



For Immediate Release

A Regional Approach is Needed to Attract and Retain Newcomers

February 7, 2019 – The 11 Northern Ontario districts require a comprehensive, coordinated and inclusive newcomer attraction and retention strategy.

This is the key finding in the second commentary in Northern Policy Institute's the *Northern Attraction* series, by author Christina Zefi titled, "*Identifying Northern Ontario's Strengths and Weaknesses in the Attraction and Retention of Newcomers*".

The commentary highlights the challenges in attracting newcomers such as the lack of collaboration between governments and organizations, the greater focus on settlement efforts as opposed to recruitment, and a weak sense of community.

The paper also highlights the strengths of Northern Ontario from a newcomer perspective. Necessities such as food, shelter and clothing are, for example, more affordable here than in Southern Ontario. Newcomers have a higher percentage of their income free for other things. Recent immigrants in the North also have a higher labour participation rates than in other parts of the province.

Continuing to attract international students to Northern Ontario can also assist in the economic growth of northern communities. "Northern Ontario's current international students are beneficial to Ontario because of the diversity they bring to education, research, campuses, and communities" writes Zefi. "They can enhance the learning environment through varying perspectives, experiences, and languages."

The paper notes that the process of attracting and retaining newcomers, which includes both immigrants and secondary migrants, is not the responsibility of a single entity, but rather multiple actors found in the community and in government such as Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs), Settlement Agencies, Professions North/Nord, Réseau du Nord and more.

The commentary concludes with several recommendations to improve the attraction and retention process, some of which include:

- Developing a regional approach to newcomer attraction and gathering greater support from communities
- Targeting newcomers from specific countries and communities
- Marketing Northern Ontario's strengths, diversity and potential

Other commentaries in the *Northern Attraction* series will be published in the coming months. These commentaries will explore other immigration programs that could be implemented, and how our communities can attract newcomers.

Read the full commentary, "*Identifying Northern Ontario's Strengths and Weaknesses in the Attraction and Retention of Newcomers*" at www.northernpolicy.ca/northernattraction2



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Media Interviews: Author Christina Zefi and NPI President & CEO Charles Cirtwill are available for comment. To arrange an interview, please contact:

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About Northern Policy Institute:

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

About the author:

Christina Zefi is a former Research Analyst at Northern Policy Institute and has a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration from Humber College. Her research interests include immigration reform and policy related to Indigenous Affairs, the environment, and mental health. Prior to her role at NPI, Christina worked at TD Canada Trust as a Financial Advisor