



## Presentation Session: Rural Population Retention (Welcoming)

### DATE:

Friday, November 18th, 2022

### TIME:

9:00–10:30 AM

### FORMAT:

Four 15-minute oral presentations followed by a 30-minute discussion

### SESSION DESCRIPTION:

This session presents different research, case studies, and stories on rural population retention (welcoming) in Northern Ontario or other rural, remote, northern, and island communities. It touches on themes such as creating communities where residents feel welcome, social capital building, outmigration, rural population decline, and others. It also provides participants with the opportunity to join the discussion, give their input, and share their knowledge, best practices, or stories with the other participants.



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## Presentation 1

Time: 9:00–9:15 AM

Title: OUTLoud North Bay – supports the health and well-being of the 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and allies – To be confirmed

Presenters: OUTLoud North Bay

Abstract: To be confirmed

## Presentation 2

Time: 9:15–9:30 AM

Title: Rural Housing Information System: Filling The Housing Information Gap in Ontario

Presenters: Iain Storosko (Program Development Specialist, Rural Housing Information System, ROI, Rural Ontario Institute)

Abstract: Currently, in rural Ontario, there is a shortage of proper housing data. The lack of adequate data is a barrier to the planning and construction of affordable housing development in the region. Through the Housing Supply Challenge, the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) is partnering with the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) and tech company, Itergy, to build a streamlined digital tool to fill the housing information gap: the Rural Housing Information System. This locally driven tool will support municipalities, developers, and homebuilders in the planning and development of affordable housing. It also aims to support not for profit builders in overcoming information barriers regarding housing in rural communities. ROI and EOWC are building this tool by consolidating the information that is available through eastern Ontario municipalities' existing resources. By having a consolidated effort for data acquisition, the RHIS can implement a streamlined approach to enhance the data collected in a centralized, digital platform. In the medium to long-term, this information will be used to appropriately strategize housing development plans, bringing appropriate affordable housing to the region and keep residents in their communities of choice.



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### Presentation 3

Time: 9:30–9:45 AM

Title: Fostering Inclusive Sport and Recreation in Rural Communities

Authors: Grace Nelson (Brock University), Tammy Borgen-Flood (Brock University), Vivien Ugwu (Brock University), and Kyle Rich (Brock University)

**Abstract:** Economic development strategies and policy programs like the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot have drawn attention to a need for rural communities to be welcoming to new community members. An important way to foster interaction and community development is through sport, recreation, and leisure opportunities. In this session, we draw from research conducted in Nipissing and Sudbury Districts and present a series of strategies for practitioners and policy makers to foster inclusive sport and recreation opportunities in rural communities. The research explored how practitioners understand their communities and the social inclusion of diverse groups in and through sport and recreation. The findings highlighted that practitioners and managers draw from ideas of colourblindness, ambiguity, and "otherness." We suggest that practitioners should actively engage new community members in sport and recreation contexts, and work to offer/develop understanding and programming that attends to their unique circumstances. Practitioners should also consider the implications of strong relationships within rural communities and the impacts they have for newcomers of diverse backgrounds. In conclusion, we highlight a need for social inclusion policy that is clearly articulated and implemented throughout rural sport and recreation organizations. We will offer both practical and theoretical implications of our work.

### Presentation 4

Time: 9:45–10:00 AM

Title: Why they left: Current knowledge concerning immigrant migration and Canadian localities

Authors: BJ Szabicit (M.A. Sociology candidate, Nipissing University)

**Abstract:** As part of the ongoing Nipissing University graduate student research project "Why did they leave? Foreign-born Canadian newcomer outmigration from northern Ontario urban centres" a literature analysis was conducted examining outmigration according to Canadian immigrant status (newcomer, well established, and multi-generational) from national, provincial, regional and large urban areas. Of the 73 studies included in the analysis a number of patterns were detected - not only the myriad of factors associated with migration, but a vivid demonstration of the lack of research into migration drivers in northern Ontario as well as a general lack of research around newcomers in northern Ontario. This session will explore the studies included in the literature analysis and clarify terminology around human migration patterns while providing a broader understanding of the factors correlated with migration behaviour of immigrants at the Canadian national, provincial, regional, and large urban levels. The session will end with an overview of how conference attendees can help spur participation in the aforementioned research project, which will provide insight useful to policy makers and community members working on the pressing issues of population decline and immigration in northern Ontario.



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