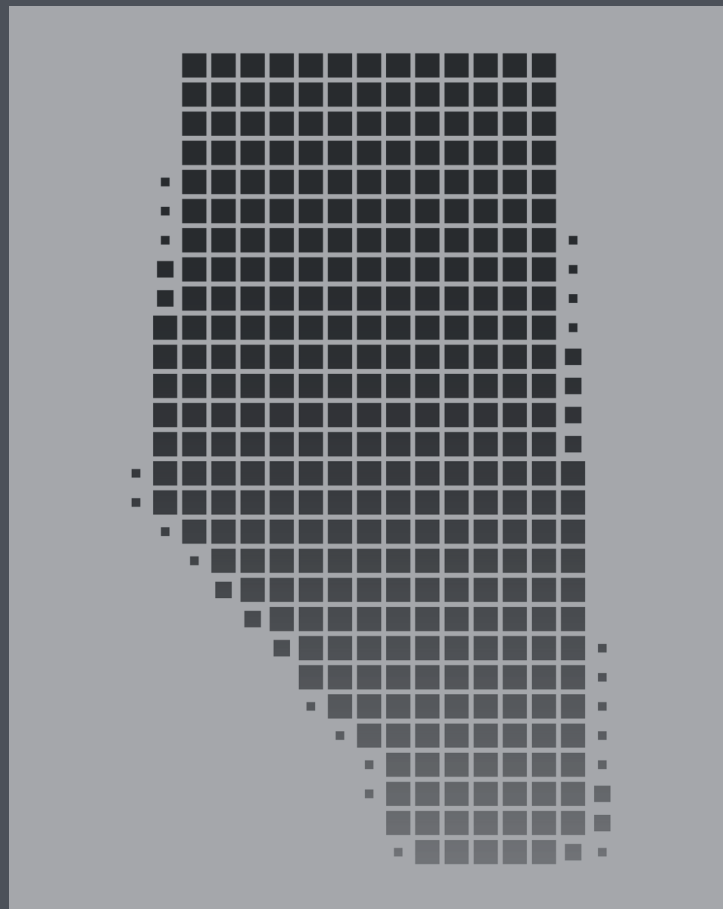


ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015



aa isa

Alberta Association of Immigrant
Serving Agencies

Year in Review

aa isa

Alberta Association of Immigrant
Serving Agencies

About us

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) is a nationally and provincially recognized leader in the settlement and integration sector. As an umbrella organization, AAISA's mandate is to build sectorial capacity by providing member agencies access to specialized professional development and training opportunities, to act as a liaison with stakeholders, and provide a centre for knowledge, expertise, and leadership. AAISA's mandate is enacted through a responsible governance model with effective communication between all stakeholders supporting the delivery of settlement services provided by members and Alberta's communities.

Vision Mission & Values

Our Vision

An inclusive, welcoming and engaged society.

Our Mission

Facilitate collaboration and leadership within the settlement serving sector.

Our Values & Guiding Principles

Integrity

Will approach its work with integrity. It will be professional in its approach, ensure education and continued learning are part of its initiatives, set and follow standards, and be respectful in all its interactions.

Collaborative

Will follow a collaborative model. It will ensure inclusivity and offer a unified voice for the sector.

Proactivity

Will be proactive in all undertakings. It will take initiative and have influence in the areas of policy and advocacy, and will aim to have impact in its work.

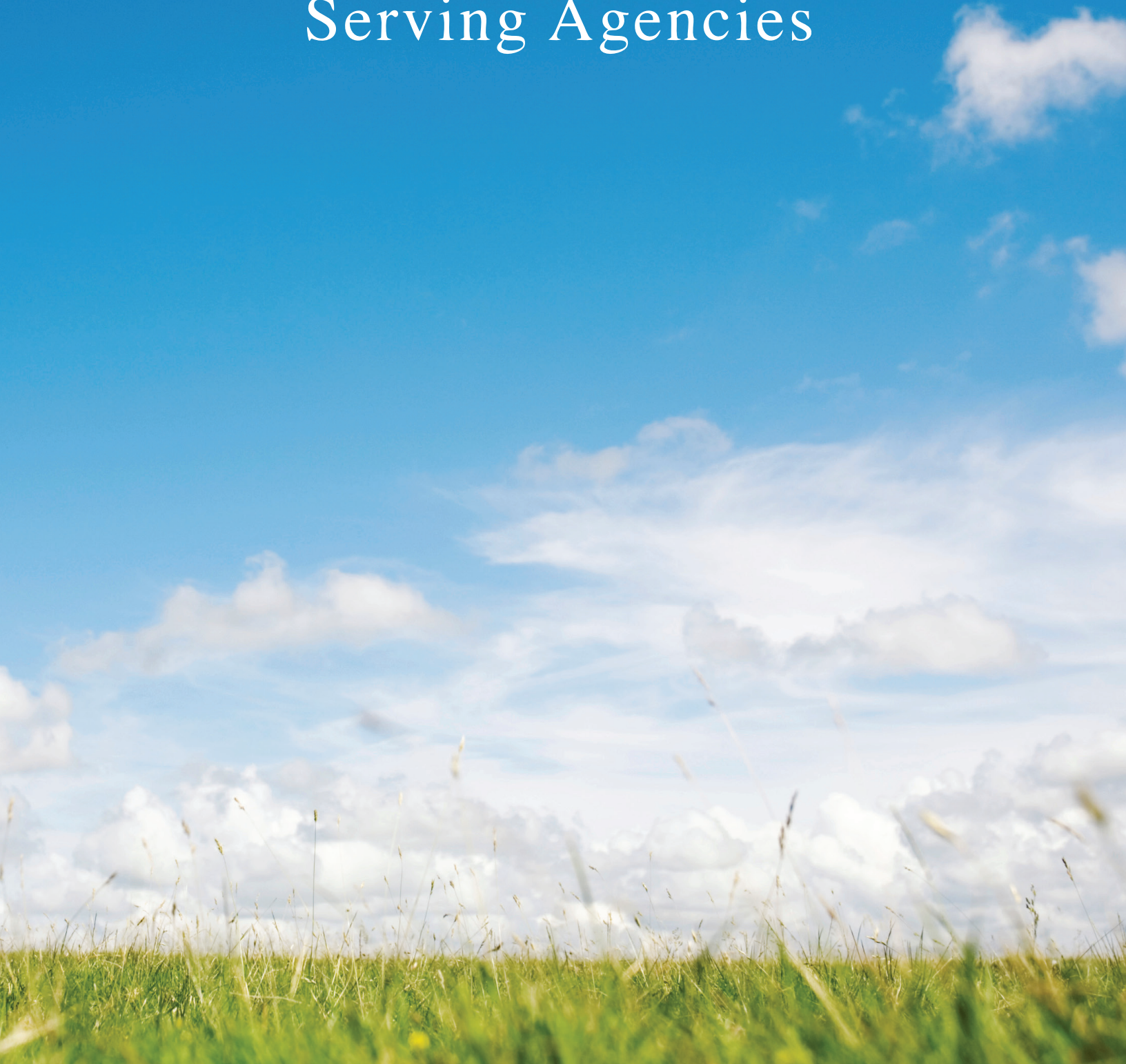
Accountability

Will ensure that it is accountable. Its responsibility to its members, funders, and the larger settlement sector will be at the forefront in what it does.

The logo for Aaaisa features the word 'Aaaisa' in a stylized, blue, serif font. The letters are bold and have a classic, slightly ornate appearance. The 'A's are particularly large and prominent. The logo is set against a white rectangular background that is centered at the top of the page.

Aaaisa

Alberta Association of Immigrant
Serving Agencies



Message from the chair



"This year AAISA witnessed an increase in the target number of immigrants set by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) from 250,000 to 285,000."

This year AAISA witnessed an increase in the target number of immigrants set by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) from 250,000 to 285,000. This increase was also reflected in the number of immigrants choosing Alberta as their final destination. As a result, there was a significant impact on service demand from public institutions as well as the settlement and integration sector. Despite a shifting landscape, AAISA member agencies, representing 7 locations across Alberta with satellite offices in a number of smaller locations, have been able to facilitate the settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees while increasing the level of community engagement with this important work. We have been encouraged by the acceptance offered to newcomers in our communities. Albertans are taking a keen interest in making settlement and integration a positive experience for new Canadians as well as the host community.

In the midst of tremendous changes, AAISA, as a 35-year old organization, has taken this as an opportunity to review its current challenges and advantages. AAISA's strategic, forward-looking approach has led the membership through a planning process to identify what kind of settlement and integration coordinating body is needed in Alberta over the next 10-15 years. As a result of this thinking, and in consultation with stakeholders, a new vision has been developed. To achieve this AAISA needed to revise its mandate and business practices. Subsequently, new bylaws have been developed and approved by the Board. We do recognize that AAISA needs to go through a total transformation in order to achieve its new direction which will be forward-looking, inclusive and result-orientated. I'm confident that with the commitment of our membership, the communities we serve, and support from our funders, we will go through this transformation and become the kind of umbrella organization that can positively impact settlement and integration outcomes across the province.

In addition to the activities arising from strategic planning and governance review, AAISA continues to build capacity through training, accreditation, events and research. For example, AAISA organized a well-attended Alberta Integration Summit in Edmonton which welcome over 300 stakeholders from multiple sectors with the goal of developing realistic and client-centered priorities. Through this event, AAISA has contributed to policy development at all levels of government and brought Alberta's settlement perspective to the national agenda. In the new fiscal year, AAISA will build on this momentum by hosting its *8th Biennial Settlement Conference, Engaging Minds, Creating Sustainability—The Future of Settlement*.

AAISA continues to provide leadership on the professionalization of the sector through its high-quality professional development programs. As a complement to this, the organization has been actively involved in diverse research initiatives which have influenced the national and regional settlement and integration agenda. As we look forward, the development of a Calgary Settlement Blueprint, created in partnership with the Immigrant Sector Council of Calgary, could be a guide for future collaborations and program design.

As the Chair, I have enjoyed the support of my peers and appreciate the trust they have placed in me. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Milton A. Ortega, AAISA's Provincial Manager, AAISA staff and volunteers for their hard work. Finally, I would like to thank our funders for their support and guidance.



Fariborz Birjandian

Chair,
Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies

Financial highlights

aaisa Members

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair – Fariborz Birjandian

Vice – Chair Christina Nsaliwa

Secretary – Mamady Camara

Treasurer – Dale Taylor

Member-at-Large – Antonio Samayoa

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

Edmonton Immigrant Services Association

Centre Accueil Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones (CANAF)

Centre for Newcomers

Saamis Immigration Services Association

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

SPTA Committee – Christina Nsaliwa

Communications – Erick Ambtman

Research Committee – Mamady Camara

Governance Committee – Marty Hornstein

Sector Compensation Committee – Frank Bauer

HR Committee – Fion Lee

Edmonton Immigrant Services Association

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

Centre Accueil Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones (CANAF)

Jewish Family Service Calgary

Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E)

ASSIST Community

AAISA MEMBER AGENCIES

Edmonton Immigrant Services Association

Centre Accueil Nouveaux Arrivants Francophones (CANAF)

Calgary Immigrant Education Society

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

Centre for Newcomers

Immigrant Services Calgary

Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth

YMCA of Wood Buffalo-Immigrant Settlement Services

Lethbridge Family Services-Immigrant Services

Changing Together: A Centre for Immigrant Women

Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E)

Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du nord de l'Alberta

Saamis Immigrant Services Association

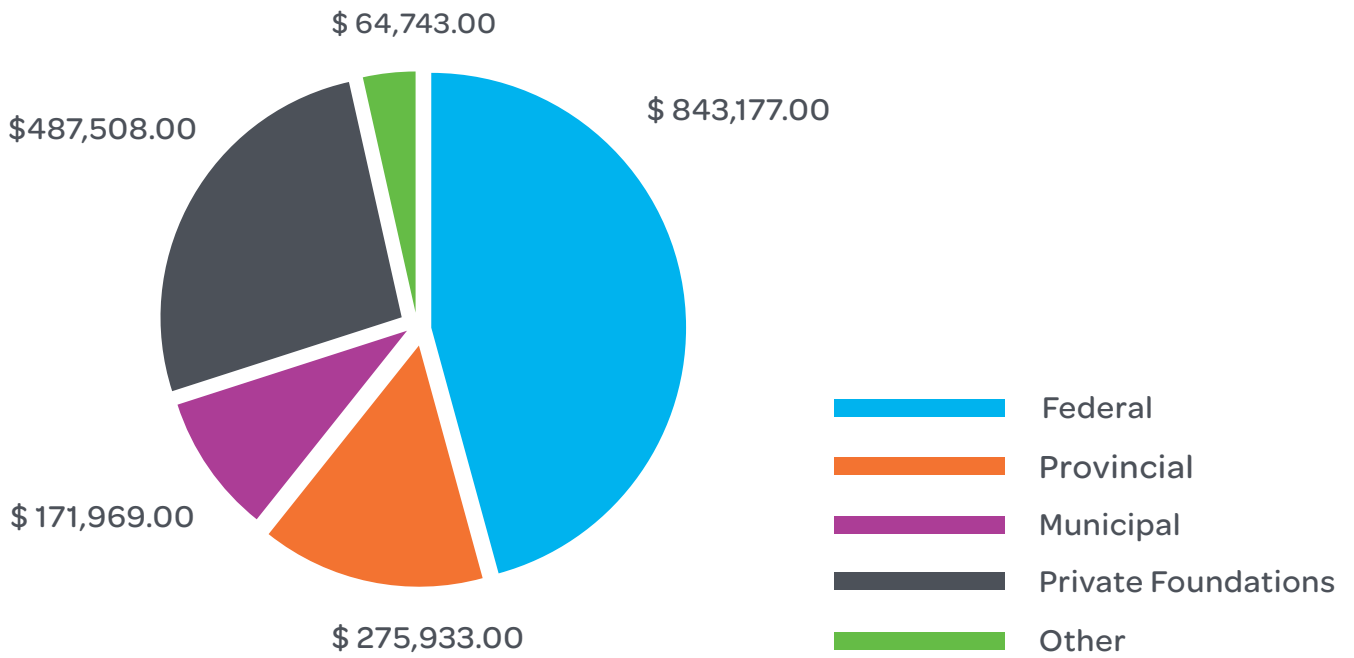
Calgary Immigrant Women's Association

ASSIST Community Services Centre

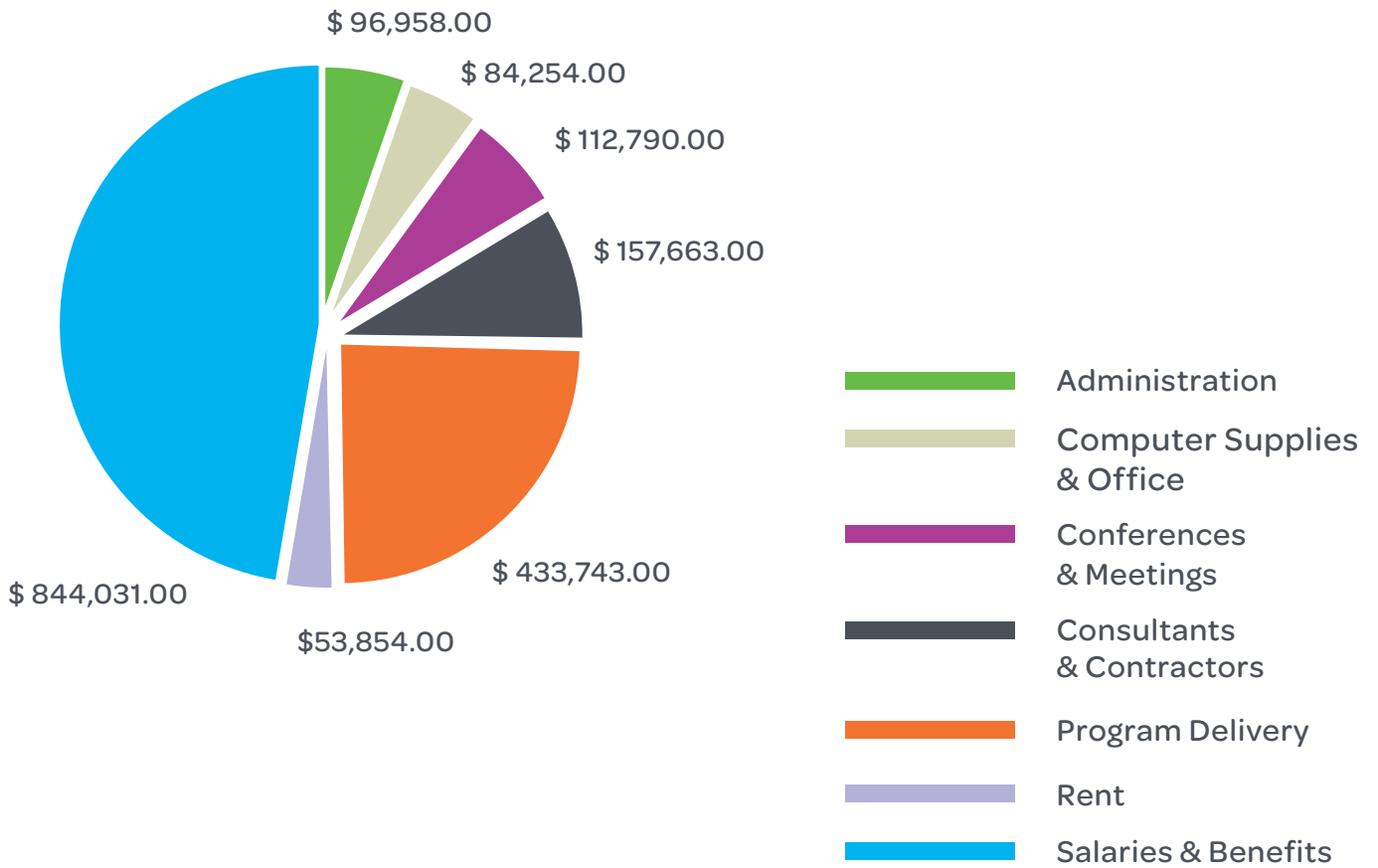
Jewish Family Services Calgary

Indo Canadian Women's Association

Catholic Social Services



.....



Empowering Alberta's settlement sector through professionalization & standardization

Approaching its 35th year, AAISA has consistently showcased leadership in building capacity for the settlement and integration sector. The foundation of our ability to build organizational and sectorial capacity is demonstrated through the professionalization and standardization of settlement practice in AAISA's learning communities, professional development, training, and accreditation, as well as serving as a hub for research on trends that impact newcomers and the people who serve them.

"Training is very essential; it must be received by all workers as long as they work in settlement agencies."

Settlement and Transition Processes Participant

"The instructor was amazing. She was very knowledgeable and knew how to engage the room. This day of training has really given me more knowledge and focus on the work I do with interpreters. I look forward to more AAISA training!"

Working with Interpreters Participant

AAISA SETTLEMENT TRAINING

13 sessions for member agencies

- 389 registered
- 89% completion rate

1 session for non-member agency (SAISIA)

- 80% completion

2014 AAISA Certified Settlement Practitioners

- 115% completion rate

MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Management Professional Development

- 84 registered
- 92.8% completion rate

Bursaries

- \$4,790 distributed

TOTAL TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN 2014-2015

13 sessions for member agencies

- 508 registered
- 89% completion rate

SITE VISITS

13 sessions for member agencies

- 5 site visits (CANAF, YMCA, ASSIST, EMCN, and Regina – SAISIA Member Agency)

Sector Compensation

AAISA's Job Classification and Standards Project began in the spring of 2007.

Its objective is to evaluate the competencies, roles, and responsibilities of professionals working in settlement who support the application of consistent job standards for settlement practice across the sector. Through AAISA's Sector Compensation Committee, consultations with key funding partners, and Human Resource consulting firms, AAISA has created five Job Classification Bands (2010-15), Human Resource Ranking Tool (2013-14), a Job Standards and Salary Framework (2013-15), as well as a communication strategy between its members and key funding partners.

Empowering Alberta's settlement sector through timely, evidence-based research & communication

Research Publications and Projects

- 10 publications available at AAISA's Research Library.
- 5 strategic long-term projects.

Bulletins

The process of Foreign Qualification Recognition presents challenges both for newcomers seeking to integrate into the labour market, and employers working to attract and retain talent in a competitive environment. For a look at Alberta's experience, read: *Foreign Qualification Recognition in Alberta*.

Briefs

Recent changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) have had a pronounced impact on Alberta's temporary worker population and the settlement sector. For analysis read: *To Extend, or Not to Extend?: The Case for Temporary Foreign Worker Settlement Services in Alberta*.

Introduced in early 2014, Bill C24 represents the most significant reform to the Citizenship Act since 1977 and sets the tone for changed eligibility requirements, security and fraud provisions. For more information read: *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act*.

Papers

Following multi-stakeholder consultations during Summits across Canada, AAISA recognized the need to evaluate a comprehensive and collaborative approach to settlement and integration policy development. Drawing from the review of the Alberta settlement policy process, recommendations on avenues for system-level improvement are discussed in the Partnering for Success: Facilitating Integration and Inclusion issue of Canadian Diversity here: *Collaboration in Settlement Policy Development: Experiences from the 2014 Alberta Integration Summit*.

Reports

As part of a national initiative funded by CIC, the Alberta Integration Summit was a collaborative event which facilitated understanding of the current context of settlement and integration. For the findings, read: *Alberta Integration Summit Report*.

Une initiative nationale et collaborative financée par Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada, le Sommet sur l'intégration en Alberta a facilité le développement des connaissances et compréhension du contexte actuel de l'établissement et l'intégration. Pour examiner les résultats, lisez: *Rapport du Sommet sur l'intégration en Alberta*.

Leading up to the Alberta Integration Summit, AAISA held the first forum designed to facilitate an inter-sector conversation regarding settlement and integration services in the province. For more information read: *Analysis of the 1st Provincial Settlement and Integration Forum Report*.

Western Region Working Group

Understanding the current trends, successes and challenges in the Western Region (AB, BC, SK, MB, YK) helps set the foundation for strategic planning and stakeholder influence at the policy-level. For more information on Western Canada's settlement and integration landscape, read: *Western Region Working Group Environmental Analysis Report*.

At the Vision 2020 National Settlement Conference, CIC presented several policy and program directions of the National Settlement Program. The Western Region shares a common vision for the future of this Program and have presented their policy recommendations here: *CIC's Vision 2020: Summary of Provincial Policy Recommendations*.

Following the 2014 Integration Summits held across the nation, several common priority areas and policy directions were recognized in Western Canada. For a look at these commonalities, read: *Western Region Strategic Directions*.



Project highlights

Courage to Begin: Building Capacity of Immigrant Service Providers and Sexual Health

AAISA completed an environmental scan focused on understanding what supports and resources are offered to newcomers within the areas of sexual health, prevention of sexual violence and gender and sexual diversity to assess how important these three areas are to settlement practice; and to gain a deeper understanding of the comfort and capacity of staff within immigrant agencies to support newcomers in these areas. The scan presents a succinct analysis intended to be a motivating influence, a bold conversation starter to propel and inform the important work of supporting sexual health and well-being for newcomers with multiple, non-traditional stakeholders in the coming years. The final report will be disseminated in the summer of 2015.

Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund Reducing Racism and Discrimination Barriers for Newcomers

Settlement service workers, case managers and client-facing staff require the appropriate tools and best practices to address racism and discrimination barriers with their clients. Through the development and delivery of a Learning Community and AAISA's Human Rights, Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Module, settlement practitioners will be able to access the resources and information required to reduce these barriers. Two reports of the interviews and focus groups conducted across Alberta and an Environmental Scan of anti-racism resources were produced to inform the design of both the Learning Community and the Module. The launch of the Learning Community and Module is scheduled for fall 2015.

Blueprint for an Ideal Settlement System in Calgary

Given that a quarter of Calgarians are immigrants, it is important to ensure that they are all able to access and use settlement and integration resources and services. AAISA, through the Immigrant Sector Council of Calgary (ISCC), facilitated expert discussion and consultation with key stakeholders to create a blueprint of an ideal settlement system in Calgary. Available this summer, the blueprint provides the government and other community stakeholders with recommendations for funders and settlement and integration services providers in Alberta. Looking forward, this valuable research outlines an ideal settlement system that is comprised of:

- Continuous improvement of the service system
- Multiple entry points to the service system with effective orientation and referral
- Diverse services
- Stakeholder awareness and understanding of the service system

Communication and Outreach

- Soft Launch of the applytosettlement.ca website designed to professionalize the sector through a competency-based web portal for settlement organizations.
- Presentation at 2014-2015 CAPLA Conference on Establishing Competencies for Settlement Practice (Ottawa)
- Presentation at 2014-2015 Literacy and Learning Symposium (Edmonton)
- Presentation at 2014-2015 Newcomer Fair (Calgary)
- Presentation at 17th National Metropolis Conference on Exploring the Challenges Faced by AB TFWs (Vancouver)

1,035,920 hits

658 downloads

725 organizations receive timely information and research via AAISA Connection E-bulletin

184 Twitter followers & 224 Tweets

Building capacity through collaboration



Western Region Working Group (WRWG)

The group has been established to represent the Western Region (WR) settlement and integration sector by working in a collaborative interprovincial/territorial effort. The WRWG has a total of nine members representing the umbrella organizations in British Columbia, Yukon Territory, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Partnership Highlights:

- Increased lines of communication between CIC and across the Western Region
- Improved the understanding of CIC's WR Advisory Committee of the commonalities and challenges within the region
- Identified each jurisdiction's comparative advantages across the WR
- 3 policy publications



Alberta Integration Summit 2014

"Great networking and exchange of ideas and local initiatives."

Summit Participant

Held in October 2015, the Alberta Integration Summit was a catalytic AAISA-led initiative funded by CIC. The Summit was designed to engage a wide cross-section of settlement stakeholders to understand the current context of immigrants, the status of settlement service use, the impact of settlement programs and programs that serve sizable populations of foreign-born clients, and the gaps in settlement services. Not only was the Summit intended to provide an opportunity for the reflection and consideration of these emerging priorities, but also for stakeholders to collectively gather the necessary information to ensure better settlement and integration outcomes for newcomers and foster welcoming communities in Alberta.

- Unique bilingual policy development event with 129 different organizations: 3 levels of government, research networks, settlement agencies, and employers
- 250 participants
- Attendees from settlement, Francophone, public, private, non-profit, health, and justice sectors
- Simultaneous translation
- Summit discussions resulted in an Alberta Integration Summit Report which identifies core needs and gaps. This Report was used to inform CIC's upcoming Call for Proposals priorities

Stakeholders & partners

Funders, staff &
volunteers



STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

AAISA's success is related to the breadth of its network and commitment to collaboration. We have 19 Member Agencies across the Province. Our Partners include:

- The Alberta Settlement and Integration Summit with the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments, Partnership to Prosperity (P2P), Immigration Research West (IRW), Association Canadienne Française de l'Alberta (ACFA), and Alberta Rural Development Network
- Rural Development Institute (RDI) and Immigration Research West (IRW) for the Immigrant settlement services and gaps in CIC's Western Region Project
- NGO role in supporting Temporary Foreign Workers in collaboration with the Canadian Council of Refugees (CCR), the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies of BC (AMSSA), and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- Pathways to Prosperity (P2P)
- Calgary Sexual Health Centre
- CAPLA- Immigrants RPL Working Group
- Restorative Justice Working Group
- Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance (CISSA-ACSEI)

FUNDERS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- 66 Event Volunteers
- 3 Organizational Volunteers
- 4 Job Placements

- **AAISA Funders:** Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Alberta Human Rights Commission, Alberta Ministry of Jobs, Skills, Training, and Labour, Alberta Culture, United Way of Calgary, City of Calgary Family and Community Support Services (FCSS), and Private Foundations

AAISA STAFF

Milton Alfonso Ortega
Provincial Manager

Rennais Gayle-Indire
Training and Professional Development Project Coordinator

Caroline Hemstock
Research and Policy Project Coordinator

Deniz Erkmén
Research Officer

Pradnya Yadav
Administrative Officer

Sharlene Torres
SPTA Administrative Assistant

CONTACT US

website: aaisa.ca



The logo for AAISA features the lowercase letters 'aaisa' in a white, serif font, set against a solid black rectangular background. The letters are closely spaced and centered within the rectangle.

aaisa

Alberta Association of Immigrant
Serving Agencies