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Public Health, Childcare, Employment and Social Services, Toronto Newcomer Office, Social policy analysis and research, etc. to the administrative cluster which includes the City Deputy Manager’s office. City of Toronto consists of three over-arching clusters: Cluster A is the social economic cluster that serves people as clients with emergency services thrown in; cluster B is the corporate support; and cluster C is the hard services such as transportation and planning. At the high administrative level, cluster C plays an important role in

coordinating all the various divisions, ensuring focus around access and diversity issues through auditing action plans consisting of yearly updates from each city division. Diversity-related city practices in cluster A include a variety of place-based, issue-based, individually-based or integrated approaches. Considering the complexity and the variety of ways in which diversity may manifest itself in Toronto, many of these practices do not focus attention on one specific area. However, there still seems to be a strong tendency towards shedding light on issues surrounding newcomers and their integration into Canadian society.

Another critical point is that at the federal level, there has been a recent shift in the focus of immigration policy from building citizenship to importing economic capital (Russo, 2008), thus making it easy to highlight the positive economic contribution of newcomers. Such approach remains *asset-based* so long as there is a need for the involvement of immigrants in the labour market. In Toronto, however, the *asset-based* approach goes above and beyond recognizing short-term economic contributions of newcomers (which is the dominant discourse at the federal level presently) to address diversity in its broader sense. It is further crucial to note that recognizing the asset in diversity is by no means to undermine the complex and ‘compounded’ challenges many newcomers face in settling and achieving meaningful participation in Toronto as a Community Development Manager emphasized:

*“If you are a young person and a newcomer and come to the labour market, you face a lot of challenges anyway which are then compounded sometimes by where you live, what colour you are, what language you speak and where you got your education. [...] the inclusion is seen increasingly as not just a social, but a critical economic factor, people have to be included in the labour market and we have to increase opportunity by addressing these other sometimes structural, sometimes episodic challenges that create a compounded barrier for specific Torontonians. So we are trying to get away from the words clients and social assistance recipients and just talk about job seekers and then try and figure out how do we work with specific groups of job seekers to provide the opportunities as clearly and cleanly as we can”.*  
[Respondent 16, 30 October 2013]

Additionally, the diversity in Toronto also resonates in the composition of the city staff as well as in many other agencies serving the city population, which in turn has resulted in increased assets and flexibility in service provision. To provide an example, language has been a fundamental area of concern in serving Toronto’s diverse population since the beginning of the 1980s. But it is widely evident that the City staff members have become more representative of the diversity in the region meaning that on the service identification and provision side, people can actually communicate in a broader range of languages. This has reduced the need for external language-related services and further resulted in enhanced flexibility in City agencies. Diversity in staff composition is widespread even to a greater extent in the charitable and community-based sector as increasing attention has been paid to hiring staff from the community where the agency is based. There is, however, consensus that representativeness of staff has not yet reached the higher official and corporate levels [Respondent 16, 30 October 2013].

Within this *comprehensive* policy context we have come across multiple categories of policies concerning marginalised groups, not only immigrants, and their access to services. Our field research revealed broader categories of policies including seniors, youth, women, LGBTQ people, the urban poor, ethnic groups, disabled people, newcomers and immigrants, aboriginal peoples and the homeless. This effort, as one respondent from the City of Toronto’s Community Development indicated, is more about ‘inclusion’:

*“Everyone is diverse and how do we as an organization make sure that everyone is part of what we do not just this or that group. We often use the terminology ‘equity seeking groups’ to address these groups and it is the LGBT community, as it is people with disabilities as it is newcomers, etc. It is about equity and access and ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to participate.”* [Respondent 2, 15 October 2013]

This *pluralist* approach eliminates the insider-outsider mechanisms in the society and thereby differs from a typical integration approach wherein people are required to fulfil certain expectations or the relationship between diverse groups are systematised. Subsequently several policies at national, local and community level have been implemented to deal with the needs of diverse groups and their better access to services. In the following section we provide an overview of diversity-related policies in Toronto addressing social cohesion, social mobility and economic performance by means of creating recognition of diverse voices and needs, creating spaces of encounter and redistribution of resources, respectively.

*Dominant discourses in policies for diversity/ recognition of multiple voices to meet their needs*

As mentioned earlier, a group of diversity policies in Toronto aspire to address the specific needs of diverse groups and individuals. Such pluralist policies particularly strive for enhancing social cohesion and increasing social mobility among different groups by means of the services they provide and further recognize and address individual uniqueness. In many policy documents and strategies, this broader approach to diversity is visible, no matter what the focus of the document is. For instance, quite a wide range of categories are considered by the Stepping Up strategy of Ontario Children and Youth Services while mentioning the barriers and challenges for diverse groups of youth including ‘*racialised youth, newcomer youth, Aboriginal youth, youth with disabilities or special needs, youth in and leaving care, francophone youth, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit and queer (LGBTQ) youth, youth living in rural and remote communities, youth from low-income families and youth in conflict with the law*’ (Stepping Up, 2013: 5). Moreover, ‘*equal access*’ and ‘*meeting the needs of everyone*’, are common discourses that can be observed in policy documents concerning recognition of multiple voices.

In addition to the policies that aim towards providing equal access for everyone, there are some policies that are especially designed to increase the access of specific groups. The Access, Equity and Human Rights Action Plan of the City of Toronto, for instance, falls into the ‘access for everyone’ category with strategic directions including political leadership, advocacy, economic participation, public education and awareness, service delivery, building strong communities, and accountability for everyone (Work Book, 2004: 5). At the municipal government level, using the ‘diversity our strength’ discourse, some concrete steps were taken within the framework of the Action Plans to formalise practices for ‘*servicing a diverse population; providing accessibility to City services and facilities; strengthening communities; and establishing benchmarks to be used in evaluation, monitoring and accountability*’ (Work Book, 2004: 1). There are also other specific policies that aim to meet the needs of specific groups.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> For instance, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005, amended in 2009) aims to not only enforce accessibility but also to increase their involvement in the development of the accessibility standards. Moreover, the amendment of Civil Marriage Act on 2005 aimed not only the recognition of same-sex marriage but also the equal treatment in regards to benefits and obligations owing. With regards to LGBT health and well-being, the government of Ontario has funded Rainbow Health Ontario (RHO), a province-wide program that works to improve the health and well-being of LGBT people in Ontario via provision of health services, education, research, and public policy advocacy. Another recent step forward taken towards addressing the needs and rights of gender and sexual minorities has been the passing of the Accepting Schools Act, known as Bill 13 which amends the Education Act which underscores that sexual assault, gender-based violence and homophobia

As indicated earlier, despite the pluralist approach to broader diversity, recognising the multiple voices of newcomers to meet their needs is a very visible policy discourse, dominating the urban diversity policies. It is not surprising that many efforts in line with addressing diversity in Toronto concentrate upon *newcomer settlement* as a major area of focus.<sup>7</sup> At the municipal level, many of these newcomer oriented services are steered by an over-arching committee called the Toronto Newcomer Office (TNO) which plays an important organisational role in facilitating and collaborating efforts involving a broad range of city official and non-government agencies. TNO consists of three staff members –a policy development officer and two community development officers, and is fully funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Moreover, the office is in charge of developing and implementing the Toronto Newcomer Strategy (TNS)<sup>8</sup> wherein the following four inter-connected strategic pillars are: Advancing labour market outcomes; promoting and supporting good health; improving access to municipal support; supporting civic engagement and community capacity.

A few observations regarding the objectives of the TNS are worthy of being addressed. Firstly, accommodating newcomers and the ethnic, cultural, socio-demographic is explicitly addressed at city level policy. Newcomer presence and increase is not perceived as a deficit. From a labour force stand point, the federal policy approaches newcomers as complementary to the skills of the domestic labour force, bringing new investment and innovative practices, helping to open trade routes with their countries of origin and enhance cultural diversity (*City of Toronto, 2013*). This actually leads to an *instrumental approach to pluralism*, where newcomers are seen as assets, and evaluated on the basis of their potential contribution to the economy. These federal definitions and perceptions create the grounds on the basis of which city-level policy treats diversity in Toronto, as one respondent from Toronto Social and Employment Services division of the City of Toronto asserts:

*“There are lots of issues associated with that governance perspective. Really the point is that we see ourselves having now two kinds of costumers in a classic workforce development sense. We are trying to define people not as social assistant clients of a welfare program but as job seekers”.* [Respondent 16, 30 October 2013]

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will not be tolerated in Ontario’s elementary and secondary schools. Ontario’s Action Plan for Seniors provides another example which underscores independence, activity and good health as its three primary objectives. By focusing on the development of age-friendly cities, the plan aims to harness the potential and maximize the contributions and participation of seniors. Ontario’s Action Plan for Health Care and the Aging at Home Strategy are also similar examples of province-wide programs which focus upon providing services to address Ontario’s seniors’ needs.

<sup>7</sup> According to the Toronto Newcomer Initiative from 2000-2005 Toronto accommodated 32% of all new immigration to Canada, 56% of immigrants to Ontario and 68% of immigrants to the Toronto Metropolitan Area. During this period Toronto received an additional 449,883 immigrants which indicates that an average of nearly 75,000 newcomers have been arriving in Toronto each year. (*City of Toronto, 2013*)

<sup>8</sup> The Toronto Newcomer Strategy was developed in 2012 as a citywide strategy for coordinating newcomer settlement programs across Toronto. The strategy has three primary components namely the Newcomer Leadership Table (which officially steers interactions among leaders from all three orders of government, the community-based and non-profit sector as well as institutions such as hospitals and school boards in order to address system-wide issues), Local Immigration Partnerships (launched by Citizenship and Immigration Canada in 2009, initially in Ontario and now all across Canada with the mission to identify and implement locally-driven strategic action plans concerning newcomers. The initial Toronto LIPs consisted of a network of 17 neighbourhood-based local planning tables which all focused on areas with high concentration of newcomer residents. The current LIP model consists of four quadrants) and four Strategic Pillars (*City of Toronto, 2012*).

Client vs. job seeker is more of a choice between governance standpoints than it is a matter of definition as the latter clearly points us towards a more asset-based approach in relation to diversity and the reception of newcomers in the job market. While job seeker has agency, potential and will to contribute, a welfare client is vulnerable and requires assistance, thus the consolidation of each discourse in policy and mainstream society alike sets a different tone in how newcomer reception is perceived.

Another important notion regarding the TNS concerns focusing on newcomers as the main point of focus in addressing Toronto's diversity. In Toronto a newcomer would be defined as a non-Canadian foreign-born individual who has recently arrived in the Toronto region (in some definitions less than 6 months) and has intentions of establishing long-term residence in the area. However, across different scales, agencies and programs, there seems to be no consensus or unanimity around one specific definition. Moreover, the conventional definition is controversial in that it falls short in addressing the complexity of settlement processes since the process of settling is never really over and newcomers and Canadians alike may need assistance throughout their lifecycle' (*Toronto Newcomer Initiative, 2010*). It further fails to recognize the presence, needs, and positive contribution of people who are in Toronto for a temporary period as well as the growing number of individuals and families without immigration status or legal documents. The failure in recognition of issues as such has resulted in loop-holes being created in social policy and service provision when it comes to addressing the multi-fold and complex problems surrounding such individuals. To provide an example, one respondent from the non-profit sector shares the following observations with regard to her experiences with live-in caregivers in the Toronto South quadrant:

*"Now if you come as a live-in caregiver, there is a pathway for you to become a permanent resident but 30 years ago there was not. You were basically just a short-term foreign worker. So these are women who came here 30 years ago and they have been working all along but they have mostly been working under the table for the last 30 years. Now they are in their 80s, they have no status in Canada, they have no connections left back home because they have been here for 30 years. Because they have no status, they have no access to health care, and because they are 80, they cannot work as domestics anymore. So they end up often in the city shelters, and the city shelters do not know what to do with them because they can't get them any benefits because they have no status".* [Respondent 12, 25 October 2013]

As mentioned in the quote, in addressing such existing loopholes, many governmental and community-based agencies across the GTA have adopted open door (don't ask, don't tell) policies whereby service is provided to individuals without any requirement of providing proof of legal residence. However, in many cases dependence on government funding limits micro-scaled efforts in line with universal service provision to people regardless of their status.

Earlier it was noted that the four strategic pillars of the Toronto Newcomer Strategy are interconnected as there are strong overlaps evident between the objectives outlined in each pillar and similarly in the existing practices that aim towards fulfilling them. Prior to the establishment of the TNS a set of pilot projects was funded by Citizen and Immigration Canada under the umbrella title of Toronto Newcomer Initiative (TNI). The project, which took place between September 2010 and December 2011, provided the building block for identifying and establishing the TNS pillars and developing a multi-sectoral strategy for serving newcomers. The pilot projects included Settlement Workers in City Facilities; Recreational Programming for Newcomers; Reunification and Adaptation Program; Health Research on Newcomers; and City-Wide Local Immigration Partnership (City of Toronto, 2012).

An interesting characteristic, which can be identified in both the TNI, as well as the more recent TNS, is that both projects are heavily *community-oriented*. Moreover, both programs explicitly voice the need for and importance of *coordinated system planning*, in other words creating and sustaining a collaborative institutional environment whereby City officials, funders, service providers, and Toronto residents are well-connected to each other throughout the ongoing identification, planning and delivery of newcomer-related services. Thus community based organizations play a vital role in identifying needs, implementing programs and providing services at the community level.

Another pertinent topic, which has been brought up by both programs is the *interconnectedness of issues* faced by and matters related to newcomers and more broadly the diversity in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). As one respondent from City of Toronto Cluster A, Employment and Social Services is assertive, this interconnectedness is regarded as an important characteristic of Toronto's governance coordination:

*"From a governance perspective, one of the key responsibilities of the deputy city manager in the new city and challenges was to integrate services in her cluster. So we spent and still continue to spend a significant amount of time thinking about how we can integrate services. [...] there is more paper than reality sometimes but this is the philosophical or conceptual basis for the work we are trying to do".* [Respondent 16, 30 October 2013]

Similarly another City Cluster A representative from Parks, Forestry and Recreation contends:

*"Our effort is to make sure that all of our divisions that are delivering service, be it employment and social services or ourselves or child care or what have you, that we are actually trying to best meet the needs of newcomers. So there are structures that have been set up for us to coordinate amongst ourselves (so the newcomer office). But then there is also this geographic-based planning so we have the LIPs, there are now 5 of them and the newcomer office coordinates them".* [Respondent 2, 15 October 2013]

The Parks, Forestry and Recreation division provides a fascinating case of an agency providing integrated services to diverse groups. When asked about what factors pertain to diversity in Toronto, one former outreach worker and current recreational programmer at the City identifies diversity as having different needs:

*"Often everybody thinks about diversity as a room full of different colours but it is not about that. For me it was recognizing individual diversity and the uniqueness of the individual so how can we address everyone's barriers and not look at diversity as something around colour or gender. For me it was about uniqueness and that's kind of how I see it in the job that I do as well. Like there is a lot of invisible diversity, like the gay and lesbian community for example. How do we address the needs when it is not a diversity that you can see? So I just look at it like everyone is diverse and how do we as an organisation make sure that everyone is part of what we do, not just this or that group".* [Respondent 1, 15 October 2013]

From a governance point of view, the merits of defining diversity in terms of 'individual uniqueness' are multi-fold. First and foremost, it sets out a specific tone and thereby agenda in City diversity policy. Toronto's policy framework aspires to voice and address the diverse needs of individuals as well as the complex barriers they may face throughout their settlement process. It further provides evidence for the recognition of the complexity of the notion of 'diversity' itself. The concept is no longer defined within the boundaries of immigration or in-migration as it

addresses ‘invisible’ diversities (such as gender identity, sexual identity, physical and mental disabilities, etc.).

*Policies to create encounter to offer opportunities for increased sociality*

Another array of diversity-policies in Toronto are designed and delivered in aims of enhancing social cohesion and increasing socio-economic opportunities and mobility through the creation of spaces of encounter and socialisation. The *interconnectedness* between different layers of governance concerning the implementation of diversity related policies is quite present in the implementation of encounter and socialisation targets. Diverse interconnected discourses are visible in the policies at diverse layers of governance, aiming at increasing the opportunities for encounter and sociality. These discourses can be classified under four categories: discourses that perceive creating encounter as ‘*increasing social interactions*’ between diverse people; discourses that approach encounter through the creation of ‘*accessible and flexible community space*’; discourses on increasing ‘*communication*’; and on increasing ‘*access to information*’.

*Increasing social interaction* is targeted by many of the City of Toronto’s Parks, Recreation and Forestry division programs. The division’s Recreation Service Plan, which outlines the City of Toronto’s delivery of recreation programs and services over the course of five years, recognizes increase participation of diverse Toronto residents in recreation as its main aim. Community recreation delivers programs and services across the city in four operational districts and in two main ways: registered programs (i.e. aquatics, camps, sports, After-school Recreation and Care, etc.) and drop-in programs (i.e. Aquatics, fitness and wellness, and skating). Parks, Forestry and Recreation currently operates hundreds of facilities including 134 Community Centres (City of Toronto, 2013).

The hands-on involvement of a City division like Parks, Recreation and Forestry in planning for diversity-related matters is an interesting factor which very well demonstrates the wide-spread scope of official bodies and programs that part take in the design and provision of services catering to diversity in Toronto. Recreation, as our respondents from the City Community development and Recreation further explained, is perceived as a less intimidating and more accessible entry point, or a gateway through which diverse individuals find access to a wide range of services provided by city divisions:

*“We have a physical location in most places and it's recreational, so it is fun-based. So folks will come in there when they may not come in the city hall or some other kind of service where they might have to show identity. You know, it is like that whole welcoming approach that once they're in, there's almost like a hub kind of feeling where there is information on how do I get a job, how about school, how do I do this and that. So it is kind of a place where they enter in often where it is not intimidating and they have the opportunity to get linked to other services”.* [Respondent 1, 15 October 2013]

*Accessible and flexible community space* is perceived by some non-profit sector agencies as an important aspect in increasing encounter and sociality in diverse communities. For example, with the same aim United Way of Toronto has established 7 community hubs across the city, which house 54 community organisations. These hubs offer *accessible and flexible community space* intended for not just formal programs but various uses such as gathering with friends and family, participating and engaging in community activities, accessing health services, and so forth. A recent place-based initiative has been the redevelopment of Regent Park in Toronto throughout which TESS collaborated with the builders, other governmental agencies involved (federal and provincial) as well as City divisions (such as Social Development division of the City) in order to create an accessible community space with the new Aquapark Project, which is open access for

free for all residents, and for the distressed community which has diverse types of disadvantaged or marginalised groups.

*Increasing communication* among diverse people and public authorities is seen as an important aspect to contribute to the encounter between people and the authorities. Toronto Employment and Social Services partnered with the City's Park, Forestry & Recreation, Standards & Innovation department to create a program called *Investing in Families* to easily communicate with people applying for social assistance about recreation activities they may be provided. By locating a community recreation programmer in Social Services Office, the person in need is directly contacted to set up a meeting. Through the program, participating families are provided with access to employment related services and workshops, recreational and leisure activities, literacy supports, health services, and opportunities for social engagement of families in their communities. Moreover, *access to information* is perceived as a key factor in increasing sociality. For instance, collaborations were established between Toronto Public Library, City divisions, and Citizenship and Immigration Canada to serve newcomers by placing settlement services at various library sites since libraries are more common internationally than recreation centres and thereby perceived as more accessible by a wider range of people. Thus, a number of settlement agencies were funded by Citizen and Immigration Canada to deliver on-site services at their local libraries for designated hours throughout the week. Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan of 2012-2015 recognizes the importance of establishing partnerships in order to support and improve service delivery as well as increase access to services for different age groups such as youth and seniors as two of its primary goals.

#### *Policies for redistribution of resources to redress of disadvantage*

Diversity policies in Toronto focus upon redistribution of resources as one of their primary objectives. These policies are dominated by three main category of discourses namely *broader approach to diversity; access to services; and increasing opportunities*. City of Toronto's Employment and Social Services (TESS) is one department, which has been highly involved in the collaborative efforts taking place around implementing such policies at the municipal level. *Broader approach to diversity* is visible in strategic policy documents that aim to increase the economic opportunities of everyone. Subsequently the division's workforce development strategy includes a range of issue-based projects such as programs targeting specific groups such as Aboriginal people, LGBTQ communities, etc. Broad approach to diversity is a cross-cutting approach that repeats in the discourses related to increasing *access to services* and *increasing opportunities* as well.

*Access to services* is usually meant for everyone, but the emphasis is given in the discourses related to marginalised or disadvantaged groups. The Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), for instance aims to improve '*access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing that is linked to flexible support services based on peoples' needs*' (CHPI, 2012: 1). Another notable example which has leveraged resources through partnerships between different layers of government, City of Toronto divisions, charitable and community-based organisations has been the Priority Neighbourhoods strategy. In 2005 the non-profit organisation partnered with City of Toronto to strategically identify 13 priority areas (neighbourhoods with *poor service coverage* –with 21 to 40 per cent of residents within walking distance of service, and *high need* –with population coverage ranges of 20 to 49 per cent lower than city average) in aims of attracting services, resources, and funding towards these inner suburban neighbourhoods (City of Toronto, 2006).

In line with the Priority Neighbourhoods, United Way of Toronto established a strategy called Action for Neighbourhood Change which aimed towards creating capacity for local residents to come together, identify priorities and start coming up with solutions on issues that they recognised as important and further access skills and resources. The Priority Neighbourhoods

strategy has recently been renamed into 'Neighbourhood Improvement Areas' (due to controversy around the possibly stigmatizing connotation of the initial title). Review and neighbourhood consultations are being held at the time of the field research, in order to determine whether the need for attracting services and funding resources in these areas continues to exist. The mentioned policies have played a very important role in terms of bringing resources and funding to programs in less affluent areas in Toronto and have both suffered cut-backs in the recent years. Generally the recent federal cutbacks under the conservative government have generated a great degree of insecurity at the community-based sector with regards to the future of social programs. The revisions regarding the priority neighbourhoods have thus raised many concerns in the target areas among community advocates and service providers as there seems to be an overall tendency towards cutting support for social services across all levels. Budgets for services ranging from child care centres to homeless shelters have been decreased sharply in 2013 (Maguire, 2013). For instance, there are about 22.000 families on the waiting list for subsidized day-care spaces in Toronto, which is a growing list because of this year's budget; and flat-lining this year's budget for shelters means the number of homeless people looking in vain for a bed or a meal will grow as well (ibid, 2013).

Poverty related policies have also been introduced in line with the access to services. Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy, for instance, aims toward breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty by focusing on children and their families. The policy was launched in late 2008 and increased supports and investments in protecting the most vulnerable children and families facing poverty in Ontario. Focusing particularly on school-aged children and youth through investments in Ontario's After School Program and the Pathways to Education initiative, the Ontario Student Assistance Program, and Ontario's Youth action plan to provide children and youth disadvantaged communities with better opportunities to reach their full potential. Moreover, the policy emphasized on supporting the unique needs of Aboriginal communities as a wide range of historical, geographical, and cultural challenges have continued to create barriers for them in overcoming poverty. Additionally, issues such as affordable housing provision, homelessness, accessibility for people with disabilities, barriers to employment, abused/at risk women in the labour market, and protection of live-in caregivers are also recognised and addressed by this policy (Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2013).

*Increasing opportunities* is approached from an entrepreneurial standpoint in order to enhance chances of employment and leadership for everyone. Again, a broad approach to diversity is quite visible in these policies. For instance, using the motto of '*When young Ontarians succeed, Ontario succeeds*' or '*All young people have assets to be nurtured*' (Stepping Up, 2013: 5) Ontario Children and Youth Service's Stepping Up program (within Ontario's Youth Action Plan, 2012) aims to provide young people with '*every opportunity to succeed and fulfil their potential to contribute to their communities*' (Stepping Up, 2013: 5). There are several programs specifically designed for increasing the economic opportunities for women, like the Micro lending for Women in Ontario Program (2014) for low-income women who are seeking to start their own business by providing financial literacy training, entrepreneurial mentoring, and skills development and life skills support; Women in Leadership program (2013) for broader gender diversity in corporate leadership and increasing exceptional leadership of women and girls to improve the lives of others in their communities. Similarly in regards to seniors' independence, the province of Ontario has several tax credits and other forms of financial assistance intended to provide assistance and services to seniors including Ontario Trillium Benefit, Ontario Senior Homeowners' Property Tax Grant, Elder Abuse Strategy, etc. (Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, 2013). Moreover, place-based strategies such as the *Investing in Families* program are also aiming to enhance opportunities to families.

Another example is the Partners for Access and Identification (PAID) Project in which part of the effort has been in line with preparing youth for job interviews. “[PAID] has been a symbolic project in terms of prototyping a different way of working that has to involve employers which has been quite successful. We are pretty much of the opinion that the best projects need to have an employer at the end, not necessarily a job but an employer!” [Respondent 16, 30 October 2013] emphasizes a TESS representative who has been involved in the project. Underlying the importance of educating youth around interview and presentation skills, he further explains:

*“Interview processes can be so anonymous. You submit stuff electronically as do 150000 other people and you never hear back at all or you get a rejection tweet! So I think just generally now a lot of kids do not have much exposure to real interviews and real employers so one of the things that has been profound is to actually provide the feedback. So while probably out a 1000 kids not all have got jobs but many multiples of that have had job interviews! And have had feedback from the employers. They are disappointed in many cases if they do not get the job but it is also profoundly helpful to get that experience. It is an educational process and they get significant exposure”. [Respondent 16, 30 October 2013]*

Notwithstanding the complex challenges mentioned earlier, the tone towards diversity appears quite positive at TESS, which again is very much in line with the division’s approach towards defining newcomers as potential contributors to the Toronto economy as opposed to burdens on its social programs. In-migrant groups are considered to be somewhat entrepreneurial as they have taken the significant risk of relocation. Thus optimizing on this entrepreneurial potential has been an important priority at TESS:

*“As a trading country how do we better take advantage of the connections that many people have to places all over the world? [...] How do we take advantage of the fact that Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in the world in terms of both developing a more entrepreneurial based economy, providing more opportunities for people to unleash those energies and also taking advantage of their amazing connections across the globe to better situate ourselves competitively in a global economy”. [Respondent 16, 30 October 2013]*

Concerning the category of newcomers and in-migrants it is important to note that employment has been a major area wherein various groups, in particular in-migrants face complex challenges while residing in Toronto. In addition to the common difficulties faced by in-migrant groups such as language challenges and lack of networking opportunities with employers, there are a number of under-lying systematic barriers to newcomer participation in the labour market in Toronto, the most notable of which is the so-called Canadian Experience<sup>9</sup> or credentials issue. The notion of Canadian Experience, which has sparked many heated and at times contested debates in the Toronto policy field as well the mainstream public, stems from the structural challenges many newcomers encounter when entering the job market. Newcomer applicants are in many cases refused the job because they lack work experience in Canada or their non-Canadian educational certificates are not recognised as equivalent to Canadian certificates by employers. The notion has been heavily criticised for its ambiguity as there is no clarity around what this Canadian Experience actually means, resulting in skill mismatches in the labour market as well as increased opportunity for employers to exploit as well as discriminate against jobseekers. Canadian Experience is also problematic in that it is strongly interconnected to topics

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<sup>9</sup> Canadian Experience (widely known as Canadian Experience Class) is a requirement to move people from temporary to permanent residence (<http://www.cic.gc.ca/EnGLish/immigrate/cec/index.asp>).

of race and country of origin as it is seemingly less pertinent to newcomers coming from the global North. Similarly, one respondent from Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) contends:

*“Those kind of ‘systemic’ issues are problematic. They reflect some changes in the labour market that are affecting the other group, I suppose the group that is most seriously affected are young newcomers in many ways because they are facing kind of demographic challenge where newcomers to the labour market, whether they are newcomers to Canada or not, are facing in getting into the labour market because of the increase in non-permanent, precarious non-standard jobs. Doubled then by sometimes the place they come from and the race they are and the language they speak. Some things are additive. You begin to add these things up and they constitute quite a big challenge”.* [Respondent 16, 30 October 2013]

With regards to policies of redistribution that use *increasing opportunities discourse*, it is important to mention the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP). In the past decade, in light of evident demographic shifts in Canada (such as the growing number of seniors) as well as documented and/or speculated labour market shortages of both skilled and lower-skilled workers, Canada has experienced a significant increase (more than 50 per cent) in the number of temporary foreign workers admitted to the country due to the expansion of the TFWP. The national policy, as the definition by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) makes explicit, is designed to enable employers to hire foreign workers for a temporary period of time in aims of filling immediate skills and labour market shortages. According to Nakache and Kinoshita (2010), the number of temporary foreign workers in Canada rose by 148 per cent over a course of 6 years (2002 to 2008), from 101,259 to 251,235, while total entries (sum of initial entries and re-entries) of these workers rose by 73 percent, from 110,915 to 192,519.<sup>10</sup>

The considerable increase in these numbers has had multiple consequences for the Canadian society in general and Toronto in particular. The growing influx of temporary foreign workers has not surprisingly complicated the challenges around gaining entry to the labour market in Toronto, for both Canadians and newcomers (even though the latter group has been impacted more severely). It has further raised many concerns around notions such as temporary foreign workers’ rights, protection, integration, as well as Canadian (and thereby Torontonian) multiculturalism and diversity due to a number of factors, a few of which are briefly outlined below;

Firstly, the temporary foreign worker permit is inherently restrictive given that temporary foreign workers often find themselves tied to one job, one employer and one location which results in their limited employment rights and protections. Secondly, more complex problems and complications are arising due to illegal recruitment practices, misinformation about migration opportunities and lack of enforcement mechanisms in light of the TFWP expansion (Nakache and Kinoshita, 2010). Thirdly, the seemingly indifferent approach of the federal government towards the future position of these temporary foreign workers in the Canadian society –which is very well captured in the following quote by Max Firsch “*We invited guest workers, and got human beings*” (International Labour Office 2004, 111 as cited by Nakache and Kinoshita, 2010), has

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<sup>10</sup> The Temporary Foreign Workers Program, which came into existence in 1973, initially targeted specific highly skilled groups such as academics, business executives and engineers. However, due employer demand for workers to do lower skill jobs, in the oil and gas and construction sectors in particular, the federal government introduced the Pilot Project for Hiring Foreign Workers in Occupations that Require Lower Levels of Formal Training in 2002 (for more elaboration see Nakache and Kinoshita, 2010).

resulted in the creation of a so-called ‘second-class resident’ population, in other words an expanding group of un-documented immigrants with very limited access to services and resources. Thus, the implications of emerging discourses around the ‘second-class’, ‘undocumented’ or ‘illegal’ population for Torontonians diversity have been negative as expressed in the quote below;

*“The issue lies in] the idea that somebody is good enough to work here but is not good enough to live here and to belong. Temporary foreign workers are not immigrants and a very small fraction of them will ever be permitted to stay and that is perhaps the most profound change since 2006 in our discussion of diversity. Because it creates a class of the other, it forces a great deal of people who are now here permitted to be here temporarily for only 4 years to go underground when that four years are up. The temporary foreign worker policy is changing how we view the rights of the individuals and how we practice rights”.* [Interview on Oct 29, 2013]

#### *Resource allocations*

Financial resources of the City are mainly generated by property taxes, the provincial grants and subsidies, federal and other subsidies, investment income and interest, and other forms of funds. In general property taxes and provincial grants play a larger role in the budget compared to other sources. For instance, in 2014 39.4% of the total City budget was received from property taxes and 19.1% from the provincial grants and subsidies. It is, however, difficult to estimate how these resources are allocated to diversity matters.

As mentioned earlier within Toronto City policy diversity-related programs and practices are very much *embedded* within existing policy frameworks and spread across different City divisions and partnerships. Thus, it is difficult to draw a clear and general picture of diverse public agencies that are involved in the development and implementation of diversity policy because of the broad approach to diversity that includes many interconnected agencies. It is challenging (if not impossible) to trace down and identify, in a quantified manner, precisely the type and amount of resources and funding that are being injected into diversity-related efforts at the city level. Next to obvious organisations like Children Services, Long-Term Care Home Services, or Public Health, many departments like Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, or Toronto Public Library are involved in the implementation of diversity policies, though it is not easy to track down the financial allocation of resources that are spent for diversity related matters by these agencies. We can, however, make some estimation based on municipal budgets allocated to most relevant programs. The City’s budget figures are in line with the serious cutback expectations. In 2013, for instance, the total cost to deliver municipal services to Toronto residents was \$15.26 billion, while in 2014 \$9.6 billion was spent on the operating budget of the City. The City budget is planned to stay around \$18.6 billion between 2014 and 2023 (City of Toronto, 2014), which indicates a serious decline. However, according to Social Planning Toronto<sup>11</sup> the list of what was lost with these budget cuts is a time-consuming process as some reductions in the budget are described as ‘service efficiencies’ and others as ‘minor service impacts’ or ‘major service impacts’.

Looking to the budget allocations in 2014, it can be observed that among the diversity related organisational bodies, the Toronto Employment & Social Services received the highest share (12.2%) of the total operating budget. Same year Parks, Forestry & Recreation received 4.3%, of the total operating budget, while Children’s Services Program to Toronto residents received 4.2%, Long-Term Care Homes & Services 2.4%, Toronto Public Health 2.6%, and Toronto Public Library 1.9%, and Economic Development & Culture Program received 0.7% of the same

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.socialplanningtoronto.org/news/february-3-2012-city-budget-sum-up/>

budget. All together these diversity related services sums up to 28.3% of the total budget. Some of these allocations show serious declines like, for instance, Park, Forestry, and Recreation will receive 6% of the capital budget allocated between 2014 and 2023, while Public Library, and Long-Term Care Homes & Services will only receive 1% of the total budget for the same years (City of Toronto, 2014).

Clear efforts and budget allocations are directed toward programs like Community Centres, Social Assistance, Child Care, Homeless Shelters, Youth Equity Strategy, Women's Shelters, etc. with declining budgets. However, concerning diversity matters, many of the efforts fall under the umbrella of newcomer and settlement-related services. Consequently, it is possible to find a better assessment of the institutional resources dedicated to policy in terms of deployed number of staff in this field. Identification of settlement-related needs often takes place while taking into account individual needs of residents. According to Lim et al. (2005), the most common settlement needs identified in Toronto services and programs include: Welcome Policy, Advocacy, Counselling and support, Education, Emergency food services, Employment, English as a second language (ESL), Form filling, Health/Medical, Housing, Information and referral, Legal, Orientation, Recreation, and Translation and interpretation (Lim, Lo, Siemiatycki, and Doucet, 2005). Table 3.2 provides a general overview of sources of funding to settlement-service agency locations and distribution of settlement-service agencies in the GTA in.

The table demonstrates the number of settlement-service agencies that receive funding from each level of government as well as non-governmental agencies. One interesting observation based on the table is that non-governmental agencies play a vital role in financing such programs more than governmental organizations at all three levels combined. The table further highlights the important role of fundraising organizations, in particular United Way, in social service provision in Toronto. UW funds 169 agencies in the GTA, a similar number to that of federally-funded agencies (189).

**Table 3.2. Sources of funding to settlement-service agency locations in the GTA in 2005\***

	City of Toronto	Durham Region	Halton Region	Peel Region	York Region	Total
<b>Federal</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>189</b>
Citizenship and Immigration CA						
HOST	2	1		1	3	7
Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP)	57			8	6	71
Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)	57	1	2	16	6	82
Heritage Canada			1			1
Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)	20	2			6	28
<b>Provincial</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>76</b>
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI)	21	1		3	6	31
Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS)	13				3	16
Ministry of Health (MOH)	12			1	3	16
Ministry of Justice				1		1
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU)	9				3	12
<b>Regional/local</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Foundations</b>	<b>44</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>56</b>

Canadian Race Relations				1		1
Maytree	18			2		20
Trillium	26		1	2	6	35
<b>Other</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>258</b>
Charities					3	3
Community Access Program (CAP)	1					1
Job Search Workshop	38	2		7	6	52
Legal Aid Ontario (LAO)	11					11
Ontario Women's Directorate (OWD)	1					1
Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)	8					8
Settlement Foundation Partnership Toronto (SEPT)	7					7
Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)				1	3	4
Toronto District School Board (TDSB)	1					1
United Way (UW)	149		1	13	6	169

\* **Note:** Because of the unreliability of the National Household Survey of 2011, data from an older source had to be used in this table.

Settlement services are at the forefront of the diversity programs that receive resources from different levels of governance in Canada as well as non-governmental sources. However, these policies address a wide array of issues faced by diverse Torontonians and not just those concerning immigrants. It should be noted that the Harper government began to diminish social programs with serious cutbacks concerning diverse groups and communities including the unemployed to low-income families and poor seniors. Further, there is a consistent effort in Toronto in line with leveraging non-profit and private sector resources and collaborations to support such programs in times of increasing privatisation and on-going cutbacks in government funding<sup>12</sup>. The integrated approach witnessed in Toronto's diversity policies further entails that the overall allocation of resources has not targeted only one specific group of the three policy types mentioned in the previous section, rather all three groups have received resources and suffered recent cut backs to a more or less degree.

### 3.2. Non-governmental views on diversity policy

As mentioned in the previous section, non-governmental actors such as charitable non-profit organisations, private foundations, and community-based agencies are highly involved in programs related to diversity matters. In general, there is a seemingly unanimous belief across the non-governmental sector as well as many city-level governmental agencies that the formerly outlined broad shifts taking place at the higher levels have had an impact upon practices and discussions around diversity in the GTA. Many efforts have suffered cutbacks in funding from different levels of Canadian government in the recent years. A notable change in federal funding which has had significant impacts in the Toronto region has taken place in light of the government's attempt to shift sources of funding to the newcomer landing points given the recent increase in number of newcomers arriving in some Western Canadian provinces that have very robust oil driven economy and other economic resources (which has also been in line with the expansion of the Temporary Foreign Workers Program). However, Toronto remains a

<sup>12</sup> By 2015, the Harper government will have imposed permanent budget cuts of approximately 10.8 billion dollars per year to federal departments and agencies. (Parliamentary Budget Officer, 2012)

powerful immigrant magnet, since there is evidence for the fact that even though newcomers may not land in Toronto at first, many do in fact move to Toronto at a later stage to access the wealth of newcomer services provided in the area. Thus, at the community level some agencies have lost funding in the past number of years and there is increasing concern around the future funding of current initiatives. In the following sections some of the critical comments aimed at these shifts along with concerns and insecurities expressed by non-governmental actors will be addressed.

As previously observed in Table 3.1, the non-governmental sector remains highly influential when it comes to identifying needs at the demand side, designing programs and serving the diverse communities of Toronto. The most important factor contributing to the resilience of community-based agencies involved in the governance of diversity in the GTA is what one respondent from City's social policy analysis and research refers to as *structures of collaboration* wherein;

*"You have bodies with different interests or responsibilities coming together like the newcomer leadership table to solve a problem or look at an issue [...] and you get those different perspectives around the table to discuss what are you currently doing that is the best practice perhaps we need to look at. So identifying some of the gaps and who fills those gaps and also bringing different orders of government together (federal, provincial, city divisions). That is a very powerful instrument in structures of collaboration".* [Respondent 9, 17 October 2013]

Another respondent from a settlement agency member of the Toronto South LIPs similarly asserts that Toronto's legacy of non-profit involvement in City diversity policy continues to exist but is becoming increasingly precarious due to the federal cutbacks and devolution of responsibilities and funds

*"We have done very well under the conservative governments as charities go, and I think it is a trajectory that is going to continue of them trying to find ways to cut government roles and put more services out in the community. It is precarious in that they cannot cut us off without having to fire staff or lay off staff because it is a contractual arrangement. That has not happened so people are afraid that by contracting out when they do eventually wish to eliminate the service, it will be easier for them to do so cause they do not have to fire their own employees. But they have not done that so that is a concern but not something that has happened".* [Respondent 13, 25 October 2013]

#### *Private enterprises and charitable non-profit organisations*

As Table 3.1 makes it clear, government funding, even though substantial, is not the only primary source of funding for newcomer and diversity-related programs. Private enterprises such as Maytree and non-profit fundraising organisations such as United Way (UW) of Toronto also play an important role in funding initiatives and community-based organisations. Fundraising organisations such as United Way are also experiencing some challenges of their own due to a number of factors including changes in demographic trends (such as the increasing senior population in Toronto). One respondent from United Way of Greater Toronto accordingly explained:

*"Most of our money comes from people writing their pay checks so when you think you have got less people working for big organisations, you got tons of baby boomers who are on the edge of retirement who are our traditional donor base and younger generations do not give to UW in the same way as their parents do and that is a big shift that will affect us".* [Respondent 17, 31 October 2013]

The quote highlights the fact that organisations such as UW are becoming dependent on their donors now more than ever due to the overall decentralization and subsequent cutbacks in governmental resources. Another contributing factor has to do again with the fact that there is more and more uncertainty facing young people entering the labour market. Another challenge stems from the increasing pressure from the donor-side explained by one UW representative as follows;

*“We hold a very high steam among very senior leadership in the city and that certainly helps us and helps people understand how and why the decisions we make are the right ones for city building and across the whole of Toronto. But there are certainly demands for us to be pulled in different directions and we know that. So we have corporate partners who are really interested in a particular issue like they might really care about homelessness or food, and we know that there are needs out there and may not have been part of our traditional stream of programming but there is an appetite to build that into some of the work because it is seen as tangible”.* [Respondent 18, 31 October 2013]

Considering the important role UW plays in funding Toronto’s social and settlement services as underscored in the previous sections, the pressure from donors seems to influence the revenue streams of different projects at the community level. This brings up many concerns around the future of many diversity-related programs adding to the feeling of uncertainty and insecurity present the community-sector as it. It moreover undermines Toronto’s systematic and coordinated approach towards addressing diversity in a comprehensive and integrated way, especially given that nationalist and ‘us versus them’ discourses in Canada seem to be on the rise not so far outside Toronto’s doorsteps.

#### *Community-based agencies*

Moreover, it is evident that the existence of the so-called structures of collaboration, in other words a strong embedded network of community-based organisations whose collaborative efforts are coordinated by an official steering committee at the city level (Toronto Newcomer Office) has been quintessential in sustaining Toronto’s asset-based approach towards diversity. Toronto is home to a wealth of collaborative initiatives and strategies in that regard. In fact, the integration and embeddedness of diversity-related matters in policy, which was elaborated upon in section 2.1 in relation to City programs, is even more prevalent to the community-based sector. One settlement worker from Saint Christopher’s Community House, a non-profit organisation in a downtown Toronto neighbourhood and member of the Local Immigrant Partnerships of the Toronto South quadrant, recognizes the integrated approach as an important tool in responding to some of the current gaps in the current diversity and newcomer-oriented programs, providing the example below;

*“We have the newcomer settlement outreach program which [...] tries to bridge the gap between work with homeless people and work with newcomers. [...] What we found years ago was that there were quite a few and increasing number of newcomers showing up at those [drop-in] shelters. But the shelter staff were not used to dealing with newcomer issues, they were used to dealing with homelessness issues, so when somebody turned up and could not access social assistance because for example they had no immigration status, or they had no documents, the shelter staff would have no idea what to do. On the other hand, the traditional settlement workers around the city did not know how to work with homelessness issues. So when somebody turned up at their agency asking for help with immigration issues but actually could not be helped because they did not have an address, because they had mental health or addiction issues”!* [Respondent 12, 25 October 2013]

The quote provides an excellent example of how official policy sometimes fails to recognize or sufficiently address the complexities around diversity and newcomer-related matters and the loopholes that are created in the service provision system as a result. Thus collaborative resources have been mobilised over the past years in aims of supporting efforts across the community-based sector, whether in shape of advocacy, ‘open door’ policies, etc. to address some of these gaps. There are many other examples of such system loopholes, especially when it comes to the issue of status facing undocumented immigrants, permanent and temporary residents (the number of whom is expanding as asserted earlier).

Regarding the non-citizens in particular, there has been a promising improvement made very recently at the City level whereby Toronto City Council has asked the Ontario government to amend legislation in order to allow permanent residents the right to vote in municipal elections. Whereas some official figures such as the city’s conservative mayor Rob Ford are explicitly opposed to the idea, there is unanimous optimism among most City and community-based agencies that the amendment will have very positive implications for the inclusiveness and function of democracy in the city as well as creating a sense of belonging for residents by providing them with the opportunity to engage in and influence their local politics.

The current imbalance in terms of resource and service distribution in the GTA (concentration of services in downtown neighbourhoods and significant lack of resources injected in inner-suburban areas which are accommodating an increasing influx of newcomers) coupled by the recent cutbacks in government funding, as well as the systematic barriers elaborated in the previous section are some of the main points of contention of criticisms brought forward to council by the community-based sector.

#### 4. Conclusions

The present report aimed towards unravelling the dominant discourses and governance structure in relation to diversity in policies and programs across Toronto’s governmental as well as non-governmental sectors. Our analysis revealed that the *pluralist* approach to diversity has been a learning experience for Canadian policy makers in line with implementing an *all-inclusive* approach while dealing with diverse policy fields concerning the urban society. It means that while taking a decision, needs of diverse people are taken into consideration, with a special focus on marginalised and disadvantaged groups. Canadian policy-making and implementation experience is quite close to the idea of *hyper-diversity*. We can also argue that years of experience in welcoming, equally treating, and accommodating newcomers have resulted in the broadening of the scope of policy to accommodate diverse groups’ and individuals’ needs and demands. In fact Toronto in itself has become so diverse that the *pluralism* in policy has come with it inherently. The *learning experience* that comes from producing policies for diverse people is, perhaps one of the key elements to develop and implement policies that would contribute to social cohesion, social mobility, and economic performance of urban residents and communities.

Moreover, although not explicitly indicated with exact wording, *hyper-diversity* as a general approach to urban society is strongly present in Toronto's policy discourses. While topics such as immigration and ethnic-based diversity and settlement of newcomers tend to dominate policy debates at the federal level, Toronto's *pluralist approach* to diversity proves to be very broad as it encompasses a wide array of policy categories including seniors, youth, women, LGBTQ people, the urban poor, ethnic groups, disabled people, aboriginal peoples and the homeless. This approach also reflects the organisational structure concerning urban diversity. Moreover, diversity policy in Toronto also includes a range of people-based as well as place-based initiatives. While the former focus on addressing the specific needs of special target groups (i.e. youth, seniors, people with disabilities, etc.), the latter tend to follow a spatial approach that links 'neighbourhood' to 'identity'. There are serious attempts to reflect these plural identities and complex diversities in the urban spaces especially at the city level both in terms of resource allocation and policy discourses. These attempts serve to create spaces of encounter, recognition and redistribution in the city.

Moreover, *integration* in Toronto is not a discourse to divide the society along the host and the newcomer division. It refers to a process of 'inclusion' for everyone to provide access to services, not only for newcomers. The aim of integration within this context is thereby not to assimilate in-migrants into the existing cultural and social norms of the host society. Rather the effort has been in line with acknowledging the unique and complex identities of individuals and facilitating their contribution by eliminating barriers to their access to services and to their civic participation.

The *interconnectedness* of diverse organisational bodies, *embeddedness* of diversity discourses across city level policies, and the service provision approach to *integration*, contribute to the *comprehensive governance structure* we have tried to describe in the report. Despite fragmentation and decentralisation tendencies, this system in combination with the *pluralist* approach may allow the city government to sustain its focus on diversity-friendly policies. This report further shows that Canadian diversity-related policies respond to the needs of broader categories of individuals and groups by aiming at recognizing their existence and needs; increasing the encounter between these people to offer better socio-economic opportunities and social mobility; and finally redistributing resources to the disadvantaged and marginalised groups. In sum, the dominant discourse in the 'policies for recognition' category is '*equal access for everyone*'. The 'policies for encounter' group primarily aims at creating '*accessible and flexible community spaces for everyone*'. Lastly, in the final category namely 'policies for redistribution of resources' multiple focus points can be observed, all of which aim towards increasing '*opportunities for everyone*'.

In addition to diversity being embedded in different policy and programs, Toronto's policy framework showcases another interesting characteristic. Despite the concerns about increasing fragmentation and decentralisation due to the organisational restructuring undertaken at the federal level under the conservative government, there is an increasing *interconnectedness* between diverse layers of governance in terms of financial and organisational connections and also of *instrumentalisation* of the policy and services. As our analysis highlights, there have been major recent shifts in terms of perceptions of diversity at the federal level. On the one hand Canadian immigration policy has shifted focus from building citizenship to importing economic labour. On the other hand there has been an incredible increase in the number of temporary foreign workers admitted to the country. These two inter-connected shifts coupled by a general tendency towards cutting back government funds and support for social programs at the local level, have created an environment of insecurity among city-level actors and the community-based sector in particular.

Furthermore, this picture does not mean that negative policy experiences and outcomes are far from Toronto. Boudreau et. al. (2010: 20)'s work heavily criticizes *entrepreneurial trends* in policy making and implementation with the argument that the public institutional structure resembles more of a 'business firm', making the ethnic diversity a 'marketable commodity'. As a result of this tendency, the newcomer settlement has become a 'sector' with the strong involvement of the private sector in service provision. Increasing privatisation and the welfare cutbacks of the federal policy have contributed to the city level tendencies like changing priority neighbourhood policies, which will definitely have a negative influence at the community level. Moreover, while *Toronto's asset-based* approach towards capitalizing on its hyper-diversity has had important accomplishments, questions can be raised regarding the discourses around the types of diversity, which are recognised as assets by policy. There is a risk, of course, in developing an inclusive asset-based approach towards planning for diversity. The policy may not continue to target the members of the hyper-diverse population as assets when they have grown older, or their physical and mental health downgraded and their contribution to the economy likewise decreased. That is why the asset-based approach is also subject for disputes. And finally, despite the positive approach to diversity that respects plural identities, *racism, discrimination, and income inequality* are also points of consideration in Toronto. Recent research shows that the city is falling apart into three areas with distinct income and racial characteristics, of which the low-income (mainly newcomer or ethnic) neighbourhoods that are located in the periphery of the city have been consistently facing decreasing income levels since the 1980s (Hulchanski, 2010).

In Toronto the urban/suburban divide seems to follow a clear spatial pattern of race, ethnicity, and poverty, considering that Canada's 10 most ethnically diverse federal voting constituencies are located in suburban Toronto, where the level of poverty has increased significantly during the last decade (Mustafa, 2013). This issue can be connected to the policy-making power resulting from the amalgamation of Toronto (Lafleur, 2010). Initiated by the conservative Harris government in 1998, amalgamation meant the merger of the six municipalities and the former city of Toronto as a cost-saving measure. However, the areas that seem to decline fastest are the formerly middle class suburbs that are now amalgamated into the city, while the former outer suburbs have thrived (Lafleur, 2010). Thus, despite the positive approach to diversity, there is still a clear socio-spatial segregation in the city along the ethnic lines.

Notwithstanding these negative trends, we argue that the Canadian diversity policy provides opportunities and policy instruments to realise social cohesion, social mobility, and economic performance in the urban society, not only for the newcomers but also for those who are facing certain disadvantages in accessing services. Its *comprehensive structure* that accommodates *embeddedness* and *interconnectedness* of the discourse of diversity in all layers of governance and across different city-level programs, and its *pluralist approach* to diversity, can be regarded as key reasons why Toronto has been able to respond to these shifts and thereby preserve its inclusive and asset-based approach towards diversity.

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## Appendix 1. List of Interviewees

Respondent	Organisation	Level of governance	Role of Respondent
1	City of Toronto's Park, Forestry & Recreation, Standards & Innovation	Municipal government	Operations Support Officer, Access and Diversity
2	City of Toronto's Park, Forestry & Recreation, Community Recreation Branch	Municipal government	Manager of Community Development
3	Social Planning Toronto (non-profit)	City based NGO	Community Planner
4	Social Planning Toronto (non-profit)	City based NGO	Community Planner
5	City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance & Administration, Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Policy Development Officer, Toronto Newcomer Initiative
6	City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance & Administration, Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Community Development Officer, Toronto Newcomer Initiative
7	City of Toronto's Social Development, Finance & Administration, Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Community Development Officer, Toronto Newcomer Initiative
9	City of Toronto's Social Policy, Analysis and Research	Municipal government	Director Social Policy, Analysis and Research
10	COSTI North York Centre (non-profit)	Provincial NGO	Manager of North York Housing Help
11	COSTI North York Centre (non-profit)	Provincial NGO	Specialised Housing Help
12	St. Christopher's Community House (non-profit)	City based NGO	Immigrant and Refugee Services Coordinator
13	St. Stephen's Community House (non-profit)	City based NGO	Associate Executive Director
14	Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (non-profit)	Provincial NGO	Senior Economist
15	Open Policy Ontario	Provincial government	Policy Consultant and former Ontario Government employee in social assistance, policy and operations
16	City of Toronto's Employment and Social Services	Municipal government	Director
17	United Way Toronto	Private fundraising organisation	Manager, Neighbourhoods and Community Investment
18	United Way Toronto	Private	Team Lead, Neighbourhoods

		fundraising organisation	
19	Jane and Finch Community and Family Centre (non-profit)	Community based NGO	Community Development Manager
20	Jane and Finch Community and Family Centre (non-profit)	Community based NGO	Director of Community Programs
21	Jane Finch Community Ministry	Community based NGO	Community Minister
22	Downsview Services for Seniors (non-profit)	Community based NGO	Executive Director
23	The Spot, Jane Finch Community Youth Centre (non-profit)	Community based NGO	Youth Programs Manager

## Appendix 2. List of Policy Documents Analysed

	<b>Program</b>	<b>Year of issue</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
1	Toronto Newcomer Strategy	2013	Toronto Newcomer Office
2	Toronto Newcomer Initiative	2010	Social Development, Finance & Administration
3	City of Toronto's Workforce Development Strategy	2012	City's Employment and Social Services
4	City of Toronto's Welcome Policy	1999	City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation
5	City of Toronto's Youth Outreach Program	2005	City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation
6	Toronto's 13 Priority Areas	2005	City of Toronto, United Way Toronto
7	PAID Project (Partners for Access and Identification)	2003	Neighbourhood Link Support Services and City's Employment and Social Services
8	Building Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy	2005	United Way Toronto
9	Settlement Strategy and Action Plan of Toronto South Local Immigration Partnerships	2013	Toronto South LIPs
10	Ontario's Youth Action Plan	2012	Ministry of Children and Youth Services
11	Stepping Up	2013	Ministry of Children and Youth Services
12	Microlending for Women of Ontario	2012	Ontario Women's Directorate
13	Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)	2012	The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
14	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)	2005	Government of Ontario
15	Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2012-2015	2012	Toronto Public Library
16	Recreation Service Plan 2013-2017	2013	City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation
17	Investing in Families Initiative	2007	City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation
18	Rainbow Health Ontario	2008	Sherbourne Health Centre, Rainbow Health Network
19	Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors	2013	The Ontario Seniors' Secretariat
20	Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care	2012	Province of Ontario
21	Aging at Home Strategy	2007	Province of Ontario