Does [City] Size Matter? A geographical analysis of privately sponsored Syrian newcomers' settlement, social inclusion and economic integration in the Greater Toronto Area and Guelph

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Abstract:
In 2015, the Canadian Syrian Initiative developed as over two million private citizens participated in the private sponsorship of Syrian refugees under the Trudeau government. As privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) settle in the communities of their sponsorship groups, the program supports a more geographically even distribution of resettled newcomers. The impact of the community of settlement and whether city size influences newcomers' successful integration is thus important to study. This paper offers a geographic comparison of two different sized cities, the large urban centre of the Greater Toronto Area and the smaller city of Guelph, to examine the initial settlement experiences of Syrian PSRs. The two cities are contrasted to analyze how the geography and city size of settlement impacts integration, juxtaposing newcomers' social networks, with both co-ethnic and cross-cultural communities, and access to meaningful employment, in order to analyze how both variables mutually impact one another throughout settlement. The research provided evidence that city size does matter, as the smaller centre of Guelph was able to provide enhanced social networks with the host community, more affordable costs of living and better access to employment compared to the GTA. However, this project also finds that while city size matters, it is not the most important variable for the successful integration of PSRs. Instead, the knowledge, quality and ability of each individual private sponsorship group was found to be the most influential for positive settlement experiences. Furthermore, PSR access to meaningful employment, rather than remedial employment was found to be unaffected by the size of the city of settlement.

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BVOR: Blended Visa Office-referred Refugees
CCR: Canadian Council for Refugees
CIC: Citizenship and Immigration Canada
ECRE: European Council on Refugees and Exiles
GAR: Government-Assisted Refugees
GTA: The Greater Toronto Area
IRB: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
IRCC: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
NGO: Non-Government Organization
PSR: Privately Sponsored Refugees
PSRP: Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program
RAP: Resettlement Assistance Program
RSTP: Refugee Sponsorship Training Program
SSW: Settlement Support Workers
UNHCR: The United Nations Refugee Agency

Chapter One: Introduction

Canada is internationally acclaimed for its refugee programs and has welcomed 1,088,015 refugees since 1980 (UNHCR, 2019a, p. 4). The country has specifically received praise for its Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP), in which over 300,000 refugees have been resettled and sponsored by private citizens since its creation in 1979 (Bond and Kwadrans, 2019, p. 87; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). Private sponsors financially and socially support newcomers' resettlement for a twelve-month period or until the sponsored become financially self-sufficient— whichever comes first (Garcea, 2017; Hyndman et al., 2017; Kaida et al., 2019). Recently, Canada was globally commended for a national initiative under the Trudeau government to resettle 25,000 new Syrian refugees between November 2015 and February 2016 (IRCC, 2019, p. 1). The Canada-wide mobilization was in response to the brewing political and social debate in the global North over the increased numbers of international refugees, largely due to the Syrian Civil War (Bond and Kwadrans, 2019). Through this mobilization, which will be referred to as the "Canadian Syrian Initiative" hereafter, almost 60,000 Syrian refugees have been settled throughout Canada as of February 2019 (Statistics Canada, 2019, p. 2; Veronis et al., forthcoming, p. 439). The Canadian Syrian Initiative led the way to a re-emergence of support for Canada's PSRP, with over two million private citizens from more than 400 communities participating in privately sponsoring Syrian resettlement (Bond and Kwadrans, 2019, p. 87).

Due to the Canadian Syrian Initiative and similar actions taken within other countries in the global North, such as in Germany, intense debate has developed around the social and economic costs of hosting refugees (Hynie, 2018a, p. 266). Successful resettlement and integration of newcomers is not only essential for the newcomers themselves, but also the host country (Esses et al., forthcoming). Furthermore,

> private sponsorship offers a unique opportunity to explore perceptions and experiences of an encounter between citizen (member) and refugee (other) that is both highly personal and constituted and mediated by the state. Refugee sponsors interact with refugees at the granular, quotidian level of daily life. (Macklin et al., 2018, p. 36)

Additionally, the PSRP has allowed a more balanced geographic distribution of newcomers throughout Canada, as Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) are settled into the communities of their sponsors (RSTP, 2019). In contrast, Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) were settled into 36 destination cities, including those in Quebec (Government of Canada, 2017a, n.p.). The newest category of resettlement is blended visa office-referred refugees (BVORs), in which the cost of resettlement is split between the government and private sponsors for a one-year period. BVORs are also more geographically distributed than GARs, with whom they share many characteristics with (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Labman and Pearlman, 2018). The wider geographical distribution of newcomers through the PSR and BVOR programs has increased interest in the question of how the size of community the newcomer settles into shapes their integration outcomes (Agrawal, 2018; Belkhodja, forthcoming; Haugen, 2019). My research seeks to critically question both these concerns and geopolitical factors, concentrating on two differently-sized cities in Southern Ontario, as it is the

region into which the highest number of Syrian PSRs were settled (Government of Canada, 2017a). This paper will geographically compare the large urban centre of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and the smaller city of Guelph to address these questions:

1. **How does:**
    a) the geography of settlement
    b) the city size of settlement
   shape and influence the integration experiences of Syrian PSRs in the GTA and Guelph?
2. **What are the social and economic implications for newcomers in terms of city size?**
3. **How do social networks, with both fellow Syrian and Arabic-speaking community and the wider host community, shape their access to meaningful employment, and do they differ at all across the two cities?**
4. **Do social networks and employment prospects shape each other differently based on city size in the GTA and Guelph?**

First, my research examines how privately sponsored Syrian newcomers in two Southern Ontario cities experience place during the first years of settlement. I seek to understand what factors influence integration, exploring community, or city, size as an under-researched consideration. One may be more conducive to Syrian newcomer settlement, though not much research on this exists.[1] I examine the most important factors identified by newcomers, key informants in the settlement sector, and sponsors that allow the newcomers to feel self-sufficient in their new communities, advance economically, develop social connections and feel a sense of belonging. Consequently, my research also analyzes how social connections and networks may influence settlement. This project looks to fill the gaps in both research and policy for refugee settlement, enhancing the importance and consideration of geography within the settlement process. I seek to critically illuminate the facilitators and barriers Syrian newcomers face in the settlement and integration process. These questions are answered through a geographical comparison of newcomer experiences in the GTA and Guelph.

1.1 A short history of the Canadian Syrian Initiative

In late 2010, unrest across the Middle East-North Africa (MENA) region occurred through the Arab Springs uprising (Culbertson and Constant, 2015). In Syria, President Bashar al-Assad responded to the insurgence in the country with violence, which resulted in armed conflict between the government led by Bashar al-Assad and multiple opposing forces (Bhayee, 2019, p. 1). As a result of the Syrian Civil War, which began in 2011, over 5.7 million Syrians became refugees in surrounding countries, such as Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon (Lokot, 2019, p. 471). Additionally, 6.1 million people have been internally displaced throughout Syria and more than half a million Syrians have been killed in the war (Lokot, 2019, p. 471). For the first time since World War II, the total number of refugees across the world surpassed fifty million in 2014, with the continuing Syrian conflict being one of the central sources for such displacement (Edwards, 2014; Hynie,

[1] For exceptions see Agrawal (2018); Agrawal and Zeitouny (2017); Belkhodja (forthcoming); Drolet and Moorthi (2018); Haugen (2019); Kyriakides et al. (forthcoming); Walton-Roberts et al. (forthcoming).

2018b). In 2015, there was increased attention when a larger influx of refugees attempted to move more globally, with many Syrian refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea to seek refuge in Europe (Crawley et al., 2018; Greussing and Boomgaarden, 2017; Hynie, 2018b). The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, stated that "Syria is the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time" and called for countries beyond those geographically surrounding Syria, such as those in the global North, to further support and resettle more refugees (United Nations, 2016, n.p.).

It was not until mid-2015 that the growing attention towards what has been labelled the "refugee crisis"[2] created a national outcry in Canada during the federal election (Hynie, 2018b, p. 4; Macklin et al., 2018; Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming). A country-wide campaign on Canada's own role in the Syrian "refugee crisis" occurred when a photograph of the dead body of a three-year old Syrian boy named Alan Kurdi on a Turkish shore was widely circulated on September 2 and 3, 2015 (Hyndman et al., 2017, p. 4; Kyriakides et al., 2018a, pp. 66-67). Kurdi's family had attempted to flee the conflict in Syria by crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Greece, but the boat capsized and Kurdi, his brother and their mother drowned (Triandafyllidou, 2018, p. 199). After this photograph was released, it came to light that Kurdi's family had previously tried to claim refuge in Canada, as his aunt, who lived in Vancouver, had applied on their behalf (Macklin et al., 2018, p. 40). After this application was rejected, the Kurdi family subsequently attempted to cross into Europe on a small, unsafe boat (Hyndman et al., 2017). When Kurdi's Canadian connection came to light, it was widely assumed that the death could have been avoided if the country had approved the family's refuge request. Therefore, the photograph and story became an impetus for the Canadian response to the Syrian conflict and call for increased resettlement (Kizitlan, forthcoming; Smith et al., 2017). These events occurred during the 2015 federal election, where Canada's immigration policy, particularly surrounding Syrian refugee resettlement, became one of the key focuses of the election (Labman, 2016; Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming). There was mounting pressure from the Canadian public for the country to do more in the midst of the growing concern, due to Kurdi and the increased media attention surrounding the "refugee crisis" (Hynie, 2018b; Kyriakides et al., 2018a; Macklin et al., 2018).

[2] The term "refugee crisis" has been contested by many civil society actors and refers to the increase in refugee flows towards Europe since 2013 (Triandafyllidou, 2018, p. 200; Greuessing and Boomgaarden, 2017, p. 1764). A narrative of a so-called "crisis" "reinforces a particular way of thinking about the dynamics of migration" and shapes it as "an unprecedented event, a single coherent flow of people that came 'from nowhere', suddenly and unexpectedly pressing against the continent's [Europe's] southern border" (Crawley et al., 2018, p. 2). Such a view is "over simplistic and economically deterministic" (Crawley et al., 2018, p. 7). Therefore, while I refer to the "refugee crisis" in this introduction to present the background on what led to the Canadian Syrian Initiative, I wish to critique and deconstruct such a label and response. I consequently put the label in quotations when it is referred to, as the overarching manner in which a large and diverse group of people were regarded cannot fully reflect the complexities of migration and, people's reasoning for why they move and the impact that doing so has on their lives.

In the fifteen years before the Canadian Syrian Initiative, approximately 12,000 refugees were resettled throughout Canada each year (IRCC, 2019, p. 1). In 2015, the Trudeau-led Liberal Party was elected as a majority government after pledging to resettle 25,000 government sponsored Syrian refugees by the end of 2015 (Esses et al., forthcoming, p. 71; Macklin et al., 2018, p. 36). The goal of 25,000 government sponsored Syrian refugees was not reached during the proposed period, with the government needing the beginning months of 2016 to reach this target (IRCC, 2019). Furthermore, due to the expedited timeline, the government also pulled numbers from PSRs in order to reach their objective in time (IRCC, 2019; Labman, 2016).

Within 118 days, Canada resettled 26,172 Syrian refugees throughout the country (Kiziltan forthcoming, p. 7; Veronis et al., forthcoming, p. 439). The movement, initially referred to as "Welcome Refugees", acquired extensive media coverage, both internationally and throughout Canada (Hynie, 2018b, p. 1). Media attention was also found to be the main motivator as to why Canadians participated in the Initiative, as it contributes to the construction of social narratives and representations of refugees, impacting the host community's mindset and behaviour towards the newcomers (Greussing and Boomgaarden, 2017; IRCC, 2019). Canada's history of resettlement and its rhetoric for being welcoming and inclusive also served as an important resource that mobilized more than two million Canadians across hundreds of communities (Bond and Kwadrans, 2019; Hutchinson, 2018, p. 22; Kiziltan, forthcoming).

1.2 Canadian Refugee Programs

There are two pathways to enter Canada as a refugee. The first route is through claiming asylum, where an individual claims asylum at the border or once inside Canada and it is then determined whether they qualify as a refugee by authorities based on the definition created in the 1951 Geneva Convention (CCR, 2010; UNHCR, 2019a). The second way to enter Canada as a refugee is through resettlement, where individuals who cannot return to their country of origin and are not able to settle in the country of first asylum are selected abroad and brought to Canada (Eby et al., 2011). Resettlement is one of the UN's three durable solutions, but less than one percent of the world's total refugee population will be selected from refugee camps and urban areas for resettlement in countries such as Canada, Australia and Sweden (Garnier et al., 2018, p. 1; Hyndman, 2019, p. 1; Hyndman and Giles, 2016, p. 155). (Re)settlement is the process of moving and integrating into and within a host community, whereby the length of time it takes a newcomer to integrate is dependent on pre-arrival, transit and post-arrival circumstances (Bushell and Shields, 2019; McDonald-Wilmsen, 2009).[3] Canada has been noted as one of the top countries in the world for their resettlement of refugee, in terms of numbers, resettling almost 700,000 refugees since 1959 (Bhayee, 2019).[4]

[3] The differentiation between resettlement and settlement will be discussed later in the chapter within ethical considerations.

[4] See also: Hyndman et al. (2017); Hynie (2018b) and Kumin (2015) for how Canada has additionally been reputed not just for their numbers of refugee resettlement but also their quality of refugee resettlement programs, specifically Canadian citizen involvement within the PSRP.

Refugees who are selected overseas are resettled into one of three categories: government assisted refugees (GARs), privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) and blended visa office-referred refugees (BVORs) (IRCC, 2019; UNHCR, 2019a). GARs are federally supported for their first year in Canada by the federal government (or Quebec) after being referred by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Garcea, 2017). Privately sponsored refugees (PSRs), which this paper will specifically focus on, are individuals brought to Canada when groups of Canadian citizens or organizations privately sponsor them for a one-year period or until the sponsored become financially self-sufficient— whichever comes first (Garcea, 2017; Kaida et al., 2019). The sponsors support the newcomers both socially and financially, with the newcomers settling in the same community as the sponsorship group (Kumin, 2015; RSTP, 2019). Some of the sponsorship duties are to assist the newcomers navigating the host community's social norms and various bureaucratic structures in order for them to ultimately become independent (Lim, 2019). The third and newest category is the Blended Visa Office-referred Refugees (BVOR) program, which was developed in 2013, in which newcomers are supported by both the government and private sponsors. The costs of resettlement are split between private sponsors and the government for a one-year period, but the settlement support is done privately (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017, p. 3; Labman and Pearlman, 2018).

The first citizen-led PSR initiative saw 60,000 Indochinese refugees resettled into Canada between 1979-1980, which was inspired by the Canadian public's desire to do more (Hyndman et al., 2017, p. 4; Hynie, 2018b, p. 1). Since this period, the PSRP has become a central part of the Canadian identity and has resettled over 300,000 refugees into Canada (Bond and Kwandrans, 2019, p. 87; Macklin et al., 2018, p. 37). The social bonds between the sponsors and sponsored can allow newcomers to be more quickly integrated, as the social connections and capital provided through the PSRP can improve access to employment, housing and education (Agrawal, 2018; Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017). The cross-cultural friendships also provide invaluable information on national and community customs and principles (Hynie, 2018b; Kumin, 2015). Furthermore, the program has encouraged policy shifts due to public interest and knowledge and can allow citizens to increase the number of spaces available for refugee resettlement (Lim, 2019).

The Canadian Syrian Initiative saw hundreds of communities across the country privately sponsor Syrian refugees' resettlement throughout 2015-2016 (Hyndman et al., 2017, p. 4). In total, 39,636 Syrians were resettled throughout Canada between November 4, 2015 and December 31, 2016 (IRCC, 2019, p. 3). Of this group, 55% were GARs, 35% were PSRs and 10% were BVORs (IRCC, 2018, table one). The Syrian newcomers' demographic profile varied significantly compared to past cohorts of refugees that have been resettled in Canada. IRCC (2019) found that Syrians over the age of 18 had higher rates of not knowing at least one of Canada's official languages (65%) than non-Syrian newcomers (42%) (p. 4). Moreover, 50% of Syrian newcomers were under the age of 18 when they first arrived in Canada, whereas this age group made up only

37% of past cohorts (IRCC, 2019, p. 4). However, the Syrian newcomers' demographics were dependent on their category of resettlement, as GARs, PSRs or BVORs elicited distinct settlement experiences (Hyndman, 2014; IRCC, 2016a; 2019). For example, half of Syrian PSRs reported knowing English, French or both, whereas only eight percent of GARs reported knowledge on either language (IRCC, 2019, p. 3). Syrian PSRs also tended to be older, have higher education and smaller family sizes compared to Syrian GARs (IRCC, 2016a). Compared to previous PSR cohorts between 2010-2014, Syrian PSRs were more educated and had higher levels of Canada's official languages (IRCC, 2016a, p. 1). On the contrary, Syrian GARs tended to be less educated and had lower levels of Canada's official languages compared with past GAR cohorts (IRCC, 2016a).

While the Canadian Syrian Initiative encompassed all three categories of resettlement, this research project will specifically look at PSRs and their settlement in Southern Ontario, as the category of resettlement deeply influences integration experiences due to the resources and relationships newcomers have access to (Hynie et al., 2019; IRCC, 2019). For instance, PSRs have historically become self-supporting faster than GARs and have a higher rate of employment earnings during the first three years after arrival (Hyndman, 2011, p. 14). Moreover, the economic and social support of the PSRP creates unique social relationships between the host community and newcomers, which are valuable to examine, as such support impacts settlement outcomes. As well, selection criteria for each category are very distinct. As a result, one cannot simply compare individuals with one another on their achievements, challenges or experiences across the different categories.

Canada has also received international praise for its PSRP being "a 'shining example' of community-based refugee resettlement", as the program has offset the government's costs but can still increases the total number of refugees able to be resettled (Kaida et al., 2019, p. 4; Yu et al., 2007). Federal officials have now partnered with the UNHCR in order to export the PSRP to other countries, such as Ireland, the UK, Argentina and New Zealand (Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative, n.d., n.p.; Government of Canada, 2020, n.p.; Hyndman et al., 2017, p. 9; Hynie et al., 2019). Refugee settlement is:

> often framed as a blessing or a gift by the government of Canada and media. However, while resettlement may mean rescue or relocation from a life-threatening situation, it is not necessarily a wholly positive experience. Rather, resettlement can be fraught with experiences of poverty, racism, intolerance, stress, social isolation, and housing inability. (Oudshoorn et al., 2019, p. 2)

Also, power imbalances between the host community and newcomers are created from the very architecture of the PSRP, which focuses on the newcomers' self-sufficiency after twelve-months, without any consideration of how reasonable such a challenge might be (Kyriakides et al., 2018b; Lim, 2019; Lorinc, 2019).

Furthermore, the Canadian State benefits from the actions of its citizen-sponsors and the related construct of a positive liberal reputation; the country is globally revered for its generosity and compassion,

while refugees make up only a small percentage of total immigration numbers (UNHCR, 2019a; Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming).[5] However, despite these good public relations, the Canadian Government has continued to outsource and externalize its borders in an attempt to discourage and disallow "irregular" immigrants from reaching Canadian territory (Hyndman and Giles, 2016; IRB, 2019). It has also continuously lowered the number of GARs in a deviation from the proposed additionality of the PSRP and the program is "subjected to government agendas to privatize government costs of resettlement and prioritize refugees in some regions more than others, a racialized geopolitics" (Hyndman, 2019, p. 16). Canada has also sought to resettle four times more refugees in 2019 as it did in 2015 through this program (Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019, p. 6). Consequently, it is crucial that the country develops best practices for the PSRP to minimize its negative impacts both within its own borders, but also as it exports the program beyond just Canada. A critical analysis of the program and newcomer experiences it generates is therefore imperative to be evaluated.

1.3 Integration as Defined by Existing Theory

This project aims to analyze the settlement outcomes, integration experiences and success of Syrian PSRs in Canada since 2015. Integration is an expansive concept that can mean social inclusion into the newcomers' host community or connection to a larger entity. However, within this project integration is defined as practices, politics and means that support or oppose the full participation and inclusion of newcomers within Canadian society (Hyndman, 2011; Wright and Parada, 2019). The term 'integration' has been contested as it is "subjective, problematic and complex in nature" (Kyeremeh et al., 2019, p. 3). Furthermore, classical definitions of the term have "been a source of much violence, suffering, and annihilation of potentiality" (Giri, 2013, p. 101). While Canadian government policies encourage and fund integration as a goal of immigration, the State has never formally defined the term (Hyndman and Giles, 2016). It is thus important to do so to understand its meaning and to acknowledge the problematic nature of the word, but also in order to develop a more fluid and dynamic definition. Therefore, it is crucial to define integration as intricate, profoundly political and geographic, as the process cannot be effective if strategies exclude refugees' diversity and various pre-and-post-arrival circumstances (Basu and Fiedler, 2017; Hynie et al., 2016).

This project aims to unsettle the notion that by moving to Canada, the newcomers' transition is somehow to a more developed or modern society (Hyndman and Giles, 2016). In Canada's multicultural society, integration is still often viewed as assimilation, as white settler [and other previously settled] immigrants are perceived as already fully integrated into the society they live in (Thobani, 2007). However, "this attempted purification [of becoming one] negates the complex processes of diversification, amalgamation, hybridization, and bricolage that generated today's complex 'super' diversities" (Korteweg,

[5] Refugees make up approximately 11.6% of Canada's total annual immigration, whereas 60.3% of immigrants enter Canada under the economic class of immigrants (The Daily, 2017, n.p.).

2017, p. 439).[6] There is a tension between the Canadian State promoting multiculturalism and integration, but still seeing newcomers' success through their ability to conform to the dominate society (Wiginton, 2013). Integration must thus aim to embrace and embody ethnic differences through newcomers' retaining their cultural identity and importance while still becoming a valued member of the host community (Phan and Breton, 2009). As such, integration must be analyzed as a versatile, two-way process that requires adaptation from both the newcomers and the host community (Ager and Strang, 2008; ECRE, 2002; Garnier et al., 2018; Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore, 2018; Hynie et al., 2016; Kyeremeh, 2019; Yu et al., 2007). The host community is vital to successful integration, as their policy and attitudes influence whether newcomers can successfully settle and integrate into the new community and can impact newcomers' opportunities (Kyriakides et al., 2018b; Together Project, 2016). Nevertheless, integration and its catalysts are not definitive, nor static over time, but instead are continuously changing and are dependent on various circumstances both pre-and-post-arrival (Bhayee, 2019; Hynie, 2018a; Lamba, 2003). Such an understanding of integration is crucial in a study of settlement, as the term can be used in law, policy and popular narratives to imply assimilation, or solely the newcomers changing, rather than a two-way adaptation (Hyndman, 2011; UNHCR, 2013).

Integration is often defined as equal access to employment, housing, health care, social capital and participation for newcomers (Hynie et al., 2016; 2019; Kyriakides et al., 2018a; Valade, 2017). However, this definition is incomplete, as it focuses on the newcomers' actions and needs, rather than also including what the host community is and should be actively doing to create integration and participation. The narrow description also does not acknowledge that indicators of integration are difficult to define, as many are fluid and subjective to the individual or group that is being settled (Drolet et al., forthcoming). Successful settlement therefore also puts the onus on the hosts, among whom the newcomers are to be integrated with, to ask what policies and actions are required by the host society to ensure the inclusion of newcomers in social, economic and political life in Canada (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Korteweg, 2017; Wright and Parada, 2019). Working with this approach to understanding and evaluating integration, my project focuses on Syrian newcomers' access to social networks and employment as indicators of integration, as they have been seen to be two of the most important factors to stave off isolation and develop belonging (Basu and Fielder, 2017; Hanley et al., 2018; Hynie et al., 2016; 2019). I have, however, tailored 'employment' to refer to meaningful work, so that integration is not measured by simply having a remedial, survival job.

[6] See also: Hutchinson (2018) for Canada welcoming some but continuing to exclude others; Hynie et al. (2016) on social inclusion and exclusion; Korntheuer et al. (2017) for the responsibility of integration at the structural level and Kyeremeh (2019) for how truly multicultural societies can have no clear distinction between the host community and newcomers because policies aim for equality.

Social integration occurs when strong "social relations within and between communities, as well as vertical relationships with institutions" are developed (Hynie et al., 2016, p. 2; Valade, 2017). Social networks demonstrate the immediate, banal and everyday processes, presenting both the mechanism by which social integration occurs and is also evidence of integration (Stevens, 2016). This form of integration is often seen as the last form to occur, with policy frequently assuming that social connections will naturally transpire alongside economic and political integration (Hynie et al., 2016). However, critical research has found that social networks are key pathways to successful settlement in themselves (Sherrell et al., 2005). Drolet and Moorthi (2018) find that social networks cushion stress and various health difficulties.

Furthermore, banal and informal relationships are the most important for integration, as they help build social support and communities, economic opportunities and language assistance for newcomers (Agrawal, 2018). Putnam (1993;1995) state that there are two categories of social networks, social bonds and social bridges. Social bonds are connections from the newcomers' ethnic, religious, cultural and/or linguistic group (Ager and Strang, 2008; Bose, 2010). Social bridges are relationships with individuals who belong to different ethnic groups than the newcomer (Putnam, 1993;1995; Woolcock, 1998). Bridging capital allows for broader community formation and for newcomers to leverage access to other important resources, like employment or housing (Hanley et al., 2018). Without social bridges with the host community, newcomers are often isolated and marginalized within the geographic centre of settlement (Lamping et al., 2018; Wright and Parada, 2019). However, there are positive health and mental health benefits associated with newcomers living within ethnic enclaves, as living outside of co-ethnic networks allows for repeated exposure to discrimination and microaggressions that are not beneficial for individual well-being. While social bonds with co-ethnic groups are crucial, they may also have a negative relationship on the strength of social bridges between and among different ethnic or language groups that may be necessary for wider integration (Putnam, 1993; 1995; Strang and Ager, 2010).[7]

Regarding paid work, the UNHCR (2019a) emphasizes the importance of employment for newcomers in Canada, using their labour potential as one of the main benefits of resettlement for both the newcomers and the host society. The importance of newcomers gaining employment is reinforced through the design of private refugee sponsorship, as support ends after just twelve-months. Some have noted that this expectation is highly neoliberal and ignores genuine relationships that lead to integration (Lenard, 2019; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). However, accessing quality employment is seen as indicative of successful integration in the eyes of government, and is one of the top concerns of newcomers in Canada (Brunner et al., 2010; Hyndman, 2011; Hynie et al., 2016; 2019; Wright and Parada, 2019).

[7] The casual direction of this relationship is unclear, as newcomers who are excluded from the wider community may need to rely more on social bonds. Therefore, these bonds cannot be considered limiting to newcomer access to bridging relationships, rather they are an outcome of exclusion.

Wider research has also found that both social networks and employment heavily influence one another and other factors of integration (Ager and Strang, 2008; Castles et al., 2001; Hanley et al., 2018; Hynie et al., 2019; Stevens, 2016; Strang and Ager, 2010). There are "strong bidirectional relationships" between variables of integration, with newcomers' employment opportunities linked to their social networks (Hynie et al., 2016, p. 3). For example, most PSRs in Canada find their first jobs through social networks, underscoring their importance in relation to employment (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; Oudshoorn et al., 2019). Furthermore, whether newcomers find employment opportunities through co-ethnic networks or relationships with the host community impact the quality and type of jobs they are able to access, deepening the connection between social networks and employment (Hanley et al., 2018). Therefore, my project has used both social networks and employment as dimensions to explore integration in geographical comparison, as they are mutually influent in regard to questions of Syrian newcomer settlement.

1.4 Importance of Regionalization

The settlement of newcomers into smaller centres is a standard practice in many countries, such as Sweden, Britain, Australia and the United States, and is referred to as "regionalization," where newcomers are sent to places where populations and labour forces are dwindling (Dib, 2017; McDonald-Wilmsen et al., 2009; Smith, 2008). Canada has historically experienced geographic unevenness of settlement, as larger cities are viewed as more attractive to newcomers due to economic opportunity, co-ethnic communities and diversity (Hyndman et al., 2006; Wiginton, 2013). Therefore, federal and provincial initiatives have been recently developed to purposely settle newcomers into smaller centres instead of urban cities throughout the country (Belkhodja, forthcoming). Regionalization as a population growth strategy primarily combats uneven settlement, contributes to local population growth and economic development in smaller centres, and is said to help provide employment opportunities for newcomers (Hyndman et al., 2006; Wiginton, 2013).

There are many benefits to regionalization in Canada, as the country has a steadily aging population, and young Canadians are increasingly moving from smaller communities towards urban centres (Derwing and Krahn, 2008; UNHCR, 2019a). Additionally, resettled refugees are on average younger than the average age of Canadians, which combats the country's aging population. They are also more likely to settle in smaller centres, compared to other categories of immigrants, who disproportionately settle in cities, reducing the country's uneven geography of settlement (UNHCR, 2019a, pp. 10-11). Some literature even argues that refugees may have better access to employment opportunities in smaller centres in Canada, which facilitate other factors of integration (Valade, 2017; Wright and Parada, 2019). Smaller Canadian communities generally are seen as facilitating stronger social networks for newcomers with the wider host community, allowing newcomers to learn English faster, find work more easily, purchase their own homes earlier and have better rates of feeling welcomed when compared to large urban centres (Kyriakides et al., forthcoming; Walton-

Roberts et al., forthcoming). Regionalization can also encourage chain migration, as more people will naturally settle following patterns of other newcomers, as ethnic enclaves are developed outside of urban centres (Valade, 2017). Drolet and Moorthi (2018) additionally found that participants in smaller communities felt a greater sense of belonging (55%) compared to those in larger cities (44%), due to large urban centres being more segregated, minimizing newcomers' ability to develop relationships with the host community (p. 114). Yet, Hyndman et al. (2006) found that the "presence of family and friends" was the single most influential factor that immigrants considered upon arrival in Canada (p. 2). This would prioritize larger urban centres, like the GTA, over smaller ones that have fewer people from any given non-allophone group.

However, there are also challenges identified in the practice of regionalization. Smaller centres may have a need for labour, as in Guelph, which is economically vibrant in manufacturing, and yet so many of the opportunities for newcomers are limited to unskilled, low pay, seasonal or temporary positions (Brunner et al., 2010; McDonald-Wilmsen et al., 2009; Phillimore and Goodson, 2008; Sherrell et al., 2005). The shortage of initial and long-term settlement services, especially language training, appropriate for newcomers in smaller cities are often woefully less than larger cities which are equipped to offer ongoing programming for newcomers (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; Wiginton, 2013). Communities outside of large urban centres are often culturally isolating, as the newcomers have little access to co-ethnic networks and thus negatively impact their feelings of belonging (Sherrell et al., 2005; Valade, 2017).

Normally, government-assisted refugees (GARs) are provided with settlement services at Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) locations across the country (there were 26 before the Canadian Syrian Initiative took place). Whilst Syrian GARs and BVORs were settled into 36 particular reception cities, PSRs are settled in the communities of their sponsors throughout the country (Belkhodja, forthcoming, p. 389; Government of Canada, 2017a). As noted at the outset, PSRs contribute to a more balanced geographic distribution of newcomers and diversity (Kumin, 2015), and yet this could mean more social isolation and fewer services in more remote communities. The Canadian Syrian Initiative increased the number of communities of sponsorship across Canada, which further contributed to a more geographically dispersed settlement of Syrian newcomers (Haugen, 2019). The policy and practice of regionalization in Canada has had mixed reviews (Sherrell et al. 2005). Nonetheless there is little research on how refugees fare in smaller centres, since there has been so little tracking of PSRs over the forty years they have been sponsored. Probing the effects of city size on the settlement experience among the Syrian PSRs is therefore important in filling a research gap. This paper compares sponsored Syrians' experiences in two differently-sized centres, one large and one small, in order to understand the opportunities and challenges each city presents to Syrian newcomers.

1.5 Introduction to Southern Ontario, the Greater Toronto Area and Guelph

The province of Ontario is host to 38.7% of Canada's total population, with Southern Ontario holding 94% of the province's people (Government of Ontario, 2017, n.p.; Ontario Minister of Finance, 2019, n.p.). Furthermore, the majority of refugees settle in Ontario—the province has received 40% of the country's total GARs and 58% of all PSRs between 1980 and 2010 (Hyndman, 2014, p. 12). The province was also the primary destination for Syrian newcomers, receiving 19,915 Syrians from 2015-2017, with the next largest province only settling 8,855 Syrians (Quebec) and 5,290 (Alberta) (Smith et al., 2017, p. 16). Additionally, 67% of Syrian newcomers who relocated after their first year of settlement moved to Ontario (IRCC, 2019, p. 15). Specifically, Southern Ontario was the largest region in Canada that welcomed PSRs during the Canadian Syrian Initiative and is an important space of analysis on their integration (Government of Canada, 2017a).

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) (population: 5,928,040) was chosen as it is the largest metropolitan area in the country and has thus been a place of great economic development in Canada, as well as a multicultural hub (Hyndman et al., 2017; Statistics Canada, 2017a). The GTA was also home to twenty percentage of the Syrian population in Canada before the Syrian Civil War began (Hynie et al., 2019, p. 46). Comparatively, the City of Guelph (population: 131,794) is a smaller city, approximately 100 kilometres west of the GTA (approximately a one and a half to two-hour drive) (Statistics Canada, 2017a). This smaller centre was chosen to compare to the GTA because it is close in proximity, but also because it has the lowest rates of unemployment in the country (Carty, 2019). It also has a disproportionately high number of PSRs for its population size. The following section will briefly introduce both the GTA and Guelph and explain why they were chosen as the cities of comparison for this project.

The GTA is the largest economic hub in Canada, with the highest GDP and economy in the country (Statistics Canada, 2019). The city has also been internationally recognized for its diversity and multiculturalism, which has historically attracted newcomer settlement due to the existence of strong ethnic enclaves (Basu and Fiedler, 2017; Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). Additionally, the centre has ample services for newcomers, which assist with language education, health care, social service and employment, and it has sufficient transit in place allowing the services to be relatively accessible to everyone (Government of Canada, 2017a; 2017b).[8] At the same time, Toronto has experienced an exceptionally high population growth in the last few decades that has led to mounting costs of living and an increasingly inaccessible housing market (Tomaszczyk and Worth, 2018). This housing crisis has led to both residents and newcomers to begin to successively inhabit the surrounding municipalities, leading to rapid population growth in the areas adjacent to

[8] Government of Canada (2017b) states that 229 of the 1,254 service providers that administer settlement support for newcomers were located in the City of Toronto. Furthermore, there are an additional 104 service providers throughout the cities that make up the GTA area, totaling 333 of the 1,254 service providers in Canada in the GTA alone (Government of Canada, 2017b, n.p.).

Toronto. In recent decades, the GTA has been one of the fastest growing regions in North America, largely due to immigration (McKeen, 2018; Ministry of Finance Ontario, 2019). The GTA consists of 25 separate municipalities that surround the City of Toronto, as well as Toronto itself and is Canada's highest populated area (City of Toronto, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2017b). The population of Toronto and the GTA has "increased 120% from 2.7 million in 1971 to 5.9 million in 2016" with the largest population increases seen in Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton (Wang and Larocque, 2019, n.p.). Between November 2015 and April 2017, the GTA privately sponsored more Syrians than any other municipality in Canada, with Toronto settling 5,125 PSRs (Government of Canada, 2017b; Smith et al., 2017, p. 43). Additionally, over 1,000 privately sponsored Syrian newcomers were settled into the 23 municipalities that make up the GTA, with Mississauga and Milton resettling the highest numbers (Government of Canada, 2017b).[9]

In comparison, the City of Guelph is lesser known for its co-ethnic networks and economic opportunity for newcomers in Southern Ontario in comparison to the GTA. However, this smaller city has experienced a steady population growth, with immigrants making up twenty percent of total population, roughly the Canadian average, and this proportion is expected to continue increasing in the coming decades (Statistics Canada, 2017c, n.p.). Furthermore, visible minorities constitute approximately fifteen percent of Guelph's total population, which is expected to double over the next twenty years (Seto, 2018, n.p.). Guelph also has the lowest unemployment rate in all of Canada (Carty, 2019). There are many reasons for its low unemployment rates, including the great number of factories that exist throughout the city, allowing much of the population to gain employment, even without higher education (City of Guelph, 2019).

Guelph is an important city to analyze within this project, as it contributes to the increased focus on the regionalization of newcomers for population and economic growth (Kyriakides et al., forthcoming; UNHCR, 2019a). No GARs are settled in Guelph, as it is not a RAP community (Government of Canada, 2017a), however, the small city also settled a relatively high number of Syrian PSRs for its city size, making it even more noteworthy to analyze. The high number of PSRs was due to one individual, Jim Estill, who privately financially sponsored 58 Syrian families, equating to over 200 Syrian newcomers being settled in Guelph (CBC News, 2017, n.p.; McQuigge, 2016, n.p.). Jim Estill is a technology entrepreneur and the CEO of Danby Appliances, whose headquarters and production facilities are located in Guelph (Global Hope Coalition, 2017). While there were other private sponsors who supported Syrian settlement in Guelph at this time, Estill's sponsorship made up the vast majority in the city, as he financed over $1.5 million CAD to pay for the private sponsorship and resettlement of Syrian refugees, while 800 community volunteers participated

[9] The large population of the GTA, the largest of any city in Canada, contributes to the high number of Syrian PSRs in this region, as there are more people who were able to participate in the Canadian Syrian Initiative. Furthermore, Toronto also had one of the largest pre-conflict populations of Syrians, many of whom sponsored family members during this time.

in the social sponsorship (CBC News, 2015, n.p.; 2017, n.p.; Coorsh, 2017, n.p.). Volunteers involved in the social sponsorship were assigned a Syrian family and were expected to take on all of the typical sponsorship duties except the financial commitment, such as social support, housing assistance and support in navigating the health care system (Interview 26, Sponsor, Guelph). This mobilization will be referred to as the Estill Initiative from this point on within this paper.

The Initiative developed the Guelph Refugee Sponsorship Forum (the Forum) that worked together with volunteers to develop the *Handbook for Refugee Sponsoring Groups*, that provided updated information, support and resources to assist those involved in the settlement project (De Leon and Duvieusart-Déry, 2016; Estill, 2016). The Forum is significant as it coordinated the entire Initiative, filled the gap of support services in the city with ad hoc organizations and provided oversight to the sponsorships. Furthermore, the Handbook acted as a unifying resource that allowed everyone in the community, sponsors and newcomers alike, to have access to services, supports and information during settlement. Estill also called upon various organizations and companies to assist with the settlement, including the Salvation Army to provide clothing, and specific landlords in Guelph to hold properties for newcomers before they arrived (Estill, 2016). Through the Estill Initiative and the city-wide mobilization, Guelph has become an unique space to study Syrian PSRs' integration. On account of the rarity of the case study of Guelph, the experiences and analysis of the city's Syrian settlement cannot necessarily be transferred to all other smaller cities in Southern Ontario. However, the analysis of Guelph within this paper will pull from both the city's distinct sponsorship experience, but also focuses on the findings of a smaller city in general, in order to draw broader conclusions from the findings.

1.6 Methods

This project has been developed to critique the structural understanding of place, (re)settlement, and integration. The response to the "refugee crisis" was largely at the geopolitical level of the State, which led to a partial account of the experiences of the people who were displaced (Crawley et al., 2018; Veronis et al., forthcoming). Often what is analyzed in policy and in government does not reflect the concerns of the newcomers and is instead based on preconceived notions of what others consider pertinent (Lokot, 2019). Such narratives are often at the detriment of more personalized understandings of the distinct experiences of refugees (Crawley et al., 2018). Therefore, my project focuses on redirecting the scale of "focus from state-defined subjects (as objects of analysis) to emerging techniques of governance and/or government(ability)" (Hyndman, 2012, p. 243). Often policy-based research cannot always encompass what is important within the experiences of newcomers, and first focuses on the security of the State over the security of an individual (Hyndman, 2001). Feminist geopolitics has been incited in order to animate decolonized and critical geography which assesses individuals as substantive political entities instead of the traditional narrative from the view of the State (Hyndman, 2011; 2019). Critical feminist geopolitics also allows and requires relations of various categorizations, such as gender, class, nationality, race and ethnicity to come to the forefront of my study, in

order to bring an awareness of intersectionality (Basu and Fiedler, 2011; Hyndman, 2001). The emphasis of an intersectional approach is used in order to contest how refugee studies often represent a narrow view of social and political interactions, often used to only support a limited, State-and-Western-centric vantage point (Hyndman, 2012). Furthermore, certain categories, such as immigrant and refugee, are constructed in subordination to the host community upon settlement (Garnier et al., 2018; Lokot, 2019). Power relations at different scales, such as global, national and urban, are highly interconnected and through this approach, I aim to interrogate "dominant ways and means of producing geographical knowledge" (Hyndman, 2001, p. 212).

Integration is a highly personal and individualized experience; however, policy and government rarely include the stories and perspectives of the newcomers themselves (IRCC, 2016a; 2019; Kyeremeh, 2019). Therefore, "we must uproot traditional, top-down, structure of humanitarian aid and initiate a participatory, bottom-up approach to refugee policy" (Mustafa, 2018, n.p.). Feminist geopolitics analyzes the localized and banal impacts of political processes and the how various scales of power, including globally, nationally and individually, are all connected (Hyndman, 2001). Therefore, by using a feminist geopolitical framework, this research works to be more inclusive of subaltern voices and decolonize normative governmental frameworks (Hyndman, 2001; Kyeremeh, 2019). This project was developed by consulting two different literatures: existing scholarly research[10] and primary original research with individuals who participated in the PSRP during the Canadian Syrian Initiative. Prior to developing this project, I focused on building rapport through meeting with multiple Syrians and Settlement Support Workers (SSW) to gain an understanding of their worlds. This was done in a way that intended to allow the participants to shape the research in a preliminary, ongoing and collaborative manner. Through these meetings I was able to build relationships and participate in Syrian and newcomer community events in both the GTA and Guelph.

Lokot (2019) argues that many interactions in displacement and academia focus on *extracting* information, as there is "the urge to *represent* the world through quantification [that] is a result of the value placed on objectivity" (473). The author emphasizes the importance of the relational in research with and/or about refugees,[11] in order to combat power dynamics between participants, such as Syrian and SSWs, as well as between participants and the researcher (Lokot, 2019, p. 469). Through this preliminary research, I was able to work together with Syrians in order to shape my project. Relationship building and partnership were crucial to the research design, prioritizing the scales of the person, household, and community rather than the Nation-State (Hyndman, 2004; Hynie et al., 2011; Lokot, 2019; Marston, 2000). Therefore, actively working to magnify the voices, stories and concerns of the Syrians themselves, I focus on their experience first and foremost within this project. While the function of this project is to enhance the voices of the Syrians'

[10] The consulted critical literature and research can be found in the next chapter, Chapter 2, titled *Literature Review*.
[11] Lokot (2019) specifically discusses and uses the word "refugee", as the author is drawing from their own research on Syrian refugees and humanitarian workers in Jordan (p. 468).

themselves, it is still necessary to acknowledge the State's positionality. Examining both the lived experiences of newcomers and the State's policies and actions is necessary in any analysis of the PSRP.

After developing rapport with the Syrian communities in both cities of study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three categories of participants, Syrian PSRs, sponsors and settlement support workers (SSW). A total of 27 interviews were conducted, with thirteen occurring in the GTA and fourteen in Guelph. Eight Syrian PSRs were interviewed in each city (sixteen in total), two SSWs in each location (four in total) and three interviews with sponsors in the GTA and four in Guelph (seven in total).[12] These numbers were chosen in an effort to include a greater number of Syrian newcomers than sponsors and SSWs, as I aimed to foreground their narratives of refugee settlement from the ground up (Bosco, 2010). Furthermore, the purpose of a small, qualitative study was "not to make any generalizable claims about experience or outcomes, but to glean critical insights about resettlement" and the individual experiences of Syrian PSRs in Southern Ontario (Hyndman and Giles, 2016, p. 171). This study used a purposive sample in an attempt to incorporate different genders, ages and other intersections to further gain a feminist and intersectional approach.

The category of 'Settlement Support Worker' (SSW) was given this title for a very specific reason. Oudshoorn et al. (2019) found that the settlement and integration of Syrian refugees was challenging because there was a massive increase in the number of newcomers arriving and requiring settlement supports, but there was little expansion of funding or services that were provided by the government. Furthermore, Walton-Roberts et al. (forthcoming) stressed that:

> when the Liberals formed government in the fall of 2015 and rapidly decided to resettle one of the largest cohorts of refugee arrivals in recent history, many settlement organizations were functioning with limited human and financial capital. In the context of these precarious conditions, the settlement sector faced the additional challenge of rapidly responding to IRCC's humanitarian effort to resettle a complex cohort of vulnerable refugees. (p. 27)

The PSRP had an additional challenge, as there was an immense gap in the private settlement services provided, as well as little to no pre-arrival training and orientation for both the newcomers and the sponsors (Esses et al., forthcoming; IRCC, 2019). Ad hoc grassroots settlement support groups thus developed across the country in response to the division between the formal services offered and the support that was required by the newcomers during settlement (Smith et al., 2017). Many organizations, such as the *Ryerson Lifeline Syria* and *the Syrian Canadian Foundation,* were developed in relation to the Canadian Syrian Initiative, but only existed for a certain period of time, as the majority of Syrian newcomers have since arrived and their sponsorships are complete (Smith et al., 2017, p. 46). In my research, I have labelled those I have interviewed who have worked and volunteered in the settlement sector during the Canadian Syrian Initiative as Settlement

[12] All sponsor participants in both the GTA and Guelph had no connection to, nor sponsored, any of the Syrian newcomers that participated within this study.

Support Workers (SSW). This is done to encompass all of those who participated in the spontaneous organization of settlement support for Syrian newcomers in Canada, both through formal and informal support services and was chosen in collaboration with some of the SSWs that participated in this project.

This project aims to address the "unequal…relationships among people based on real or perceived social, economic, political and cultural differences" (Hyndman, 2001, p. 213). Therefore, the various intersecting aspects of the participants' identity, such as gender identity, age and category of the participant, greatly shape one's understanding of settlement (Basu and Fiedler, 2011; Lokot, 2019). Such characteristics do not just impact the Syrians' own outlook, but also influence the experiences of sponsors and SSWs. Though the age, gender identity and category of participants do not cover all influencing factors, due to confidentiality restrictions, many further influences cannot be discussed, nor controlled for. See *Figure 1* for the GTA's personal determining factors and *Figure 2* for the participants in Guelph.

The interviews conducted ranged from fifteen minutes to an hour in length and were intentionally semi-structured in order to leave space to probe further after responses and for the participants to direct the discussion towards what was most important for them. The objectives of the interviews were to analyze the relationship between social networks, both co-ethnic networks and with the wider host community, and access to employment, and how these factors related to integration. Social networks and employment opportunities were also compared by city size to determine what the settlement process has looked like for the participants. The interviews conducted with the Syrian participants consisted of three categories: general inquires, the influence of social connections and networks on settlement and, access to employment and how this has shaped their social relationships. The interviews with sponsors and SSWs covered topics of their own roles and interactions within the settlement process of Syrian PSRs and their experiences of factors and barriers to social and economic integration.

Every Syrian participant in both the GTA and Guelph was offered an Arabic interpreter to assist during the interviews. In each city the interpreters were intentionally chosen as people who had worked within the communities canvassed previously and had positive relationships with the participants. Furthermore, participants were offered the ability to choose another interpreter if they preferred. All eight Syrians in the GTA chose not to use an interpreter during their interviews. However, all eight Syrians in Guelph chose to use an interpreter, with many utilizing the service but also speaking in English throughout the interviews when they felt comfortable to do so.

The GTA		**Total number of participants: 13 participants**	
Syrian participants			
Age range	**Number of participants**	**Gender identity**	**Total number of participants**
20-30 years old	4	Men	5
30-40 years old	2	Women	3
40-50 years old	2	Total:	**8 Syrian PSR participants in the GTA**
Private Sponsors participants			
Age range	**Number of participants**	**Gender identity**	**Total number of participants**
30-40 years old	1	Men	1
40-50 years old	1	Women	2
50-60 years old	1	**Total:**	**3 Sponsor participants in the GTA**
Settlement Support Workers (SSW) participants			
Age range	**Number of participants**	**Gender Identity**	**Total number of participants**
30-40 years old	1	Men	2
40-50 years old	1	Women	0
		Total:	**2 SSW participants in the GTA**

Figure 1: Personal Determining Factors of Participants in the GTA

Guelph		**Total number of participants: 14 participants**	
Syrian participants			
Age range	**Total number of participants**	**Gender identity**	**Total number of participants**
20-30 years old	2	Men	4
30-40 years old	3	Women	4
40-50 years old	2	**Total:**	**8 Syrian PSR participants in Guelph**
50-60 years old	1		
Private Sponsors participants			
Age range	**Total number of participants**	**Gender identity**	**Total number of participants**
30-40 years old	2	Men	1
40-50 years old	0	Women	3
50-60 years old	2	**Total:**	**4 Sponsor participants in Guelph**
Settlement Support Worker (SSW) participants			
Age range	**Total number of participants**	**Gender identity**	**Total number of participants**
30-40 years old	1	Men	0
40-50 years old	1	Women	2
		Total:	**2 SSW participants in Guelph**

Figure 2: Personal Determining Factors of Participants in Guelph

1.7 Ethical Considerations

There are many ethical considerations that have been made throughout all stages of this project. First and foremost, before commencing this analysis of Syrian PSR settlement and integration, as the researcher I engaged in reflexivity throughout this project (Juffs and Siemiatycki, 2019; Nast, 1994). My relation to the project's participants, including privately sponsored Syrian newcomers, sponsors and settlement workers, is fraught because of stark power differentials, abilities and social locations (Lokot, 2019). As a native English language speaker, a white woman who does not speak Arabic, Kurdish, or any other Syrian language, and the sole researcher in this project, who both conducted and analyzed the findings, I acknowledge my social status in relation to the Syrian newcomer participants and recognize that it impacts the research results; knowledge is socially situated (Hyndman, 2019). Systemic racism, Islamophobia, and prejudice against newcomers whose English or French might be poor is common practice. I am to avoid essentializing newcomer "othering" by focusing on participants lived experiences and narratives (Kyriakides et al., 2018a; 2018b; McDowell, 1992). Additionally, I recognize that the power dynamic in relation to the sponsors and settlement workers that participated in this project is distinctly different than it is with the Syrian newcomers that were interviewed.

In this project, I sought to collaborate with Syrian communities in the GTA and Guelph throughout the research project despite my language limitations and outsider status. Informed consent of participants was obtained in advance of data collection, and research ethics approval for the study was obtained through the Research Ethics Review and Approval at the Office of Research Ethics at York University. I reviewed the ethics and informed consent forms for this project with all participants and stressed the importance of their agency and control within the interviews. And yet some meanings conveyed may have been lost in translation. There is the possibility that the interpreter made choices around the meaning of shared experiences that translated less directly, causing important statements to be missed that may have enhanced or shifted the findings (Oudshoorn et al., 2019). As noted, in the GTA, none of the eight Syrian participants chose to use an interpreter, though it was offered. The absence of an interpreter possibly could have hindered or altered the participants meaning in statements and/or the researcher's understanding of what was shared. The reason why the participants chose to either utilize or forgo an interpreter during the interviews was purposively omitted and not questioned, in order to recognize the participants' individual choices.

It is also important to reflect on the power differences that are continually experienced by refugee newcomers during (re)settlement and integration. As systemic racism and xenophobia occurs throughout the settler nation of Canada, it is critical to acknowledge the power relations that occur between the Syrian participants and the host nation, whether with the general host community, sponsors or SSWs. Uneven power relationships are part of the core function of the PSRP and wider newcomer settlement in Canada (Lim, 2019; Lorinc, 2019). It is imperative to position both the process and study of immigration and integration within colonialism/ post-colonialism. Furthermore:

> To situate these processes complexly, we as researchers need to acknowledge the link between racialization, gendering and neo-liberalism, where the neo-liberal change of the past decades means an increased emphasis on marketization, individual action and personal responsibility for individual well-being, with that well-being increasingly delinked from state programmes and protections. (Korteweg, 2017, p. 435)

As there was a small sample size, the number makes it challenging to draw distinct conclusions around particular findings (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018). It is also important to emphasize that the Syrian newcomers that were resettled throughout Canada "represent a highly diverse group of individuals from a variety of religious (the majority were Sunni and Shia Muslims, but also included Christians and Kurds), socio-economic, linguistic, and educational backgrounds" (Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming, p. 23). Additionally, newcomers had multifarious pre-and-post migration experiences that profoundly impact their settlement, making it problematic to have one single "Syrian refugee" identity and grouping (Hynie et al., 2019; Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). Academic analysis and policy recommendations are often grounded in a homogenous newcomer identity and "assume that people have simple identities which are formed by the groups outsiders associate them with" (Cherti and McNeil, 2012, p. 4). Yet, the newcomers' identities are extremely complex and are often not shown, nor considered in official policy (Cherti and McNeil, 2012). Not recognizing the diversity, individuality and autonomy has considerable political, social and integration ramifications (Bhayee, 2019). This research does not aim to homogenize experiences or settlement outcomes based on individual elements, meaning generalized conclusions cannot be drawn about newcomers' overall settlement. However, this project reflects on themes that were continually examined in the granular discussions with participants on their individual experiences and has been strongly supported by existing research that has recently come to fruition about the Syrian newcomers (Macklin et al., 2018; Veronis et al., forthcoming).

The subject matter of this research discusses and addresses just a fraction of the experiences and settlement outcomes of Syrian PSRs in Southern Ontario. This project seeks to speak to and enhance the understanding of newcomers' social and economic integration, but such a process is individually embodied and situated, and is continuously evolving (Kyriakides et al., 2018b). Though I seek to stabilize a definition of integration through 27 participants' settlement experiences, individuals' feelings of belonging within a community and how the PSRP plays a role in this is subjective. The commitment, work and intention of each sponsorship groups is multitudinous and therefore it is extremely difficult to define or judge overall success (Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). Furthermore, in order to analyze displacement and settlement, research must address the newcomer's duality in feelings of belonging, as "belonging to other places and people beyond Canadian borders remains an important part of refugee research on integration" (Hyndman, 2011, p. 24).

Furthermore, I have carefully considered what language [word choice] has been used throughout this project in order to critically question the State-led geopolitical narrative within discussions of displacement. The category and identity of "refugee" can infantilize the newcomers' to the wider host community while

homogenizing a diverse group and creating an identity of the "other" for newcomers (Hyndman, 2010; Korteweg, 2017; Zetter, 2007). Refugees resettled in Canada through the PSRP become permanent residents upon arrival, thus gaining the right to work, healthcare, and education, and are eligible to receive social assistance after their one-year of sponsorship is complete (Bond and Kwadrans, 2019; CCR, 2010; IRCC, 2019). Due to their permanent status on arrival in Canada, this research will refer to those who were settled in the country through private sponsorship as "newcomers", rather than "refugees", in order to combat the barriers that are often faced through such classification. In specific quotations, either a journal or an excerpt from an interview, the word refugee may be used on occasion, in order to not take away from the individuals' statement and word choice. Unless otherwise clarified, when this occurs, this will correlate with the definition above for newcomers.

Moreover, the UNHCR (2019b) defines resettlement as "the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another State that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement" (n.p.). Resettlement is thus the legal process of refugees moving to a permanent third country (CCR, 2010). Therefore, there must be a separation of the physical act of moving from country of asylum to Canada (resettlement) and the more socially situated and complex process of integrating and joining a new community (settlement). In order to continue the critical questioning of the term "refugee" and the process of displacement, this paper will also refer to the period of time from the newcomers' landing in Canada onwards specifically as "settlement", instead of "resettlement".[13]

Finally, there is also an ethical awareness and need for consideration on choosing to research Syrian PSRs that settled through the Canadian Syrian Initiative, while not including other groups of newcomers, as there are politics and narratives surrounding which refugees are seen as "desirable or not" (Dikec, 2002, p. 228). During the 2015 federal Canadian election the desire to assist Syrian refugees was a popular narrative on both a national and person scale (Garnier et al., 2018; Veronis et al., forthcoming). The PSRP allows people to act on a more individual scale to make a difference at the national scale, merging the two scales of identity together. However, in order to meet Trudeau's campaign promises of resettling 25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2015, Syrians were prioritized and refugees from Eritrea, Somalia, Congo and elsewhere had to wait longer (Hyndman, 2019). In September 2016, refugees that applied to the PSRP in Jordan only had to wait ten months and those in Turkey waited eight months, while refugees in Nairobi, Kenya had to wait seventy months and those from Eritrea waited fifty months (Hyndman, 2019, p. 22).The "disparate lengths of wait times too can be considered a geopolitical expression of 'slow violence'" (Hyndman, 2019, p. 22). This project

[13] Later within this paper, the term "(re)settlement" will be used when discussing the outcomes of the PSRP. This is to insinuate that the discussion involves both resettlement, as the movement to a new country, and settlement, as the newcomer integrates into the new community.

acknowledges this geographical discrimination can be an outcome of humanitarian policies and practices. It is important to recognize that this research project has followed the narrative of the highly popular Syrians "desirable" newcomers and aims to intentionally extend its findings and conclusions in order to assist in the settlement of newcomers outside of the Canadian Syrian Initiative.

This chapter has introduced many of the main concepts within this research project. The research questions that are explored analyze how the geography and city size of settlement impact Syrian PSRs' settlement experiences in Southern Ontario. Furthermore, the research also explores the social and economic integration implications of where the Syrians were settled and how social networks and employment mutually shape each other based on city size in the GTA and Guelph. After a brief history of Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugee Program (PSRP) and the resurgence of interest in 2015 with the Canadian Syrian Initiative, I presented the three categories of resettlement to Canada that global refugees have access to: government assisted refugees (GARs), privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) and blended visa office referred (BVOR). As this research looks at the integration of Syrian PSRs, I then presented how this project defines the "complex, political and spatially divergent" process of integration (Basu and Fiedler, 2017, pp. 28). Integration must be seen as a mutual, two-way process between both the newcomers and host community. This project focuses on social networks and employment as its two relationships of integration that help to analyze settlement experiences of Syrian PSRs, as they both produce processes of belonging within new host communities. Both social networks and accessing meaningful employment are mutually influencing and can mediate newcomers' inclusion or exclusion.

The significance of regionalization as an immigration strategy was analyzed. While private sponsorship is distinct from a policy of regionalization, the Canadian Syrian Initiative served to disperse the locations where sponsored refugees settled near their sponsors. The GTA was chosen as one site for the study because it is the biggest centre in Canada, known for its diversity, and was the area that received the largest number of Syrian PSRs across Canada. The city of Guelph was chosen as a second smaller centre, as it has the lowest unemployment rate in the country, is approximately 100 kilometres outside of the GTA and had the Estill Initiative, where one man sponsored 58 Syrian families to settle in this small but economically vibrant city. Finally, I discussed the methods that were used while conducting and analyzing this research and the important ethical considerations.

The following thesis will be separated into five chapters that critically analyze Syrian PSRs' settlement and integration into the larger centre of the GTA and the smaller city of Guelph in Southern Ontario. Following this introduction, the next chapter will review the existing relevant literature, both outside and within the Canadian Syrian context. The third chapter will analyze the findings related to social networks in both the GTA and Guelph. Chapter four will then examine and compare the Syrian newcomers' access to

meaningful employment in both city sizes. The fifth and final chapter will bring together both cities and indicators of integration in analysis and discussion and present the impact of my findings, recommendations and how this thesis adds to and supports wider research.

It is important to reiterate that this project is presenting an analysis of findings and experiences shared by 27 participants in the GTA and Guelph. The participants that were willing to openly share their stories for this research represent just a small portion of the experiences within the Canadian Syrian Initiative that mobilized hundreds of communities across the country. This thesis does not intend to homogenize Syrian PSR settlement and integration experiences in any way, but instead aims to analyze and stress the individuality and complexity of the participants' lived experiences. This is done in order to unsettle, decolonize and shift dominant narratives about the subject of (re)settlement, given that a great deal of research has been done from the view of the State, and not from that of newcomers. This research has used the voices and experiences of the Syrian newcomer participants, and sponsors and settlement support workers (SSW) that were deeply involved within the Canadian Syrian Initiative.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter will review and analyze the literature published related to the topic of the Private Sponsorship of Refugee Program (PSRP) and Syrian newcomer settlement in Canada. My project details the relationship between Syrian Privately Sponsored Refugees' (PSR) access to social networks and employment and, city size of settlement in order to understand what factors are most significant in facilitating long-term integration. Furthermore, I question and explore the barriers to integration experienced by Syrian PSRs in the large urban centre of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and the smaller city, Guelph. Through this chapter, I evaluate both previously and more recently published literature that has shaped the development of my research in order to contextualize my findings. Having this broader context is especially important due to the relatively small size of my project and allows for stronger conclusions about Syrian PSR settlement outcomes. There has been a general lack of research and literature produced concerning the PSRP since its conception, though the program has existed for over 40 years in Canada (Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). In 2015, a national mobilization to assist Syrian refugees to resettle in Canada reignited wider interest in the decades-old program (Bond and Kwadrans, 2019; Macklin et al., 2018). The focus gave way to a new wave of research evaluating the Canadian Syrian Initiative and the PSRP, which has continued to grow over the course of my research from 2016-2019. Due to the increasing volume of new research and the timeline of my project, there is a limit to what can be included in this paper. As research continues to grow, it will be crucial for future studies to not only study the longer-term implications of the PSRP on Syrian settlement, but to also continue to update the literature used as the framework for such projects.

In successful settlement, the responsibility of changing falls upon both the newcomer and the host community to create a two-way perspective of integration over a one-way standpoint, where only the newcomers shift (Kyeremeh et al., 2019). The Canadian context of multiculturalism still often habitually focuses on what newcomers are actively doing to become integrated, rather than a dual process in which the host community also adapts (Hynie et al., 2016). Even when integration is defined as a two-way process (CIC, 2010), most of the responsibility for adapting is still put on the newcomers to modify to the mainstream European cultural norms (Giri, 2013; Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore, 2018). Cases of "assimilation" over mutual two-way integration are widely found in literature that analyzes host communities' expectations around newcomers' labour market participation (Hynie, 2018a; Hynie et al., 2016; Kumin, 2015)[14] or their ability to learn the official language of settlement (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Hutchinson, 2018). My project aims to contest such unidirectional definitions of integration that focus on the newcomers' obligation to change on arrival, as my analysis is grounded in a feminist geopolitical framework that does not "require the refugee to relinquish their cultural identity" (UNHCR, 2013, p. 14). Therefore, I define the core concept of

[14] See also: Wilkinson (2017) on refugees being "a good investment for Canada" from an economic perspective, based on their labour market participation over settlement costs (p. 95).

integration as a two-way, mutual process that sees both newcomers and host communities alike learning and modifying in order for successful settlement to occur (Hyndman, 2011).

The following chapter consists of two sections. The first sub-section begins by detailing the refugee settlement literature outside the Canadian Syrian Initiative, which was generally produced prior to 2016 and was used for the development of this project. Research produced prior to the Canadian Syrian Initiative assists in the construction of my theoretical framework. It also shows the long-term impacts of newcomer settlement, especially within the PSRP. Research outside of the Canadian Syrian Initiative is essential to understand how past settlement bears on present and future developments. The second sub-section will analyze the more recently published research on the Syrian context and the PSRP in Canada. Both of these sections will provide a critical evaluation of related works in order to frame my research.

2.1 Before and Beyond the Canadian Syrian Initiative

There are various significant indicators of newcomer's integration in settlement, such as community retention rates, access to quality housing, level of social assistance used, access to education, and official language competency (Reitz, 2009; Stevens, 2016; Valade, 2017). However, employment and social networks have widely been recognized as the two most significant factors to avert isolation and encourage successful settlement (Ager and Strang, 2008; Derwing and Krahn, 2008; Hanley et al., 2018; Hyndman, 2011; Hyndman et al., 2006; Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Hynie et al., 2016; Phillimore and Goodson, 2008; Sherrell et al., 2005; Stevens, 2016). This part of the chapter reviews related literature outside of the Canadian Syrian Initiative which establishes the mutual importance of access to employment and social networks to newcomer integration. First, it will examine the significance of employment in newcomer settlement, followed by the role of social networks as facilitators or inhibitors of successful settlement. This section will then analyze the strong relationship between employment and social networks as reciprocal indicators of integration. In conclusion, an examination of the literature that explores the advantages and challenges of regional immigration and the impact of the city size on settlement will be considered. Despite the Syrian settlement context having distinct features, examining research about newcomer settlement and integration more broadly is valuable not only in presenting patterns of settlement, but also in understanding the development of my research and its concentration on employment and social networks as significant indicators of integration.

There are limitations to drawing from wider sets of immigration research on newcomer settlement. Newcomers include privileged groups, such as economic class migrants, who often arrive to Canada with higher social and economic standing and more resources than other migrants, such as refugees (Hyndman et al., 2006). Barriers to settlement are also further exacerbated in the refugee experience or are refugee-specific and do not impact the settlement of other newcomers (Kosny et al., 2018). Furthermore, research conducted on refugees in Canada often does not separate the classification and category of refugee, as PSRs, GARs and

BVORs are frequently used interchangeably. Studies have found that immigration and refugee class influence the settlement experience and barriers faced (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; IRCC, 2016a; Yu et al., 2007). The refugee class is therefore an important focus in research on newcomers' settlement. Immigration also frequently fails to account for differences, like race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality etc., which deeply impact integration and ability to settle successfully (Hyndman et al., 2006). In addition, there are pathways that newcomers can take in other countries that differ from the Canadian context. It is extremely valuable to draw from past newcomer cohorts outside of the PSRP, as research has predominantly focused on the settlement of those who have settled in Canada through the GAR program, as the majority of newcomers in the refugee classification enter through this category (IRCC, 2016b). Furthermore, while categories inherently create distinctions between those who settle and their experiences, there are still similarities and connections that can be seen between the groupings due to wider "refugee specific issues" (Kosny et al., 2018, p. 25).

Newcomer integration is "falsely based on an expectation that the sponsored refugee will adapt quickly to the new society, typically defined by a narrow understanding of self-sufficiency, framed as financial independence or an emotional sense of belonging and trust" (Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019, p. 4). Simply using the newcomers' labour market participation and their related earnings to assess integration is incomplete and excludes other significant factors that impact integration. Additional economic indicators could include the newcomers' job status in Canada compared to their previous employment held before displacement, or the time it will take the newcomer to catch up to their previous employment status, if ever, to provide a more nuanced understanding of the integration process (Valade, 2017). Furthermore, there has been a separation of two types of employment newcomers have access to: remedial and meaningful employment. Remedial employment is defined as temporary and low skilled work, while meaningful employment is secure, long-term and stable with fair wages and is something the newcomer finds important (Codell et al., 2011; Lamba, 2003). Therefore, accessing *meaningful* employment is found to be "crucial to resilience through the creation of a long-term sense of belonging and community" (Chung et al., 2013, p. 68).

In the study of ethnic Karen GARs from Burma/ Myanmar, five years after first settlement in British Columbia, Canada, Marchbank et al. (2014) found only a small number of participants had full-time employment and those who did predominantly held precarious positions. Those interviewed stated there was a large need for increased and continued support in newcomers' economic integration into Canada (Marchbank et al., 2014). Wright and Parada (2019) identify similar themes when examining newcomer settlement in the GTA; the majority of newcomer respondents stated that employment was their largest concern when integrating into their new community. They identified various barriers newcomers face when trying to gain quality employment, including lack of foreign credential recognition, discrimination and structural barriers (see also: Derwing and Krahn, 2008; Hyndman, 2014; Sherrell et al., 2005). The authors conclude that there is a need for both the host community and newcomer services to be more flexible in integration methods and

settlement programs to be able to better address the immediate concerns experienced by newcomers (Wright and Parada, 2019). My project draws on the work of both Marchbank et al. (2014) and Wright and Parada (2019) to emphasize that the *quality* of employment must be considered, even on initial settlement, as it impacts the newcomers' long-term settlement. I aim to add to such findings and identify if there are any variances in ability to access meaningful employment and economic integration based on city size.

PSRs and other newcomers are greatly encouraged to become financially independent because of neoliberal expectations of integration that view newcomers as economic burdens to the host community unless they offset their cost and become a member of the Canadian economy. However, these expectations have dire consequences to long-term integration (Bushell and Shields, 2019; Kosny et al., 2018; UNHCR, 2013; Wright and Parada, 2019). PSRs historically have higher rates of employment compared to GARs and are therefore seen as integrating faster than other groups, but this may be due to sponsors' high expectations of independence often pressing newcomers to become rapidly self-reliant (Kyriakides et al., 2018a; 2018b). The pressure frequently causes newcomers to take on low-skilled and unsuited positions (Hyndman, 2019; Kaida et al., 2019). Though newcomers quickly gaining employment is economically beneficial in the short-term, it can lead to lower rates of more meaningful employment in the long-term, as it impacts facilitators of integration, such as language training, that further influence what jobs are accessible (Hyndman, 2011).

Refugees are often accepted under the economic rational that they will quickly become financially independent, offsetting their settlement costs and becoming a contributing member of the local economy. However, rapidly entering the workforce has a lasting impact on the integration outcomes of newcomers. Smith (2008) examines the smaller city of Utica, New York that successfully accommodated the settlement of over 10,000 refugees (p. 328). The city's adaption to settle this sizeable number of newcomers was primarily done for economic reasons, as the newcomers were able to fill jobs that the community saw as "unattractive" for themselves (Smith, 2008, p. 340). The majority of employment opportunities available for the newcomers had poor working conditions and wages, with little room for advancement (Smith, 2008). Similar patterns were found in the analysis of the settlement of Acehnese refugees in Vancouver, British Columbia, through comparing findings immediately after arrival with those five years after settlement (Brunner et al., 2010). Employment was sparse five years following arrival, and when available, it was identified as "short-term [and] sporadic" (Brunner et al., 2010, p. 21). The lack of long-term employment opportunities for the Acehnese refugees was because of a deficiency in the English language training available and social inclusion with the host community. Due to insufficient access to English training and services, many Acehnese newcomers relocated elsewhere in Canada by the five-year mark in order to seek better opportunities (Brunner et al., 2010).[15] In another study, PSRs who settled in Winnipeg, Manitoba were also found to have precarious

[15] Some newcomers did return again to Vancouver once other outside economic opportunities diminished.

employment opportunities (Carter, 2009). More than half of the participants were not working in their desired employment field and were overqualified for the positions they had (Carter, 2009, p. 105). Carter (2009) states that job satisfaction was declining among PSRs with time and this trend was due to newcomers being pushed by their sponsors to quickly attain remedial employment before they were ready.

My inquiry into the quality of jobs held by newcomers, their willingness to move and declining job satisfaction found in the above case studies are crucial to my analysis of Syrian employment. I confirm and extend these findings by emphasizing the importance of newcomers accessing not simply employment, but *meaningful* employment, in order to conclude if successful settlement has occurred. Meaningful employment refers to successful economic integration, such as job status compared to previous jobs held, the time it will take to catch up to previous employment, earnings, level of social assistance accessed, and the human capital and social inclusion developed through employment (Valade, 2017). This more nuanced analysis of economic integration that focuses on meaningful employment also accounts that "social exclusion is a product of larger social and political forces, and migration strategies that emphasize the economic aspects of migration over social impact are highly problematic" (Hynie et al., 2016, p. 32). The impact of employment and social networks affecting each other is visible through examples such as newcomers acquiring employment at the expense of participating in language classes and building social networks, leading to social exclusion (Bushell and Shields, 2019; Hynie et al., 2019). Employment that is not meaningful, or what I call *remedial* employment, has also been found to have a negative effect on newcomers' access to social supports, which in turn impacts the accessibility of more meaningful employment opportunities (Kosny et al., 2018). Taking remedial employment, limits the newcomers' ability to learn the new national language, requalify for previously held careers and build expansive community due to lack of time. Language acquisition, requalification and community also assist newcomers to access meaningful employment opportunities on resettlement. Through the reciprocal impact of employment and social networks, these two facilitators of integration cannot be examined in isolation. Therefore, my research aims to use and reinforce the study of *meaningful* employment, as it influences other facilitators of integration, like social networks, which together determine settlement success.

Hynie et al. (2016) develop the Holistic Integration Model (HIM) of integration that goes beyond the neoliberal narrative of newcomers bearing the responsibility of integration to improve on Ager and Strang (2008). The aim of the model is to "emphasize key issues in integration theory" (Hynie et al., 2019, p. 38) and highlight integration as an individualized process in order "to strengthen the emphasis on changes within the social context and the interrelatedness of the different levels" of indicators of integration (Hynie, 2018a, p. 267). This model shifts the settlement lens to also include the host community, encouraging integration as a two-way exchange and process. Furthermore, "using the HIM allows us to go beyond individual outcomes to consider structural issues that may be addressed by changes in policy or practice" (Hynie et al., 2019, p. 44).

Hynie et al. (2016; 2019) create an intersectional and fluid approach to examining social integration, emphasizing social networks as key integration pathways for both GARs and PSRs. The framework demonstrates that all levels of integration are connected, such as social identity and socio-economic context. In order to critically analyze newcomer integration, my research has been grounded using the HIM to indicate the importance of the two-way responsibility of settlement, and the interconnectedness of indicators of integration. The HIM was developed using an idealized case of what settlement looks like but does not necessarily reflect the continuously changing lived experiences of newcomer settlement. My research implements and affirms the HIM to compare two different sized cities in order to enhance the theory and analyze how the model works on the ground, as geography is more relationally situated. As a result of HIM's emphasis on the connection between factors of integration, I have focused on employment and social networks in my research. Social relationships demonstrate the immediate banal and ever-evolving process "that can enable or constrain refugees in resettlement" and are seen as evidence of integration (Lamba, 2003, p. 46).[16] Therefore, newcomers' access to social networks impacts their settlement experiences and abilities in informal settings.

Stewart (2014) focuses on the importance of social networks in the settlement of Somali and Sudanese refugees in Ontario, Alberta and BC. The author uses social comparison theory to identify that newcomers are more likely to affiliate themselves with those who have had similar experiences to them, as was found in the Somali and Sudanese refugee populations (p. 93). Various barriers can prevent newcomers from establishing and maintaining social networks with those outside of their cultural groups, such as lack of child-care, financial instability and language barriers, which therefore impede integration (Stewart, 2014). Beiser (2014) also discovers similar themes in examining the social relations of Southeast Asian and Tamil GARs and PSRs in Canada. Like Stewart (2014), he finds stronger co-ethnic networks in comparison to relationships with the host community, but the benefits of such asymmetry were predominantly time-dependent. While co-ethnic networks were identified to assist the newcomers in the immediate post-arrival period, having stronger connections with the wider community was seen to be more advantageous for the newcomers' long-term integration (Beiser, 2014). Though the development of social networks may be time-dependent, I contend that the definition of integration in Stewart (2014) and Beiser (2014) is incomplete. Both authors judge greater integration occurring based on whether the newcomers had higher English language development and more general social connections ten years after arrival. Though the newcomers themselves express their belief that relationships with the host community are more valuable in settlement, the judgement of success of integration simply on language development and the size of social networks is problematic. Such connections to success are influenced by age and socio-economic status pre-and post-arrival (Hanley et al., 2018).

[16] See also: Hyndman (2011) for the UNHCR's indicators of integration and the role of social networks.

Cross-cultural relationships as an indicator of integration, like seen in Beiser (2014), oversimplifies the quality of relationships. However, there are benefits in newcomers having quality and mutual relationships with the host community, like seen in an Australian program that supports refugee integration through social mentoring. Atkinson (2018) finds that these mentorship relationships can lead to sustained change and impact settlement experiences through constant renegotiations of social connections. Remediation of the relationship transpires in order to develop a two-way learning environment that can act as a bridge between both the newcomer and the wider host community, mutually benefiting both parties involved. However, the program faces challenges, such as navigating the often-unexpected complexities of society with little formal support; and trouble in measuring the programs' progress and success, as social relationships are ambiguous (Atkinson, 2018). The Australian mentorship program reflects social support similar to what is provided through the PSRP in Canada. Both programs provide opportunities for newcomers to have close host community connections and support and can remove some obstacles to accessing informal social participation.

Atkinson (2018) and the other authors above discuss the importance of access to social networks in order to analyze how and why they are so significant for successful settlement (Beiser, 2014; Hynie et al., 2016; 2019; Stewart, 2014). These authors have placed emphasis on the type of social relationships built can facilitate or inhibit integration, whether with co-ethnic groups or the host community, which is important to my research. My research draws from these pieces and aims to examine more deeply what barriers restrict newcomers' from accessing wider social networks and how time dependency impacts this analysis. I seek to employ and add to such theory through the analysis of how the size of city of settlement impacts social integration through geographically comparing the GTA and Guelph.

In 2001, the Canadian national census found the majority of immigrants were concentrated in the country's three largest cities, Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal (Belkhodja, forthcoming, p. 393). Due to the geographic unevenness of settlement, the process of regionalization became an increasingly analyzed process in federal and provincial policy, where immigrants were intentionally settled into smaller centres over large cities (Belkhodja, forthcoming; Wiginton, 2013). Since 2001, the country has experienced growing uniformity of settlement, with increasing numbers of immigrants settling in the Prairies and Atlantic provinces (The Daily, 2017).[17] However, Canada's three largest cities still hold over half of all new and recent, while growth in the Prairies has also been concentrated around Census Metropolitan Areas, such as Regina, Saskatoon and Edmonton (The Daily, 2017, n.p.). Larger cities are habitually attractive to immigrants based on the assumption of higher employment opportunities, better education and larger size of social networks available

[17] The Daily (2017) states that the increase in settlement of immigrants into the Prairies and Atlantic Provinces is because of the Provincial and Territorial Nominee Program, broader cities having more established communities from immigrants' home country and the economic conditions, as Alberta had the largest employment growth between 2011 and 2016 (n.p.).

(Hyndman et al., 2006). However, access to employment is frequently found to be better in smaller centres for newcomers (Valade, 2017; Wright and Parada, 2019). Regionalization is therefore done mainly for three reasons: local population growth, economic development within smaller regions and employment opportunities for immigrants when they first settle (Wiginton, 2013). Examining theory on the process of regionalization is central in my project because, though the Canadian Syrian Initiative and Syrian PSRs are not directly regionalized through government policy, the PSRP allows for a more equal dispersal of settlement, producing a regionalization approach. Private sponsorship has increasingly dispersed newcomer settlement in Canada as the newcomers settle where the sponsorship groups are based throughout the country. The literature on regionalization of immigrant and refugee settlement is central to the understanding of how geography influences settlement and, therefore, is significant to my analysis of whether city size matters for integration (such as: Valade, 2017; Wiginton, 2013).

Sherrell et al. (2005) examines the outcomes of Kosovar GAR refugee resettlement in smaller centres in British Columbia. The authors describe Canadian refugee settlement as "geographically uneven," with urban centres settling larger numbers of newcomers than smaller centres because of limited location of Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) sites (Sherrell et al., 2005, p. 77). Due to the high concentration of newcomers in urban areas, some Kosovar refugees were uniquely settled into smaller centres outside of Vancouver. Sherrell et al. (2005) found high rates of temporary, seasonal and part-time employment among the newcomers, with great disparities between the jobs accessible to them in Canada compared to the positions they held pre-arrival. However, the authors concluded that there was no evidence to suggest faster integration of Kosovar refugees was able to occur in the smaller centres over larger cities (Sherrell et al., 2005). In fact, a great number of Kosovars moved to Vancouver because of the large concentration of fellow Kosovars there, even though employment opportunities were limited. Sherrell et al. (2005) conclude that there was no evidence to support the theory that smaller centres facilitating faster integration than larger cities. Their work on whether city size is a facilitator or inhibitor to newcomer settlement is foundational to the development of my project. I aim to update and add to the findings in this piece, confirming how mutually influencing both social networks and employment are to newcomer integration and if there are different findings based on region and time of study.

Derwing and Krahn (2008) found that newcomers in Canada chose where they settle for four reasons: economic factors, social networks, quality of life and educational opportunities. As urban centres are growing, smaller cities are increasingly experiencing decreasing birth rates and growing labour shortages. The authors examine the provincial and municipal policies and programs that have been developed to attract more immigrants to second-tier Canadian cities (Derwing and Krahn, 2008). Barriers to smaller city settlement were

the limited social services available, poor public transport and trouble adjusting to the climate.[18] Derwing and Krahn (2008) find that many settlement stakeholders do not acknowledge the value of attracting newcomers to smaller communities, including their potential contributions to economic development. not recognizing the benefits of newcomers impacts how the host communities perceive newcomers and the nature of newcomer integration within such communities (Derwing and Krahn, 2008). Whilst the PSRP requires newcomers to settle in the same community as the sponsors, whether feelings of belonging develop can be identified through retention rates after the official sponsorship period is over. Derwing and Krahn (2008) find that the four reasons for settlement also influence retention and are consequently areas of potential development to attract more newcomers to other cities. I aim to build on the findings of Derwing and Krahn (2008) and add to discussions of location of settlement in connection with the resurgence of the PSRP.

Lai and Hynie (2010) similarly analyze the importance of social participation for recent immigrants to the small city of Peterborough, Ontario. The authors found that the largest barriers to accessing social networks with the host community arose because newcomers tended to socialize only with other immigrants.[19] Collectively, the newcomers knew little about various opportunities for social participation that would allow them to create more informal and extensive social connections with the larger community. Lai and Hynie (2010) identify a need for a stronger focus on educating recent immigrants on the services offered and have larger efforts in order to reduce structural barriers to participation. Important parallels for newcomers may be able to be drawn between one of my research sites and Lai and Hynie (2010), as both Peterborough and Guelph are smaller cities in Southern Ontario. This piece also emphasizes the importance and impact of newcomers being able to access social networks, especially in smaller centres. Co-ethnic communities are frequently underdeveloped in smaller communities in Canada, and therefore, newcomers have difficulties accessing social bonds when settled outside of urban centres. It is important to focus on newcomers' access to social participation, while taking into account the size of the community and whether social opportunities are available to the newcomers.

McDonald-Wilmsen et al. (2009) analyze a regional refugee settlement program in the state of Victoria, Australia. Here there are many available jobs for newcomers in smaller centres. While the smaller centres had economic opportunities, the work available to newcomers was generally temporary or seasonal, low-pay, and unskilled. Though the authors do not state the retention rates of newcomers in this program, McDonald-Wilmsen et al. (2009) argue that the availability of employment opportunities utilized in

[18] See also: Hyndman et al. (2006) and Brunner et al (2010) for difficulties newcomers had with the Canadian climate and; Drolet et al. (forthcoming) for climate specifically in the Syrian context.
[19] Newcomers were found to socialize with other immigrants; however, it was not just newcomers within their own co-ethnic group. Therefore, the social relationships held limited wider social networks, but they are still considered social bridges, as they are not social bonds.

regionalization and dispersal was not an adequate rationale for regionalization. Social networks are additionally "regarded as essential to establishing sustainable settlements" (McDonald-Wilmsen et al., 2009, p. 101). Resettling refugees in smaller centres must seek to achieve both local economic and social sustainability for newcomers, with the authors developing effective policy propositions to support both. Proposals included: holistic approaches to settlement objectives, commitment to long-term sustainability, and consulting refugee communities in order to have adequate and suitable employment in these smaller centres (McDonald-Wilmsen, 2009). McDonald-Wilmsen et al. (2009) find the outcomes of settlement into smaller centres to be mixed, with only certain environments creating a beneficial system for both refugees and the host communities, where there are reciprocal relationships, newcomers are active members of the community and the host economy grows as a result of the incoming labour. The authors call for establishment of ongoing support that monitors the impact of regional settlement to ensure a valuable system.

In the Canadian context, Lepawsky et al. (2010) analyze the push and pull factors responsible for migrants being more likely to settle in large urban centres, as a way of discovering what smaller cities can do to attract increased settlement.[20] The authors examine newcomers in St. John's, Newfoundland, as it is a city with both a strong local economy and cultural life to allow for quality employment and ample social networks that McDonald-Wilmsen et al. (2009) state are mutually important. Despite the strength of seemingly positive settlement factors, there was still great outmigration to larger cities experienced due to St. John's distance from other larger urban centres. Lepawsky et al. (2010) improve on McDonald-Wilmsen et al. (2009), identifying that it is not just access to employment and social networks that allow newcomers to integrate into small centres, but also the geography of small centres in relation to larger ones. Proximity to larger urban centres is seen as crucial because it allows the newcomers to still access services and larger co-ethnic networks in the large cities through commuting without having to reside there (Lepawsky et al., 2010; Valade, 2017). Guelph's vicinity to the GTA (approximately 100 kilometres) allows Syrians in the smaller city to access various advantages from the city centre, as identified as essential in regional settlement. Nonetheless, this distance is still significant. My project seeks to engage Lepawsky et al. (2010)'s findings by examining the impact of how Guelph is both relatively close but also distant from the GTA and its Arabic-speaking communities.

This section has analyzed the literature that has been used to shape the foundation for my research, as there was limited research published on the Canadian Syrian Initiative at the time of project development. The

[20] Lepawsky et al. (2010) analyze the retention of highly skilled and educated migrants in St. John's, Newfoundland. The type of settlement the authors are analyzing is very different from my own research subject, as those who come to Canada as refugees face extensive additional barriers compared to economic migrants. Though they have this variance, the importance of retention and proximity is still valid in the PSR context. Furthermore, Valade (2017) updates the model used by Lepawsky et al. (2010) to confirm how it works and holds up while being compared to expansive research. Therefore, based on Valade (2017), I have still chosen to include Lepawsky et al. (2010) within this literature review and find it valuable to my project.

broader context and theory that has been discussed above is deeply connected to the more recent settlement through the Canadian Syrian Initiative on which my project focuses on. First, my research is grounded in the definition of integration as a two-way process, with the newcomers and host community being mutually responsible for successful settlement. Neoliberal policies and practices show little regard for this dual adaptation dynamic, often placing the burden on the newcomer to become rapidly self-sufficient, which has long-term consequences for integration. Though access to quality employment is strongly connected to feelings of belonging, the majority of opportunities available to newcomers are low-skilled and precarious positions and PSRs have largely reported feeling forced to take lower-skilled work by their sponsors in the name of becoming quickly self-sufficient. Secondly, employment and social networks are two of the most important factors in successful settlement and mutually influence one another. Newcomers also generally have stronger co-ethnic social networks, known as social bonds, than relationships with the host community, known as social bridges, due to barriers such as language ability, but this is time and geographically dependent (Ager and Strang, 2008). Finally, I analyze why regionalization has increasingly occurred, with case studies demonstrating the experiences of newcomers in smaller centres who have adapted this strategy. The literature outside of the Canadian Syrian Initiative discussed above forms the foundational theoretical framework of my research. Analyzing past settlement allows for connections and differences to be drawn, in order to explore how long-term implications of settlement have been experienced by the newcomers. The next section of this chapter will discuss the more recent literature produced specifically surrounding the Syrian context in Canada.

2.2 The Canadian Syrian Initiative Context

Since the Canadian Syrian Initiative that took place in late 2015, there has subsequently been a development of research that has focused on the integration of Syrian PSRs and GARs throughout the country.[21] This section of the chapter will review a small selection of this growing research topic, pulling from literature that focuses on the PSRP, as well as examining how the Syrian PSRs reflect and differ from their GAR cohort. The pieces examined in this section demonstrate both the similarities and unique qualities of the Syrian settlement process compared to the past settlement experiences of other newcomer groups outlined in the previous section. Due to the relatively small size of my study, the connections between wider research and my own are essential in order to analyze Syrian integration.

First and foremost, Lim (2019) vitally argues that the PSRP's current form is unethical because the sponsorship role allows sponsors to exercise unequal power over newcomers. The private sponsors' role is two-fold, as they function within both the private and public sphere, however there is little regulation of either sphere (Lim, 2019; Lorinc, 2019). The sponsorship relationship lacks key boundaries that are exercised when

[21] There has been a lack of research produced on the category of BVORs, as this category only made up 9.8% of the total number of Syrians settled in Canada (Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming).

there are positions of power. This was shown through extensive experiences of newcomers facing paternalism, as sponsors dictated topics such as health and education to follow what they believed were best for the newcomers, undermining the Syrians' personal autonomy and development (Lim, 2019).[22] These unequal power relations, alongside inconsistencies in support, have resulted in varying experiences of the program for newcomers (Kyriakides et al., 2018a; 2018b; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). The variations are especially significant to consider with the Syrian context because of the high number of first-time sponsors who participated in the PSRP due to the popular political discourse surrounding Syrian refugees at the time (80% in Macklin et al., 2018). The difficulties through the volume of first-time sponsors were further aggravated by the expediated nature of Syrian settlement, allowing for the sponsors to not receive proper training and for the newcomers to have little to no pre-arrival orientation (IRCC, 2019; Veronis et al., forthcoming). The lack of experience and training provided can impact how the power relations inside the sponsorship groups were able to function. Furthermore, whether the sponsor is aware of this power imbalance extensively influences the quality of the sponsorship experience (Lorinc, 2019). The PSRP must be critically questioned, as the difficulties experienced are not an outcome of the individual participants, but of the program itself.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) released a report on the initial settlement of Syrian newcomers in 2019, assessing integration factors such as English language knowledge, employment rates and social interactions. The report identified the differences between PSRs and GARs, as half of the PSRs reported knowing at least one of Canada's two official languages, English and French, while 92% of GARs stated having no knowledge of either language (IRCC, 2019, p. 3). Additionally, PSRs had the highest rates of employment due to the influence of sponsors encouraging the newcomers to acquire jobs within the twelve-months of sponsorship. IRCC (2019) found the main barriers to integration were low official language proficiency, lack of effective public transportation available, economic constraints and social isolation. The accelerated nature of the Syrian settlement was also identified to impact the initial resettlement, but the cohort has been steadily improving and are on track to become aligned with past newcomer populations.

IRCC (2019) offers a general overview of Syrian newcomer settlement in Canada, but there are some problems identified in the data that were used to draw its conclusions. For example, findings on the Syrians' communication skills were established through the results of the 2018 department survey, which was administered in 2018 by email to Syrians over 18 (IRCC, 2019, p. 7, in footnote 12). Administering the survey through e-mail is in and of itself limiting, as accessing emails and having time to participate in the exercise with no compensation can create conditions for uneven participation. Furthermore, the outcomes of the survey and information on employment rates are not weighted (IRCC, 2019, p. 8, in footnote of Surveyed Adult

[22] See also: Hyndman (2019) for discussion on how the "asymmetrical power relations of host/settler society and guest/ refugee remain fraught" in private sponsorship (pp. 18-19).

Syrians Reporting Employment table), meaning numbers have not been adjusted in order to accurately reflect the whole population of Syrian newcomers and, therefore, cannot be applicable past the sample size. The report suggests that integration pathways do vary between resettled refugees, but integration is not clearly defined nor necessarily seen as a two-way process: such as "it is important to note that every refugee's journey is unique in terms of opportunities and challenges faced as *they work* to make Canada their home [emphasis added]" (IRCC, 2019, p. 1). Integration is a two-way, mutual process that shares the responsibility of integration between the newcomers and host community (Hyndman, 2011). I have chosen to utilize IRCC's (2019) report nonetheless because the information is important to analyze. It also illustrates how the State represents policy and practices surrounding newcomer settlement. IRCC (2019) creates a contrast for my project to contest its standardization and generalization to evaluate settlement through a feminist geopolitical framework (as explained in chapter one) that can eradicate some of the shortcomings identified and push back against the State narrative.

Drolet and Moorthi (2018) examine how the PSRP mutually affects social connections during Syrian settlement in Alberta. Participants' integration experiences were determined by their location of settlement and who their sponsors were, as sponsors are generally the first social networks PSRs have on arrival. Hynie (2019) echoes similar findings, stating that, in theory, PSRs are able to have strengthened intergroup relationships and better integration outcomes due to the PSRP providing increased social connections. However, those who were younger, in Canada longer, had English language knowledge, were male and Muslim reported heightened social networks (Hynie, 2019).[23] Co-ethnic community were found to be the highest support for newcomers' finding employment for government, family and community sponsorship (Hynie, 2019; also found in Drolet and Moorthi, 2018). Similarly, Oudshoorn et al. (2019) identify a lack of relationships between the host community and Syrian GARs one-year after arrival in midsized Canadian cities, with the majority of their support stemming from co-ethnic groups. Though the authors analyze midsized cities that often do not have established ethnic enclaves, GARs are settled into specific centres based on where newcomer services are concentrated. Ethnic enclaves are therefore developed in designated settlement communities, which allow for stronger co-ethnic relations to develop for GARs than would for PSRs in non-designated settlement cities. Therefore, integration outcomes in mid-sized cities would be contingent on category of settlement. The above pieces are crucial to my research as they demonstrate the inconsistences within newcomers' access to social community and the need to distinguish the type of social networks Syrian newcomers have access to, as each can influence short-and-long-term settlement outcomes.

[23] Hynie (2019) compares PSR and GAR indicators of integration, comparing the differences between categories of sponsorship. Therefore, the findings include government, family and community sponsorship, not solely privately sponsored Syrian newcomers like my own project does.

Newcomers in Canada historically have primarily settled in urban centres. This occurs, in part, because of the greater availability of both services and perceived economic opportunities in large cities compared to smaller towns (Valade, 2017), but also because of the presence of family and friends is more likely in larger cities (Hyndman et al. 2006). The PSRP has worked to geographically disperse newcomer settlement beyond the usual centres, as newcomers reside in the community of their sponsors for the first year (RSTP, 2019). A sizeable number of first-time sponsors in the Syrian context live outside of major urban centres (Government of Canada, 2017a). The extension of settlement locations raises the question of how settlement geography shapes newcomers' integration experiences and outcomes, one that my case study addresses, comparing Syrian PSRs and the size of the city of settlement. Does geography and size of city of settlement matter?

Most Syrians settled in Quebec landed in the large urban centre of Montreal where social networks formed among the newcomers when they arrived in 2015 (Hanley et al., 2018). Settlement support organizations in Montreal focused on developing social relationships between newly arriving Syrians, the existing Syrian population in the city, and the wider host community. Hanley et al. (2018) found that the development of relationships was time-dependent, as the Syrians initially wanted to develop social community with people speaking the same language, and once these bonds were formed, they wanted to build relationships with the host community (see also: Ager and Strang, 2008; Putnam, 1993; 1995; Woolcock, 1998). In Montreal, social network development was seen to be impacted by numerous factors, such as the newcomers' age, which affected how and with whom they were able to develop social connections with during settlement. The development of wide social networks was also limited by the Syrians' practice of seeking help inside close social circles which thus hindered their ability to connect and build bridges with even sponsors and the host community (Hanley et al., 2018). The authors conclude that settlement practices and policies for future cohorts need to be adjusted based on the specific group of newcomers in order to accommodate individual cultural practices and to successfully create social inclusion. [24] [25]

Hanley et al. (2018) and Hynie et al. (2019) are both publications from the Syrian Refugee Integration and Long-term Health Outcomes in Canada (SyRIA.lth) research initiative. This longitudinal study aims to evaluate the social integration of Syrian GARs and PSRs in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec and "the

[24] This case study is unique, as the province of Quebec has different immigration and refugee resettlement policies and practices than the rest of Canada. Quebec selects their own immigrants "according to the interests of the province" (Hanley et al., 2018, p. 128), whereas the Federal government controls other provinces' immigration. Furthermore, before the Canadian Syrian Initiative, Quebec had the highest population of Syrian origin in the country and therefore had high levels of interest in private sponsorship, as well as existing Syrian communities to assist with the newcomers' settlement (Hanley et al., 2018).

[25] "Syrians" represent more than a dozen cultural groups, so there is no single "Syrian" cultural tendency. There will thus be further intersections and cultural tendencies between the various groups and individuals even within this so-called single given identity.

impact of integration pathways on their long-term physical and mental health" (SyRIA.lth, n.d., n.p.). The SyRIA.lth database is the first of its kind in Canada and on Syrians, collecting data over four years from approximately 1,800 Syrians in three provinces (the same people are surveyed each year). This study has already filled a gap in research on the long-term settlement of resettled refugees in Canada, albeit specifically Syrians, that does not yet exist. SyRIA.lth is important for my project as it has begun to analyze both the short-and-long-term integration experiences of Syrian newcomers (Hynie et al., 2019). This study more deeply examines the outcomes of the Canadian Syrian Initiative over time and across space compared to previously published research and ensures that there will continue to be rich data available to probe topics, like my own. Therefore, my research aims to learn from this database and also add to its findings to further examine the long-term implications of the Canadian Syrian Initiative on the newcomers' settlement in Canada.

Walton-Roberts et al. (forthcoming) examine three mid-sized cities in Ontario, Hamilton, Ottawa and Waterloo, and the community mobilization that occurred in response to the Canadian Syrian Initiative. The authors identify how the national initiative to settle Syrians in 2015-2016 caused an increase in the diversity of settlement stakeholders, as many who participated in the Initiative had not previously played a central role in the settlement process, such as healthcare providers, landlords and schools. The inclusion of wider community members in this settlement case provides a constructive example of how and why large mobilization occurs and can be applied to future cohorts of newcomers. Drawing on Doreen Massey's work, Walton-Roberts et al. (forthcoming) emphasize the importance of place in shaping the settlement experience, the resources on offer to newcomers, and the historical background a particular city might have in relation to immigration. Different stakeholders and the broader assemblage of communities shape opportunities for integration to occur differentially across place. I wish to add to the exploration of how and why this mass support from communities in Canada was able to occur, in order to use this event to better comprehend how such similar mass support can be garnered in response to future newcomers, especially with the current geopolitical narrative surrounding newcomers and the widespread anti-immigration rhetoric developing in the West.

While newcomer settlement research has tended to focus on large cities because they have been the most common destinations for newcomers, research on Syrian newcomers' settlement includes small cities and towns given the geographical spread of sponsors who participated in the Canadian Syrian Initiative and the PSRP. Kyriakides et al. (forthcoming) analyze Syrian PSRs' settlement in the rural area of Northumberland County, Ontario and the impact of small centres of settlement size on the newcomers' integration experience. The authors note that newcomers had increased community visibility and lacked anonymity, as small community size allows newcomers to more regularly engage with the host population. This allowed the newcomers to gain a sense of familiarity and belonging based on the amplified daily connection with the

broader community (Kyriakides et al., forthcoming).[26] The pre-arrival visibility that the Syrians experienced due to the Canada-wide mobilization effort in 2015-2016 also impacted the host community's acceptance and participation in newcomers' integration. Though important, Kyriakides et al. (forthcoming) conclude that the pre-arrival visibility of Syrians experienced is not sufficient to ensure long-term integration into smaller communities. My research looks to further strengthen this observation to demonstrate how this principle is also seen in the smaller sized city of Guelph and the large urban centre of the GTA. As the authors factor in the effects of visibility on newcomers' integration experiences, they deepen the existing research on the factors that influence social integration and inclusion of Syrian newcomers. Furthermore, the authors' observation that pre-arrival visibility is central to exploring how the Syrian context differs from other newcomer groups to Canada, as this visibility through the Canadian Syrian Initiative impacts experiences post-arrival.

Agrawal and Zeitouny (2017) geographically compare Syrian newcomers who have settled in the large city of Edmonton and the smaller centre of Lethbridge in Alberta, to explore how city size has influenced integration. The authors find that both sized cities had advantages and disadvantages to settlement, and it was not clear if one could be seen as the better size for integration. In Edmonton, newcomers shared experiences of being abandoned by their sponsors within the initial twelve-months, infantilization and being forced to take low-skilled jobs in the name of becoming quickly quick self-sufficient (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017). Nevertheless, the large city had a great number of culturally and linguistically appropriate services that aided Syrian settlement. In contrast, Lethbridge saw strong relationships between the sponsors and the newcomers, and there was a city-wide mobilization wherein sponsors assisted the newcomers in finding quality employment. Community engagement in smaller centres allowed for the quick delivery of support, similar to the assistance that was provided by formal services in urban centres (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017). However, though there was greater community engagement, there was still little access to co-ethnic communities for the newcomers in Lethbridge. Agrawal and Zeitouny (2017) conclude that the experience of settlement was most significantly influenced by how committed and resourceful the sponsors were and was not based on city size.

Drolet et al. (forthcoming) also analyze Syrian integration by city size in Alberta, comparing experiences of settlement in the larger cities of Calgary and Edmonton to the smaller cities of Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Red Deer. Like other studies, Drolet et al. (forthcoming) find that sponsorship plays a key role in settlement outcomes but there are irregularities in the support PSRs are able to receive, based on the individual sponsorship group. The comparison of various city sizes informs my research, mirroring the challenges and impacts that many of my research participants identified. My project looks to add to Agrawal and Zeitouny (2017) and Drolet et al. (forthcoming), with the aim of examining Syrian PSRP settlement in

[26] See also: Haugen (2019) for the study of smaller rural communities that have participated in Syrian newcomer settlement across Canada. Similar to Kyriakides et al. (forthcoming), smaller centres were found to cultivate strong social relationships between the newcomers and host communities.

Southern Ontario, which might then be compared to Alberta. Comparisons of settlement experiences between two provinces in Canada would allow for a deeper understanding of the differences within the PSRP and Syrian integration across the nation.

Lastly, like Hynie et al. (2019), Bhayee (2019) concludes that the category of refugee, whether PSR, GAR or BVOR, has a major influence on the profile of Syrian who comes to Canada and the needs and challenges they face in remaking a new home. The PSRP has been globally praised for its ability to offer permanent protection and a new home, alongside individualized support and social connections from the private sponsors which aids integration and self-sufficiency (Kyriakides et al., 2018a; 2018b). Due to the more personalized assistance that PSRs receive from sponsors, they are often touted as the most successfully integrated category of refugee (Kaida et al. 2019). However, there are very few formal legal requirements for sponsors beyond the financial commitment, and yet sponsors remain the main source of settlement support for newcomers (Esses et al., forthcoming; Labman, 2016). Numerous studies have identified inconsistencies in support that sponsors are able to provide PSRs, as assistance is reliant on how knowledgeable and resourceful the individual sponsorship group is (Beiser, 2014; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019).

In some cases, PSRs have higher *rates* of employment compared to other categories of refugees (Hyndman, 2014; IRCC, 2019) and yet they may earn less other resettled refugees (Hyndman 2011). Furthermore, the PSRPs' design supports pushing newcomers to find employment and become self-reliant as quickly as possible, as support is provided for only twelve-months. There is often little focus on the quality of job (Bushell and Shields, 2019; Kumin, 2015; Veronis et al., forthcoming). Indeed, IRCC (2016a) found that the most common jobs held by Syrian newcomers were sales and services, which are largely low-paying positions with little room for long-term promotion or salary growth. Moreover, in quickly attaining low-skilled work, newcomers' ability to have long-term settlement success is negatively impacted, as it becomes more challenging to advance in their career due to lack of English language proficiency or related Canadian experience in their desired field (Hyndman, 2011; Kaida et al., 2019; Kosny et al., 2018).[27] Yet, sponsors focus on newcomers' self-sufficiency and financial independence as this is a major objective of the PSRP:

> This implication finds support in multiple sources, including in particular in the rhetoric invoked by government officials who aim to shore up support for refugee admissions and defend higher admission numbers in terms of the financial contributions that refugees will ultimately make in Canadian society. (Lenard, 2019, pp. 70-71)

The PRSP design and the sponsor-sponsored relationship play crucial roles in shaping the settlement outcomes and success of newcomers (Beiser, 2014; Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). Various research has concluded that

[27] See also: IRCC (2019) who find that the impacted integration factors mutually affect each other, with the possibility of language skills limiting employment uptake, as well as the type of employment that is available to the newcomers.

the most influential determinant to the successful settlement of PSRs is who the newcomers' sponsors were, over all other factors of integration, including city size (Agrawal, 2018; Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Drolet et al., forthcoming). However, Macklin et al. (forthcoming) conclude that as private sponsorship support shifts from provision by government to support from private citizens for twelve-months, so the power imbalance is built into the PSRP itself. They assert that "inequality of social, economic, legal, linguistic and political status is not a provisional feature of sponsor-refugee relations; it is the premise of the scheme [program]" (Macklin et al., forthcoming, p. 24).

Numerous scholars have developed many proposals to create a more even and empowering program that allows all newcomers similar opportunities and tools to succeed in Canada. Carter (2009) recommends that the sponsors' capacity to take on the needs of the sponsorship must be analyzed prior to the newcomers' arrival and argues for increased follow-up and accountability in the program (see also: Labman, 2016). IRCC (2019) found that there were advantages for the newcomers who had a sponsorship group that had previously participated in the PSRP, as they were more aware of the level of commitment and demands, compared to first-time sponsors. Lorinc (2019) reinforces the benefit of previous sponsorship experience and presents a group that is developing a software platform that can pair better-suited sponsors with newcomers. Labman and Hyndman (2019) have stated that a BVOR-only mode of private sponsorship, such as the one currently promoting by the Canadian Government and others through the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI) may require a complementary sponsorship pathway that mimics Canada's own private sponsorship streams more fully. Although there have been numerous suggestions in the literature to improve the PSRP, most have been recent. There is surprisingly little research on the PSRP over the forty years of its existence. Private sponsorship relies extensively on volunteers, private citizens who offer their time and own funds to facilitate the settlement process for newcomers.

I will add to and strengthen the growing literature on the PSRP by presenting the narratives of Syrian newcomers settling in Canada. Following the Canadian Syrian Initiative, there has been a growing global interest in the PSRP model and how other countries can adapt and export it (Bond and Kwadrans, 2019; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). Hutchinson (2018) states, "the potential to expand the program of private refugee sponsorship to other countries around the globe demands further interrogation of the individual relationship between sponsors and newcomers" (p. 32). Macklin et al. (forthcoming) would add that the design of the program also matters. Kaida et al. (2019) also state:

> As several European nations (ex: Germany, France and the UK) are implementing or piloting private sponsorship and the European Union is exploring its roles to promote private sponsorship across its member nations, a rigorous assessment of Canada's long-standing sponsorship programme will be of interest to researchers and policy makers beyond [just] Canada. (p. 2)

My project seeks to explore and further enhance analysis of the PSRP, examining its normative and historical structures that are four decades old and deeply shape settlement experiences for newcomers. Research from both past cohorts of PSRs in Canada and the more recent Syrian group creates a context for this critical analysis. The literature reviewed above along with the critical and feminist geopolitical framework of my project creates a unique approach to probing potential barriers to successful settlement and examples of constructive social inclusion. I aim to provide salient findings that might improve programs in the future, especially as private sponsorship is being considered in other countries.

The recently published literature on Syrian settlement in Canada since the 2015 Initiative shows that the Syrian context is unique, despite similarities with past cohorts of other resettled refugees. The accelerated timeline of settlement and higher numbers of refugees to arrive, along with a huge proportion of first-time sponsors (Macklin et al. 2018) created challenging conditions compared to any PSR cohorts since the arrival of Cambodians, Vietnamese and Laotians in the late 1970s and 1980s (Hyndman et al., 2017; Veronis et al., forthcoming). These dynamics, along with a lack of pre-arrival training for both sponsors and newcomers, created a unique operational context. This review sets the stage for my inquiry into Syrian settlement in two Ontario cities, and how city size impacts – if at all – settlement and integration.

The following chapters draw on the existing scholarly literature as a foundational framework for analyzing my own research. The next chapter will compare Syrian newcomers' access to social networks in the GTA and Guelph to analyze how city size impacted social integration. Chapter Four will then present my findings on Syrian newcomers' access to meaningful employment in the GTA and Guelph. The concluding chapter will compare the experiences of participants in accessing social networks and employment in both sized cities in order to highlight differences and draw connections between the two cities. The last chapter will also include an analysis and conclusion on how the experiences shared of both indicators of integration in the GTA and Guelph impact wider research and policy.

Chapter Three: A Comparative Analysis of Privately Sponsored Syrian Newcomers' Access to Social Networks

This chapter will examine Syrian Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR) in both the GTA and Guelph, focusing on how their access to social networks influences their settlement and integration process. Community connection is embedded in the principles of the UNHCR's refugee protection framework, whether in refugee camps, urban centres or through resettlement, and is measured by an individual's sense of belonging and the ability to share emotional connection with others (Fisher et al., 2019). Therefore, elements such as social inclusion become determinants of social cohesion in successful settlement (Dion et al., 2009). Social networks provide an additional avenue for connection and are a potential resource for newcomers in addition to modest government support and assistance through the settlement sector (Chung et al., 2013; Hynie et al., 2019; McDonald-Wilmsen et al., 2009). When newcomers arrive they face structural and social barriers to integration that can lead to social isolation and exclusion, such as un(der)employment, insufficient access to resources, and language difficulties (Hyndman, 2014; Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Hynie et al., 2011). Furthermore, "resettled refugees, almost by definition, have been removed from the context of integrational social capital" (Together Project, 2016, n.p.). Social networks combat such barriers and have significant benefits to integration, as they can diminish isolation, enrich senses of belonging and help relieve the strain that occurs during newcomer settlement (Ager and Strang, 2008; Cheung and Phillimore, 2014; Hyndman, 2014; Stewart, 2014; Strang and Ager, 2010).

Social networks are defined as including both social support, which is how one's needs are met through relationships, and social capital, which is the ability to invest in reciprocal relationships (Cohen, 2004; Hynie et al., 2011; Portes, 2000). These networks are significant because they allow involvement, engagement and a sense of security for both the newcomers and host community (Mawani, 2014; Drolet and Moorthi, 2018). According to Putnam (1993; 1995) there are two categories of social networks: bonding and bridging capital, each influencing the social connectivity that the newcomer is able to access and develop which in turns affects the quality of information, resources and support they are able to receive (see also: Ager and Strang, 2008).[28] Bonding capital is defined as connections with those from the newcomers' ethnic, religious, cultural and/or linguistic group (Ager and Strang, 2008; Bose, 2018; Hyndman, 2011), that help strengthen, support and empower newcomers and build emotional security by acting as a buffer for stressors (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Menjivar, 1995). Bridging capital is understood as the links between individuals who belong to different ethnic groups, which facilitate broader community formation, increase the number of employment

[28] The third category of social networks, linking social capital, will not be discussed within this research project. Linking social capital is the relationships individuals hold with institutions and organizations, making up formal social networks and is the weakest type of social networks (Ager and Strang, 2008; Hanley et al., 2018). Because of the nature of this research, only informal social relationships will be analyzed, based on the long-term benefits that informal networks offer compared to formal ones.

opportunities, combat prejudice, and encourage inclusive belonging (Putnam, 1993; 1995; Woolcock, 1998; Cherti and McNeil, 2012; Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Lamping et al., 2018; Wright and Parada, 2019). Both bonding capital and bridging capital are integral to the successful integration and settlement of newcomers (Putnam, 1993; Ager and Strang, 2008; Hynie et al., 2016; Stevens, 2016).

Those who are sponsored through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP) have "more regular, more intensive and earlier contacts with the host community," that can allow integration to occur more quickly (Kumin, 2015, p. 19; Lim, 2019). Newcomers settled through this program have unique experiences, building social relationships because of their initial connection with sponsors that can contribute to increased senses of belonging and development of social capital (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; Hutchinson, 2018; Hyndman, 2014). However, the beneficial outcomes are dependent on the individual sponsorship group and their knowledge of useful resources, as well as how active they are in the settlement process (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; Drolet et al., forthcoming; Smith et al., 2017). Sponsors often have varied approaches, commitment and impact, so that social connections cannot simply be assumed in the context of sponsorship (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Beiser, 2014; Esses et al., forthcoming; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). It is then crucial to analyze Syrian newcomers' access to social networks with both those within and outside of their co-ethnic community and sponsorship groups, to analyze integration experiences. Hynie et al. (2019) conclude that all PSRs are not comparable, as they are diverse and have varied experiences based on their type of sponsorship.[29] As this project aims to add to existing research, I couch my analysis in wider literature throughout this chapter in order to support my own findings within this analysis.

The term integration is often used in policy to suggest assimilation of the newcomer to the host identity, rather than mutual adaptation of both the newcomer and host community (Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore, 2018). The idea of a one-way process of integration or assimilation, "has produced much violence, suffering and annihilation of potentiality" (Giri, 2013, p. 100), as there is "no single, generally accepted definition, theory or model of immigrant and refugee integration" (Hyndman, 2011, p. 7). Accordingly, researchers have recognized the importance of reciprocal, two-way integration, as the host community's beliefs towards newcomers significantly shapes integration abilities and outcomes (ECRA, 1999; Ager and Strang, 2008; Basu, 2011; Wright and Parada, 2019).[30] Therefore, I wish to unsettle the notion of integration as a one-way process, where the majority of the responsibility is placed onto the newcomers and analyze the importance of reciprocal integration.

[29] Hynie et al. (2019) briefly alludes to the type of sponsorship based on who the newcomers were sponsored by in the PSRP, such as Groups of Five, religious groups, family or friends etc. (p. 46). My project did not inquire on the type of group of sponsorship; therefore, I cannot comment on the influence of such factors. Instead, the type of sponsorship I allude to in this statement is how active, committed, knowledgeable etc. the sponsors were, as this also deeply impacts the experiences shared by participants.

[30] See also: Basu and Fiedler (2017) for the notion of "multifarious integration" (pp. 26, 28).

The PSRP allows numerous stakeholders in the host community, both public and private, to play more central roles in the newcomer settlement and integration process than other settlement streams (Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming). How integration is defined by the host community, either as a one-way or two-way process, acts as a facilitator or inhibitor of successful settlement. The integration of Syrian PSRs in the GTA and Guelph must be analyzed as a two-way process in order to shift the focus of the analysis away from just what newcomers are doing, such as learning the national language and participating in wider communities (ECRE, 2002; Garnier et al., 2018; Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore, 2018). It is critical to additionally analyze the host communities' efforts to also participate and include the newcomers' identity in the community (Kyeremeh et al., 2019; Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming; Wiginton, 2013; Yu et al., 2007).

This chapter is divided into two sub-sections, the first exploring Syrian newcomers' access to social networks in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and the other in Guelph, Ontario. The analysis draws directly from the interviews conducted with Syrian newcomers, with the perspective of the sponsors and settlement support workers (SSW) participants that participated in the settlement of Syrian newcomers. Although the themes of social networks and employment are discussed in separate chapters in this thesis, they are highly interconnected and mutually influence newcomers' settlement experiences.

3.1 Social Networks in the Greater Toronto Area

Numerous themes developed throughout the interviews conducted in connection to Syrian newcomer integration in the GTA and their access to social networks. Firstly, the observation that Syrians have strong social bonds and 'ethnic enclaves' is evaluated, followed by an analysis of the structural barriers to newcomers' ability to develop wider social bridges with the host community. This section will then examine the influence of the individual sponsors and the relationships built with the newcomers on settlement. Finally, the shift over time for the Syrian participants' desire regarding which social networks they wished to hold throughout the course of settlement is then considered.

Large urban centres regularly have stronger boundaries that isolate different communities and neighbourhoods, allowing ethnic enclaves to cultivate (Dib, 2017; Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; Smith et al., 2017). Due to well-established ethnic groups in the GTA, Syrian newcomers largely settled into pre-existing Arabic communities upon arrival (Government of Canada, 2017a). A large number of Syrians have settled in Scarborough and Mississauga. Much of the wider population of Scarborough has stated that they decided to settle there because of extensive social networks with family and friends, usually co-ethnic groups (Basu and Fiedler, 2017). Mississauga is also known for its large and highly successful migrant settlement (Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). All eight of the Syrian participants in the GTA were able to build strong co-ethnic networks with ease because of the pre-existing ethnic enclaves in the urban centre. Participants mentioned how their

families were able to find comfort in being near people who had similar experiences to them when they settled, such as the same culture, language and religion. In particular, two Syrian participants discussed the idea of finding comfort and safety in similarity and community within the "overwhelming" space of the GTA and it was an important part of their settlement process (Interview 5, Syrian woman; Interview 13, Syrian man). Similarly, a Syrian woman discussed finding a book club like the one she was a part of in Syria, as she wanted to find comfort in elements that brought her happiness before the civil war. Joining an Arabic language women's book club allowed her to create familiarity and feelings of belonging in the GTA (Interview 4).

During all the interviews conducted with Syrian newcomers in the GTA, the participants discussed relying heavily on these social bonds to help them with the initial settlement process. Though they had sponsors to initially help them with settling, they spoke of their desire to gain support from those who they felt understood their identity better, could speak the same language, and who lived in closer proximity upon arriving. Indeed, research shows that it is extremely common for newcomers to greatly depend on support from fellow co-ethnic networks (Hynie et al., 2011; Stewart, 2014). However, there are disadvantages to such reliance on social bonds because it can often limit newcomers' ability to build social capital beyond their co-ethnic networks (Duke et al., 1999; Hynie et al., 2011). There is generally lower civic engagement outside of one's ethnic community in large urban centres due to strong co-ethnic reliance, which limits interactions with the wider population (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; Oudshoorn et al., 2019). Though co-ethnic relationships are valuable, newcomers' need access to both social bridges and bonds, as both provide different, but equally important support and integration resources (Hanley et al., 2018; Haugen, 2019; Strang and Ager, 2010).

The second theme identified in the GTA research was the existence of significant structural barriers that inhibited Syrian newcomers' ability to access spaces where social relationships could develop beyond their co-ethnic community. Half of the Syrian participants in my study stated that they only had access to spaces with co-ethnic networks and other newcomers since arriving in the large urban centre. Limited access is a result of several barriers, including the newcomers' limited ability to speak English during settlement and the location of the neighbourhoods where the newcomers can afford to live and/or where fellow co-ethnic enclaves exist (see also: Oudshoorn et al., 2019). Additionally, the services Syrians do have access to are largely used by fellow Arabic-speaking newcomers which limits the opportunity to form connections outside of the pre-existing co-ethnic communities. In particular, one participant spoke of how these services were one of the only tools that his family had to build networks, limiting their ability expand their social networks through social bridges with different ethnic groups (Interview 13, Syrian man).

Though there were barriers to meeting people outside their co-ethnic networks, the research participants found Canadian residents to be approachable and welcoming. A Syrian man stated: "my colleagues, they always helped me practice English, teach me new things. The customers always spark up

when I say I'm from Syrian and we chat, but nothing goes beyond [that]" (Interview 11). One Syrian newcomer shared that she had developed acquaintances through her young children, explaining "during the school year, my kids have friends and I talk to their parents when picking them up" (Interview 5, Syrian woman). Whilst the wider community has been welcoming, research participants spoke about how it was challenging to build ongoing, genuine friendships. Canadian and host community connections are often seen as being valuable for long-term integration to occur, as belonging in space and social relationships are mutually constitutive (Hyndman, 2001; Oudshoorn et al., 2019). One Syrian woman shared that she felt that developing long-lasting relationships with members of the wider population was unable to happen for her because of her appearance, saying:

> People are friendly, but community, deeper friendship, I can't figure it out. I feel like people see the difference, because I wear a hijab. They hear the difference with my voice, my accent. It's hard to move past that… It's hard to build true friendships with people who are not like me. People who can watch my children, people I have over to my home. I don't have anywhere to find that in the GTA. There's nowhere to get deeper with people not like me. (Interview 5, Syrian woman)

The interviews reflected wider research that identifies that Syrian newcomers feel more of a sense of belonging to Canada as a whole than to their individual neighbourhoods (Hynie et al., 2019; IRCC, 2019). The feeling of belonging to the nation of settlement, but not necessarily to the people directly around them, impacts their social integration into their communities.

Four of the seven participants who had difficulty building relationships outside of their co-ethnic communities were still attending various levels of English language classes. One Syrian woman stated she had given up attending English classes after the first year because her age made it too difficult, and she did not see a possible to benefit from continuing them (age range: forty to fifty years; Interview 4). When asked if this participant had relationships outside of the Arabic speaking community, she simply answered "no, I don't have. I haven't been able to have" (Interview 4). This participant also found she was able to learn more English from her job at a coffee shop than in the year she attended the State provided English classes. This example demonstrates the structural barrier of homogenized language classes, where the newcomers' success can be dependent on their socio-economic position, such as their age, whether they spoke English prior to arrival in Canada, and if they have young children in school (Hanley et al., 2018; IRCC, 2019; Reitz, 2009). Additionally, Drolet et al. (forthcoming) found the individual positionality of Syrian participants', such as the geographical locations of where they live pre-arrival and post-arrival, education and religion, greatly influence their social network development. These potential barriers dually impact newcomers' social bridge development. First, without having English language ability, newcomers often cannot communicate with the host community, limiting the capacity to create relationships. Second, English classes only allow the newcomers to interact with other newcomers, reducing the ability to meet the host community and access informal spaces of learning and relationships (Hanley et al., 2018). This Syrian woman's experience reflects such barriers. In addition, she spoke on having a more limited sponsorship as she rarely saw her sponsors

during the first year of settlement (Interview 4). The unevenness of sponsorship support reduced this woman's access to social bridges, as well as the informal language learning opportunity these relationships offer.[31]

There was one exception to the pattern of newcomer participants struggling to develop social relationships with the host community. A younger participant reported having many social networks both inside and outside his co-ethnic group (Interview 7, Syrian man). This young man was of high school age when his family arrived in Canada in 2016[32] and was conscious that he was able to build such large social networks because he had attended high school in Toronto and was able to meet other students who were from different ethnic backgrounds from him. The young man said this space was beneficial for his language acquisition, which assisted him in gaining access to more relational, educational, and economic opportunities. He shared:

> When we first came here, I was always with Arabics [sic]. They helped my parents, they were around. Then I started school and I made friends outside of Arabic people... I like to talk to people, meet new people and make friends with people always. All different people. Going to school gave me the ability to meet these different people. There's a lot of diversity there too. All different accents, colours, cultures. I felt like everyone was okay with me because I wasn't different. (Interview 7, Syrian man)

In having access to a space with individuals a similar age to himself from various ethnic backgrounds, this participant was able to create lasting relationships outside of his co-ethnic group. Wider research has also found educational institutions are significant spaces of integration, particularly for social network development (Basu, 2004; Basu 2006; Hyndman, 2011; Hyndman, 2014; McCreary et al., 2013).

This young Syrian man's experience compared to other participants' difficulty in accessing wider social networks demonstrates the importance of newcomers having access to informal sites of integration in order to enhance their sense of belonging to the wider community (Basu, 2011; Basu and Fiedler, 2017). The newcomers' barriers to developing wider social relationships are possibly further intensified in the GTA, as larger cities often make it more challenging for intergroup relations to develop. Numerous participants suggested having more programs and services that can assist them in acquiring the skills to build greater social bridges, such as conversational English.

The research also highlighted that the quality of the relationships generated in the PSRP deeply influence the settlement and integration experiences of newcomers (Hutchinson, 2018; Macklin et al., 2018). The sponsor-sponsored relationship is an opportunity for the newcomer to receive increased social capital,

[31] See also: Drolet and Moorthi (2018) and Drolet et al. (forthcoming) for the role of sponsorship in specific regard to language training.

[32] This participant was a few months away from turning eighteen when he arrived with his family in Canada and was aged twenty at the time of interview, which follows York University's ethics guidelines and the age of consent requirements for research participants.

positively impacting other indictors of integration, such as employment and housing (Hynie et al., 2019; Kyriakides et al., forthcoming; Lai and Hynie, 2010).[33] In theory, the sponsors provide both financial and social support to newcomers, allowing for the newcomer to receive individualized guidance and knowledge from a member of the host community (IRCC, 2019). Syrian PSRs were more likely to say their immediate settlement needs were met and they received more settlement assistance in comparison with the other refugee categories, because of the personalized support provided in the sponsorships (IRCC, 2016a). However, in the interviews conducted in my study, none of the Syrian newcomers had any ongoing connection to their sponsors after the one-year sponsorship period had finished.[34] Furthermore, all participants stated that during the initial twelve-month period, they did not develop strong connections within the sponsor-sponsored relationship. The small sample size of this research limits its ability to draw more overarching conclusions regarding this finding, but various related themes still emerge.

All Syrian participants said that there were limitations to the relationships they were able to build with sponsors. One participant said that during the first few months, his sponsors were helpful with enrolling his children in school, figuring out how to gain important documentation and accessing language classes. However, after this initial period of time "they stopped coming around" (Interview 13, Syrian man). Another Syrian newcomer said there was a lack of understanding about the roles they were to fill in the PSRP and the expectation of the outcomes (Interview 10, Syrian man). This participant knew little English on arrival and his sponsors did not know any Arabic, so there were issues with communication. He felt this affected his ability to integrate into the sponsors' wider circle, and they were unwilling to actively include him. Syrian participants generally shared that they had different expectations of what the sponsorship relationship would be before arriving and wished they were able to have stronger relationships with their sponsors. One Syrian woman said, "my sponsor, they are very nice, so I feel bad speaking about this, but I see friends who see their sponsors every week, who have holidays together, and I just wish all of us could have that" (Interview 8). She explained that she knew someone whose sponsors hired a private English teacher because the Syrian family was struggling with learning the new language and the State provided English classes were not enough for them. The Syrian woman added that she felt it was a lot to ask of her sponsors, but "it would be nice if we all had this. It would be fair" (Interview 8). The theme of varying experiences and support has been widely noted in

[33] Hynie et al. (2019) found that whilst this can occur, there has been no analysis of the effectiveness of this increased access to social capital.

[34] Though none of the Syrian newcomers in my study had ongoing relationships with their sponsors, one sponsor (Interview 10) did discuss having a continuing connection with one of the two Syrian families she sponsored. This indicates that Syrian PSRs not having an ongoing relationship with their sponsors is not necessarily and always the norm. Instead, the finding simply speaks to experience of the eight Syrian PSR participants in my study, as other studies have found many "affective ties" and "friendships [that] continue beyond month 13" between the newcomers and their sponsors (Lenard, 2019, p. 65).

wider research and has been found to greatly impact newcomers' settlement outcomes (Agrawal, 2018; Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Esses et al., forthcoming; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019).[35]

Many interviewees shared that they believe the central reason for the weaker relationships with sponsors was the geographic distance between the sponsors and newcomers in the GTA (Interview 4, Syrian woman; Interview 11; 13, Syrian men; Interview 9; 10; 12, Sponsors). One sponsor compared her experience of two separate sponsorships groups working with Syrian newcomers and how influential the distance between the sponsors and newcomers was for the program (Interview 10). The sponsor's first experience was based in the same neighbourhood that the sponsorship group resided in. In the second sponsorship, the newcomers lived farther away from the group so they could be near a larger Syrian and Arabic-speaking community.[36] The sponsor stated that distance was a barrier to the social connections they were able to develop because "only those in the sponsorship [group] with cars were able to do the social support." As a result, the newcomers had to largely rely on fellow Arabic-speaking and Syrian networks that were closer to them (Interview 10, Sponsor). In the first sponsorship, closer sponsor-sponsored social relationships developed due to geographic proximity. The research participant commented how she was still friends with the first group but did not communicate often with the second. This importance of propinquity in social relationships has been cited in wider research: Reagans (2011) analyzes social similarity and propinquity and how they both produce "strong interpersonal connections" (p. 3), whilst Hyndman (2011) emphasizes that belonging in Canada largely occurs at "the scale of neighbourhoods" (p. 19).

However, strong social networks depend on both the quantity and quality of the contact. Bridging connections between settlement groups and non-Arabic speaking sponsors are not formed automatically, as there must be deeper quality engagement (Hynie, 2018a). Walton-Roberts et al. (forthcoming) demonstrate the distinction between place and community, stating that social relationships must have coherence to translate into community and meaningful relationships. Nonetheless, "the most basic source of homophily is space", as individuals are always more likely to have contact and connection with those who are geographically close to themselves (McPherson et al., 2001, p. 429). This strategy reflects the Canadian context in regard to the path where newcomers settle upon arrival. Both Kosovar and Karen refugees in British Columbia were found to largely co-locate in apartment complexes (Marchbank et al., 2014; Sherrell et al., 2005). Furthermore, Canada settled Acehnese refugees all in one single city with the idea that members of the group would be able to rely on each other for support (Hyndman, 2011).

[35] The interviews conducted in this research did not ask if any of the participants had family that had also settled in the GTA and whether that was impactful to their ability to build relationships.
[36] Based on the location of the interview being in the sponsors neighbourhood and the participant sharing the general area that the Syrian family they sponsored lived, there is an approximate distance of 25-30 kilometres between the sponsor and the newcomers.

Another sponsor agreed with these findings, stating that: "proximity was really key for our sponsorship group's success. Having geographic proximity is not always repeatable in Toronto, but it allowed our relationship to be strong" (Interview 9, Sponsor). Furthermore, the sponsor spoke to the difficulty of finding affordable housing where his sponsorship group lived in central Toronto. A large percentage of sponsors in the GTA also live in city centres of the municipalities where the cost of living is high (Government of Canada, 2017b). The sponsor discussed that his group wanted to find affordable housing that would be sustainable for the family to continue to reside in even after the twelve-month sponsorship period had finished (Interview 9, Sponsor). This was difficult as much of the more affordable housing is found in the city's periphery (Hynie et al., 2016). As this research supports, geographic location and proximity to the sponsors is one of the main factors in determining the strength of the social networks built between the newcomers and their sponsors. Social connections and support are often weaker and more difficult to provide where there is geographic separation between the sponsors and sponsored. One purpose of the PSRP is to allow the newcomers to have social support through their sponsors living close to them, with the intent to help the newcomers settle themselves in the community (Government of Canada, 2017b). The PSRP requires sponsors to "reside in the community of settlement," defined as "the village, town or city and surrounding areas in which the refugee is expected to settle" (RSTP, 2019, n.p.). The definition of community of settlement is ambiguous and allows the distance between the newcomers and their sponsors to be dependent on city size. As the GTA is the largest metropolitan area in Canada, the benefits and community that the PSRP can provide is distinct due to the sizable geographic space. There is tension between the proximity of sponsors and the proximity of those with whom socializing happens.

Despite the challenges of geography, the desire to build social relationships outside of the Syrians' social networks is still present in the GTA. Seven out of the eight Syrian newcomers stated that they are beginning to build more long-term plans, and through that, their needs are starting to shift as they are feeling more secure in the GTA and with their language ability. All eight Syrian newcomers in the GTA demonstrated a growing desire to develop social bridges with a range of Canadian residents, not just bonds with other Syrians or other Arabic speakers. The type of social networks newcomers wish to create is influenced by various individual factors, such as age, gender, race, education, and employment tenure (Hyndman et al., 2006; McPherson et al., 2001). For example, one Syrian man spoke about the desire to start creating relationships with people outside of his Arabic-speaking network, and how it was a slow process through which he gradually started to become engage in longer conversations with customers at the shop where he works (Interview 6). Another participant stated that as she is still trying to learn English and gain more permanent employment, she does not have time for many relationships outside of the convenient social bridges she already has (Interview 4, Syrian woman). One day, she hopes to start expanding her circle and community

beyond other Syrians and Arabic speakers. Other research has also shown that the development of social relations outside of ethnic enclaves is a time-dependent process (Beiser, 2014; Hanley et al., 2018).

Following the official twelve-month sponsorship period, it is up to both the sponsored and sponsors to decide if they wish to continue a more casual social relationship outside the formal arrangement of the PSRP (RSTP, 2017). All eight Syrian and three sponsor participants discussed that close social relationships have not continued past the first year because of the distance between them and/or lack of spare time. Due to the language and spatial barriers in sponsorship relationships, a number of Syrian participants increasingly turned to family and co-ethnic networks for social support after the sponsorship period was complete. Hynie et al. (2019) found similar patterns of Syrian PSRs largely seeking support through ethnic enclaves over their sponsors, with co-ethnic friendships as the main source for Syrian PSRs finding current employment and only twelve percent of participants reporting it was their sponsor (p. 43). All three interviewed sponsors stated they had limited to no contact with those they had sponsored. There is a contrast between the official sponsorship timeframe (twelve-months after arrival) and when Syrian participants began to have more interest in developing relationships with the host community, as the length of time spent in Canada is connected with the newcomers' ability to increasingly access social bridges (Hanley et al., 2018). As a consequence of the GTA having developed ethnic enclaves, initial fellow Arabic-speaking and Syrian network reliance and the shift of type of social relationships is able to occur and deeply impact sponsor-sponsored relationships.

Syrian participants in my study reported great difficulty in trying to develop social networks with the wider host community, and the sponsors were seen to be less active in their social support due to the GTA's large size. City size can influence which relationships are able to form based on the geography and distance between where newcomers and their sponsors live, as seen through the experiences shared by Syrian newcomers, sponsors and SSWs in this project. Sponsors have the difficult task of trying to find housing for the newcomers in a neighbourhood that allows them to socially support the Syrians on a regular basis, but still can be affordable after the official year of sponsorship (Interview 9, Sponsor; RSTP, 2017). This undertaking is increasingly hard in the GTA because of the rising cost of living (Tomaszczyk and Worth, 2018). As noted previously, immigrant communities are often found in the periphery of the city due to lower costs of living and are often further away from their sponsors (Basu and Fiedler, 2017). The Syrian newcomers were able to live near to other Syrians and Arabic speakers, solidifying their social bonds. But, the strength of these communities can come at the expense of wider relationships with the host community as there is less interactions with them.

This section has illustrated Syrian newcomers' access to social networks in the GTA, with four central themes identified. Firstly, in the GTA, participants were able to develop strong social bonds due to often living within ethnic enclaves in the peripheries to the urban centre, like found in Scarborough and Mississauga.

Secondly, there were barriers to Syrian newcomers developing close community with the wider host community, such as access to informal spaces, geographic distance, and low English proficiency. Thirdly, inconsistency between sponsorship support was identified, as the level of support newcomers received was largely dependent on who the individual sponsors were and how far they lived from the newcomers. Varying levels of support in sponsorships are due to the structure of PSRP and the lack of clarity and requirements that widely allow variances to occur and create tension within the sponsor-sponsored relationships. Finally, Syrian participants shared that the social networks they wanted were time dependent, shifting as they continued to settle, but they still faced barriers to be able to create them.

3.2 Social Networks in Guelph

The private financial donation of over $1.5 million CAD by Jim Estill to sponsor over fifty Syrian families inspired a community-wide movement to support this large number of newcomers in Guelph, a small city in Southern Ontario (CBC News, 2015, n.p.; Smith et al., 2017, p. 40). While other sponsors supported Syrians as well during this time, Estill's sponsorship made up the vast majority, sponsoring 58 families out of a total of 73 Syrian families that were settled in Guelph between November 2015 to April 2017 (Smith et al., 2017, p. 41; Government of Canada, 2017a; La Rose, 2019; United Way- Guelph, 2016). Due to the large number of Syrians that were settled in Guelph under Estill's sponsorship, all participants that took part in my project were from the Estill Initiative. The Initiative was able to separate who provided the financial contribution and social support for the Syrians through a division of labour that was unique in some ways and streamlined sponsorship and resources available for those involved. By focusing on providing social support, the Initiative continuously emphasized the importance of Syrian newcomers developing social networks with the host community throughout settlement. Before the Syrians arrived in Guelph, Estill stated that settling a large group of newcomers would allow for better community to be built among them, rather than isolating a single family (CBC News, 2017). One sponsor explained:

> Jim always said we will be successful when our newcomers are shopping the places we shop, socializing with the same people and at the places we socialize…once they are members of our community, living the way that we live in Guelph, that's what integration was encouraged as. (Interview 25)

Furthermore, an SSW who worked closely with Estill through this settlement believed that "the opposite of poverty is community," and through strong social connections and community, long-term sustainable settlement can occur (Interview 22).

This sub-section of the chapter will look at the four central themes of Syrian newcomers' social cohesion and access of social networks in Guelph. First, this analysis will examine the advantages of the geographic size of the city in relation to accessing social network. It will then examine the dominance of social bridges found in Guelph and why this occurred and as a result of this, there was a lack of access to social

bonds found in the city. Finally, this section will conclude with the discussion of the experiences shared by the participants of one-way integration and the uneven power dynamics found between sponsors and those sponsored in Guelph.

The findings revealed fewer geographic barriers for newcomers in accessing services and spaces in Guelph compared to the GTA, especially in relation to building connections with the sponsors. Similar to the GTA, many of the Syrian newcomers settled in the periphery of the smaller centre because of reduced housing costs and accessibility. The smaller city size, however, allowed most Syrian newcomers to have easier access to the city no matter where they lived in Guelph, allowing them to still be physically closer to their sponsors even in the periphery. Moreover, all eight Syrians in the study reported that they purchased their own vehicles shortly after settling in Guelph, with many stating they were able to afford this because of the lower cost of living in the smaller city (Interview 14; 17; 20, Syrian men). Having access to their own vehicles impacted settlement experiences as newcomers could access services, employment, and relationships more independently. One Syrian participant explained through an interpreter:

> In Syria, a car represents who you are, what job you have, how much power you have. For him to not have a car, the ability to take his family places, it was difficult. He says he was regretful for bringing his family to Canada when he realized this because he felt stuck. He didn't realize something like a car wouldn't be available for him. A car is important for Syrians, as it is important for Canadians, and people in Guelph. He says he sees all the students at the university have cars even.
>
> When they got the car, it changed everything. They no longer had to take public transit with their children. In the winter they sometimes would ask their sponsors to take them some places because the buses were hard for them in the cold. But now, they didn't have to ask, they could just go. (Interview 14, Syrian man)

Wider literature has also identified the importance of ownership of a vehicle to Syrian settlement in Canada, even finding that the ability to purchase a vehicle and have more agency alleviated some newcomers' mental health concerns (Haugen, 2019; IRCC, 2019).

Another advantage of the smaller size of Guelph was that there was one central settlement organization and advisory team that assisted on all fronts on behalf of the Estill Initiative called the Guelph Refugee Sponsorship Forum (The Forum) (Estill, 2015; 2016; Smith et al., 2017). The Forum worked closely with both the newcomers and sponsors, which streamlined the settlement and sponsorship through various programs of operation and schedules provided for the first day, week and month of newcomer arrival (De Leon and Duvieusart-Déry, 2016). The Forum also was able to deliver commonly missing oversight to sponsorship, which has often been an identified limitation of the PSRP (Smith et al., 2017). The initiative also developed a handbook to help support and provide needed resources for sponsors, which included tactics such as where the Syrians could volunteer or attend various neighbourhood groups to develop friendships (De Leon and

Duvieusart-Déry, 2016).[37] The Forum organized various partnerships with local stores and religious institutions and stored all donations made to the Initiative to ensure equal distribution of resources to all the families sponsored by Estill (Interview 22, SSW). This organization shows how smaller cities have been found to have "enhanced social capital" (Haugen, 2019, p. 55), which can be utilized to manage settlement support distribution more effectively (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; IRCC, 2019).

The second theme identified was the strong connections between the Syrian newcomers and the host community in Guelph. Many of these relationships were reported to be built through the sponsorship groups, as both the newcomers and sponsors interviewed shared stories and photos from occasions together, such as the Syrians' first Christmas and Canada Day after arrival (Interview 26, Sponsor). There was a substantial push in the Estill Initiative to develop strong social bridges and community for the sponsorship program. One SSW that worked alongside the Forum said, "we wanted to encourage them to make connections with their new community. That was always important to Jim, having them actively participate with us and not being just stuck with other Syrians" (Interview 23). Kyriakides et al. (forthcoming) found that close newcomer and host relationships in smaller centres are due to the newcomers' improved visibility that allows for increased interactions and familiarity between the two groups. Having regular contact with the host community due to the smaller geographic size of Guelph allowed for better cultural understanding, which helped to destigmatize the newcomers and create better social bridges (Hynie, 2018a; Schulz and Taylor, 2018).

Additionally, the city-wide mobilization to assist in the settlement of Syrian newcomers fostered strong relationships between the two groups because of large community participation. Over 800 volunteers from Guelph applied for various settlement roles with the Estill Initiative (Coorsh, 2017). While smaller cities may lack culturally specific resources, they often experience stronger community engagement that fosters integration and inclusion in the community and can mobilize resources for newcomers (Drolet and Moorthi, 2018). An example of this increased support was shared by one sponsor, saying over fifty members of her church volunteered their time and resources to help move a Syrian family with only two-days' notice (Interview 26). The community also hosted public potlucks as a way of bringing together the newcomers and host community in 2016 (Interview 22, SSW). A sponsor explained:

> We were told to invite a number of families so they could build a community with us. The idea was to have 50, 75 people to these eventually. The first one was basically just our family and our [church] congregation and the people supporting them. Then a few months later we had three or four families, in September there were a number of birthdays, so we had one for that… Integration isn't just staying

[37] An SSW stated that the Handbook for Refugee Sponsoring Groups was developed by the Forum, with volunteers being able to contribute and update the document during the initial settlement period (Interview 22). After this the handbook was finalized and officially published as De Leon and Duvieusart-Déry (2016).

> within your own ethnic and religious group. The potlucks were important to allow the refugees to join our community, because they want to be with Canadians.[38] (Interview 26, Sponsor)

There was an open invitation for both newcomers and the host community to participate in order for the newcomers to build wider social networks outside of their sponsorship groups and meet the wider community (Interview 22, SSW). A Syrian man stated that the potlucks showed that the wider city was welcoming of the newcomers and provided the newcomers the ability to make further connections whilst having a meal. This was not easy in the midst of settling his family of six, working, and taking English classes (Interview 22). Whilst the potlucks were seen in a very positive light, many Syrian newcomers noted their lack of longevity. One Syrian discussed a shift of the responsibilities in the potluck organizing, where the newcomers were required to increasingly assist in organizing and hosting. After this change, respondents found it more difficult to participate in the potlucks, as they required more time commitment (Interview 18, Syrian man).

There was also a shift seen in the host community placing the responsibility for integration increasingly onto the newcomers after initial settlement. Syrian participants shared that they experienced a decline in the relationships they had with their sponsors after the official twelve-months of sponsorship ended and that much of the city-wide welcoming faded away. A Syrian woman observed that during the official sponsorship period she grew very close with two women in the sponsorship group and thought she had developed a genuine friendship with them that went beyond the sponsorship (Interview 16). She explained through an interpreter:

> She says when the first year was up, she realized it [the friendship] wasn't real like she thought. She would always reach out and text to ask if they want to do something, but they always just assume she needs something from them. She says she never thought about what would happen after the sponsor[ship] ends and never thought about if it would be difficult to go from sponsorship to friendship with the ladies. She says she already thought they were her friends, but maybe it was just because of the sponsorship. (Interview 16, Syrian woman)

Another Syrian woman experienced a similar disconnect after the official sponsorship period:

> The sponsor told her she doesn't think they can be friends once the first year was done. The sponsor told her that they had nothing in common, different religion, different languages, different values. How could they be friends? They did their job and now they were done. She says she was confused. She didn't expect anything from the sponsor. She always knew the sponsors had agreed to one year, so she understands why they're finished. But she didn't like how the woman said it was because they were different, they had different values! Canada is supposed to be diversity and she [the sponsor] is saying they can't be friends with Syrians because they aren't like them? (Interview 15)

An SSW discussed how she saw a shift in the attentiveness to assist Syrians at the time of the interview, stating:

[38] It should be emphasized how the public potlucks were framed in this quotation, as they "allow the refugees to join our community" (Interview 26, Sponsor). The language used shows the events as a way for the newcomers to get to know people outside their community, but not for the sponsors to do the same. This, therefore, underscores a one-way approach that was taken by the community that required the Syrians to shift and put in effort in order to integration but not the other way around.

> The popularity just happened to be Syrian because of social media at the time. No one heard about Ethiopia and Eritrea. They've been going on since the late 80's, so it's not front-page news anymore so nobody cares about that… If they've fallen out of headline news material? You're not going to see it. There's only attention if it's deemed newsworthy, *while* it's deemed newsworthy. The Syrian case is starting to be buried in the international section [of the news], that's buried a few pages down… After the immediate needs were met people stopped seeing them [Syrians] as front-page news. The physical needs, clothing, transportation, getting them to the doctors, this and that done? Not as dire as a situation to care about, to have community-wide motivation. (Interview 23, SSW)

An issue identified by all Syrian participants was there was little incentive by the Estill Initiative to foster the continuation of relationships built and to work towards the newcomers' integration after the year of sponsorship was complete. A Syrian man believed that the sponsor-sponsored relationships that continued were limited to Syrians that spoke English prior to arrival in Canada (Interview 18). He stated:

> When I text [name of sponsor], I feel a bother, she will always ask me to say what I say differently because she can't understand. Again and again, she doesn't understand me. When she see us at the grocery store, she often only talks to the children because they learned English in school. She'll get the children to tell me what she says and ask me to tell my daughters in Arabic. This is how I know it would be a better friendship if I had more English training, maybe before I come here [to Canada]. I think that decides who has better friendships in Guelph. (Interview 18, Syrian man)

This Syrian identified that the relationships which continued past the sponsorship period between the newcomers and sponsors were due to the Syrians speaking English prearrival because of their socio-economic positions. Not surprisingly, Nawyn et al. (2012) found that immigrants who speak their host's official language have better integration outcomes than those who do not.

The third significant theme found in Guelph was the dominance of social bridges. These relationships with the host community were seen to be so strong primarily due to the limited access newcomers had to co-ethnic social networks as there is no substantial Syrian or Arabic community in the city (Statistics Canada, 2017c). The newcomers were required to rely on and engage with the host community daily and contact with community members was perhaps thus more formative in their settlement. All eight Syrian participants discussed how they felt a kind of social exclusion in terms of lacking co-ethnic relationships; they felt isolated. One Syrian newcomer stated through an interpreter:

> She says she is extremely grateful for her sponsors… but there's something missing. Before [in Syria], she lived near family, had many friends. She could go to them with anything. She says before having friends and support came easier. She related better, more similar. You even grow up with some people, so they understand you better. (Interview 19, Syrian woman)

Another newcomer shared his belief that his children were losing their cultural identity from this separation of co-ethnic relationships (Interview 14, Syrian man). Through an interpreter the man shared:

> He feels his whole family is losing their culture, what it means to be from [locality and city name in Syria], what it means to be Syrian. The oldest children have learned English quickly from school. If you talk to them in English, you wouldn't even know they're not from Canada. They have Canadian voices [accents]. When he says certain words wrong because of his accent, they correct him. Tells him to say it the Canadian way. He says his daughter tells him he embarrasses her with his English

> words… She started to complain about doing her Arabic lessons [taught by a family member]. She doesn't want to learn anymore.
>
> His youngest children weren't born in Syria. He wonders if they ever will even get to go to [locality]… His family came here for safety, to build a new home, but he was told about Canada's diversity. He knew about Arabics and other Syrians in Canada, in Toronto. His family was told they were going to Toronto, but when they landed here [in Canada] they were told they were actually going to Guelph. No one had mentioned Guelph to them before this. His wife asked at the airport why not Toronto but the person who was greeting them told them it was close to Toronto so not to worry.[39] But it's not, the family cannot go there often. He says he sees it when they do go, only in Toronto are you able to be both people [Syrian and Canadian]. He feels that in Guelph you have to become just Canadians, or you don't have a place. (Interview 14)

This Syrian participant considered his family's integration into Guelph meant he was losing his Syrian culture.

Estill believed that by bringing a larger group of Syrian newcomers to Guelph together he would enable them to have an automatic community with each other (CBC News, 2015). A sponsor also held the same idea while discussing that she thought all of the newcomers would instinctively become friends with each other, mistakenly imagining and stating "because they're the same. Muslims- you've got a language group" (Interview 21).[40] Whilst there were some social connections amongst fellow Syrian newcomers, informants said that these were mostly people who knew each other before arriving in Canada; most were related (Interview 14, Syrian man; Interview 15, Syrian woman). Outside of the pre-arrival connections, there were limited relationships built between the newly arrived Syrians, showing how Estill's plan for co-ethnic network formation fell short (Interview 18, Syrian man; Interview 21, Sponsor).

Newcomers are not necessarily connected because they share a common language, country of origin and other characteristics with each other, as networks must be sustained and permitted (Hanley et al., 2018; Menjivar, 1995). Kyriakides et al. (2018b) states:

> In the case of the Syrian conflict, a population of gendered and classes Sunni and Shia Muslims, Assyrian Christians, Catholics, Green Orthodox, Druze, Kurds, Turkmen, Atheists and Secularists, pitted against each other (but not always), do not reformulate as a socio-culturally constituted "refugee group" on resettlement. (p. 291)

'Syrian' as a nationality is a very heterogeneous term in relation to the groups that constitute it. Furthermore, Syrian social networks are "limited to dense and overlapping circles of family and friends" based on intersecting identities (Hanley et al., 2018, pp. 125-126; Stevens, 2016). One Syrian man reflected this, saying:

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[39] This occurrence of the newcomers being told pre-arrival that they were settling in Toronto, only to be told that they are actually going to Guelph on arrival in Canada was also mentioned in Interview 23 (SSW).

[40] To be noted: Holding a common faith (authority, base, source or origin) does not mandate a shared common theological, political or philosophical interpretation of a religion, nor does it equate to speaking the same language. Furthermore, the Syrian newcomers that settled in Guelph and wider Canada were not all Muslim. This was an incorrect belief made by the sponsor being interviewed and does not reflect the statistics of Syrians. The statement has been included to convey the assumption that some people in Guelph thought all newcomers who settled would have similarities and therefore forge friendships.

> The community we wish to have is like the community I had back home. In Syria; you could depend on your friends and family for everything. Food, watching children, support. There was a unison [sic] that I can't describe, we are family. That is what I long for here in Canada. I have friends, yes. I have friends that are both Canadian and Syrian. But I do not have connections that I can depend on like the community I had before [in Syria]. (Interview 20)

Moreover, actions by the host community were not developed to allow the initial strategy of community development amongst the newcomers themselves to flourish. Two Syrian women also claimed that most of the push of the Estill Initiative focused on host community-newcomer relationships, with little emphasis put into their co-ethnic connections (Interview 15; 16, Syrian woman). Another Syrian woman mirrored the disconnect but personally had a different experience because of a devoted sponsor, who was retired and had more time to offer social support (Interview 19). She stated:

> My husband got work and she [the sponsor] could see I was lonely. I just usually see her and my family most days. More sponsors I see sometimes. I told her I missed my family in [Syrian city name], I miss my community that I was close to. She explored and told me she would take me to [Kitchener-] Waterloo to go to an Arab women's group. I was so happy! We have an organization in Guelph, but not like this. I was able to have friends with women in Waterloo. (Interview 19, Syrian woman)[41]

She mentioned that the distance to Kitchener-Waterloo was difficult sometimes, especially with having young children and when she started driving herself. However, she said the drive is more accessible from Guelph than to the GTA, which many other Syrian participants noted travelling to, to access co-ethnic networks (thirty kilometres to Kitchener-Waterloo compared to 100 kilometres to the GTA from Guelph) (Interview 19, Syrian woman).

All Syrian newcomers interviewed discussed their willingness to travel and/or move elsewhere to be able to have stronger relationships with other Arabs and Syrians, as these relationships were largely inaccessible in Guelph. A Syrian man shared that his family often travels to Mississauga, in the GTA, to access an ethnic cultural group (Interview 18, Syrian man; see also: Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). He went on to discuss that his family had considered moving closer to the GTA, where more cultural enclaves exist, but the cost of living was currently too high in this area for them. However, Guelph allowed the Syrians' to have access to employment, whereas employment in larger city centres often is more limited for newcomers (Valade, 2017; Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming). Five of the eight Syrian participants stated that they often travelled to find Syrian networks, even if this was difficult to do. Insufficient cultural infrastructure can often lead newcomers to move out of smaller centres towards large cities in order to access cultural needs and feelings of belonging (Chung et al., 2013; Wiginton, 2013). Nevertheless, the newcomers' socio-economic status influences their ability to move (Hyndman, 2001), as Syrians might wish to relocate to access social

[41] Kitchener-Waterloo is approximately thirty kilometres west of Guelph and has largely been a destination community and a Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) community for GARs in Southern Ontario. This is because of the city's number of refugee services, settlement agencies and RAPs for refugees who are government assisted (Government of Canada, 2017a; Government of Ontario, 2019).

bonds, however, they may not be able to do so due to the high cost of living in places where such cultural enclaves already exist. In the wider context of Syrian settlement in Guelph and their desire for community, the reason for relatively high newcomer retention in the city is unclear (see also: Sherrell et al., 2005). On the one hand, it could be due to satisfaction with the community, such as cross-cultural social networks, increased employment opportunities, and/or more affordable housing compared to large cities. On the other hand, it could also be because newcomers are not able to move where there may be more social resources and community for them due to lack of resources.

The fourth and final theme identified in Guelph was that the Syrian participants' felt that integration was made to be their own responsibility, rather than a two-way process of integration that included the host community. This narrow thought of integration was also further exacerbated by uneven power dynamics faced in Guelph. One Syrian shared that the host community in Guelph saw her settlement and integration as "becoming Canadian like them" (Interview 19, Syrian woman). Another newcomer echoed this idea, stating that he felt that he was expected to let go of his own culture to take on "Canadian-ness" (Interview 14, Syrian man). Overall, the Syrians discussed wanting to participate in the community, sharing stories about attending Canada Day celebrations and Guelph Storm hockey games because this was their "new home" (Interview 15, Syrian woman). Yet, the Syrian newcomers interviewed expressed a desire to hold onto their own culture identity *and* be a positive addition to Canada's diversity. When the topic of two-way integration was raised in an interview one sponsor responded: "Oh, us changing? That's so interesting. I've never thought of it like that before" (Interview 24). This sponsor also shared that she was proud that the family they sponsored did not wish to socialize with other Syrians and wished to have more relationships with the host community (Interview 24). Another sponsor agreed when discussing the challenges she found in sponsorship, saying "North Americans, we're overly routine. They're [Syrians] the complete opposite. And again, it's not that they have to be completely North American [pauses] but it is integration. They're coming here, so they have to be willing to integrate" (Interview 21).

Sponsors and SSWs expressed contradictory opinions on integration and how they thought the Syrians' settlement should occur, as they acknowledged the value of multiculturalism but also while expecting newcomers to assimilate. One sponsor stated that she believed forcing Canadian ideals of lifestyle on the newcomers was like "forcing a round peg in a square hole and not what we should be looking to achieve" (Interview 21). Later in the same interview she shared that she believed only the children and the next generation of Syrians that settled will be able to "become Canadian" because the current adult newcomers "don't have anything in common with Canadians, therefore friendships aren't forged." She thought that only the next generation "could make friends with Caucasian kids… they no longer have accents and seem Canadian" (Interview 21, Sponsor). Similar experiences were also shared by some of the newcomers, with one sponsorship group telling a Syrian family that they had nothing in common because Syrians had different

religions and the sponsors could not accept that (Interview 15, Syrian woman). Bauder (2008) found similar themes in the Canadian public discourse surrounding refugees, identifying a contradiction in what is claimed in welcoming diversity and what is actually experienced, with newcomers widely being encouraged to change in order to become Canadian. Canada's refugee program, including the PSRP, produces a specific identity of newcomers being both Canadian but also a sort of other that does not belong simultaneously (Bauder, 2008).

A deep connection of the Syrians' English ability in relation to them becoming "Canadian" was reported by both the Syrian and sponsor participants. One sponsor stated that "becoming Canadian" and successful integration is directly correlated with the newcomers' English proficiency ability (Interview 25). Furthermore, the idea of speaking English "accent-free" has been highly associated with the newcomers being more integrated and truly becoming Canadian (Interview 15, Syrian woman; Interview 21; 24, Sponsors; Bhatia, 2018). Estill also held similar beliefs, stating that "the children learn English, accent-free, very, very quickly. In three or four months, most of the kids can speak English, and the other schoolchildren accept them", showing that accent-free English may be more acceptable because it enables them to pass as being "Canadian" (Coorsh, 2017, n.p.). In this context, accent means how speech varies from the local expectations of English and how that impacts both the speaker and listener (Derwing and Munro, 2009). This idea of integration through English proficiency and "accent-free" speaking is problematic for numerous reasons. Firstly, the literature shows that accents are often used as a form of discrimination and viewed "as a kind of disorder that requires remediation," as there is a strong association between accent and race (Derwing and Munro, 2009, p. 477). Discrimination through accents often believes integration and education should eradicate accents perceived as undesirable (Bhatia, 2018). Furthermore, age is often an influencing factor in language learning, with those under the age of 18 and/or are in school being more likely to become fluent in new languages than adults (Bhayee, 2019, p. 33). Therefore, any discrimination based on accent poses issues for adult newcomers, shaping socio-economic opportunities. Research also shows that newcomers' have better access to resources and social networks on initial settlement if they have pre-arrival knowledge of English, disadvantaging those without such knowledge before settlement (IRCC, 2019; Nawyn et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the role of private sponsor systematically and regularly exercises and hold immeasurable power over those they sponsor (Lim, 2019). Unequal relationships between the newcomers and the sponsors and the idea of paternalism was found throughout every interview conducted (Hyndman, 2019; Kyriakides et al, 2018a; 2018b). Most Syrians discussed feeling afraid to speak out against what they did not agree with and were often forced to make decisions they did not think were necessarily best for their lives. For instance, one Syrian man shared that his family was "abandoned" by their sponsors a few months into their official twelve-month period (Interview 17). As the financial and social sponsorship was separated in the Estill Initiative, this man's family still had access to monetary assistance, but lost out on the support they could have benefited from through the social sponsorship (Interview 17, Syrian man). Due to the power dynamics and influence of

who their sponsorship group was in the community, the Syrian man stated that he did not feel comfortable speaking out for fear of getting them in trouble and having ramifications in other aspects of his family's life. A similar sentiment was found in Agrawal and Zeitouny (2017) in interviewing PSRs in Edmonton, Alberta who also said they did not complain because they felt in debt to their sponsors. Such findings are not because of individual sponsors' malice, but because Syrians are beholden to them for support through the design of the program (Lenard, 2019; Macklin et al., forthcoming). The PSRP has very few legal or formal requirements of what sponsors provide to newcomers outside the financial obligation (Labman, 2016; Lornic, 2019). The problematic structure of the program was further enhanced by the accelerated timeline of the Canadian Syrian Initiative, which often left sponsors without adequate training and the newcomers without prearrival orientation that negatively impacted the power imbalances experienced (Macklin et al., forthcoming; Oudshoorn et al., 2019; Veronis et al., forthcoming).

Other examples of such unequal power relations were discussed by sponsors through stories that they shared. One individual stated that the newcomers she worked with "just don't care to be independent"; explaining that the Syrian husband did not want to take a customer service job that the sponsor found for him (Interview 21). She went on to say that the family was now on social assistance after sponsorship and they are "looking at getting what they can from the system, giving nothing if they don't have to"; and that "it's an attitude." The sponsor believed that the newcomers "need a lot of guidance from sponsors on what they should purchase," sharing a story of the sponsored family wanting to purchase a car she did not approve of, laughing while calling it "operation no car." Within this account, the husband got angry at her trying to intervene, but she continued saying "they need some strong guidance sometimes, he's only 32! He's younger than my daughter… It's like a kid going into a candy store and he has all this money and I'm trying to make him buy an apple." A strong narrative of infantilization emerges where sponsors and related organizations were seen to not believe that the newcomers have "the capacity to pursue and formulate their own good" and did not support the development of autonomy and independence (Lim, 2019, p. 14). The sponsor comparing the Syrian's age in relation to her own daughter demonstrates that the sponsor thought that she was allowed to treat those she sponsored like children (Agrawal, 2018; Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017). Furthermore, the sponsor attested:

> I had to keep track of their finances because money would just disappear at the dollar store, the grocery store… on junk. Because their philosophy in their culture was he was working now and he'd like to buy the kids things and he'd buy them little junk all the time, toys and food… but they don't have short-term goals, so they don't have long-term goals, so they don't save money. I'm always very disappointed…I've told him the children want your time; they don't want junk from the toy store. Save your money and get a townhouse. (Interview 21, Sponsor)

Another sponsor recounted similar themes, stating the wife in the Syrian family she sponsored was pregnant, so the sponsor used connections to get used children items donated to the family (Interview 24). One day the pregnant Syrian woman wanted to show the sponsor interviewed and two others in the sponsorship group items she bought for the baby.

> She brought out several bags and started showing us outfits. And we were shocked! She bought upwards of $350 worth of outfits from Walmart. Dorky little bows for the kid's head, headbands, shoes, she was just thrilled. She has no concept of anything, she went with her sister, who is on welfare by the way, to buy these things. We had given her used items, clothes, car seats, everything, but she wanted brand new… we were just almost sick! They don't understand currency… I don't think they've ever had [credit] cards in Syrian. (Sponsor, Interview 24)

The sponsor went on to say she believed that giving the Syrian newcomers credit cards was "dangerous"; denying the Syrian family she sponsored their own autonomy (Kyriakides et al., 2018b).

The Syrian participants themselves shared that they often felt like they were being regulated, with one stating that she found it difficult to move past the identity that her sponsors seemed to assign her (Interview 16, Syrian woman; see also: Kyriakides et al., 2018a; 2018b). She shared that her sponsor would plan many parts of the family's lives, often booking appointments or arranging playdates for their children. Whilst the assistance was helpful during the initial settlement in Guelph, it soon became frustrating for the Syrian woman and her husband, as she felt like one sponsor thought her and her husband were neglecting their children. The sponsor had told the newcomer that parents should do more for their children, like the sponsor was doing. The self-appointed role of an additional parental figure by the sponsor can point to a possible failure in the sponsor-sponsored relationship to establish mutual trust, and failure to recognize and acknowledge the authority and autonomy of the newcomers (Kyriakides et al., 2018b).

One sponsor stated that the best part of being a sponsor was her relationships with the children and how she has taken on a parental role with them (see also: Macklin et al., forthcoming). When discussing the Syrian family she sponsored, she said:

> They're lucky they have [other sponsor's name] and I. I love the boys. I've got a strong attachment to the children. The one [child] that's now in school, he's finally doing well. I attribute that to me going over and taking him outside all the time. (Interview 21, Sponsor)

The sponsor explained that she often had to take the sponsored family's children to school because the mother could not wake up some mornings. When asked if the Syrian woman's inability to get up in the morning may have been due to mental health issues the sponsor responded:

> Maybe, I'm unsure, but either way, they need to take more responsibility for their children. I know she's been through a lot, but she should be more grateful her son is in school and put that first. I'm pretty sure the school thinks I'm [child's name]'s mother [laughs]. (Interview 21, Sponsor)

Another sponsor shared the reason behind her joining a sponsorship group was based in her role as a parent (Interview 24). She noted:

> Alan Kurdi looked like one of our kids. He wasn't black, he wasn't malnourished, he wasn't any of those things… it was a shocking picture because it looked like it could have been a Canadian. He was dressed in western clothes. I think all of those things made a difference in how it impacted us. I wanted to protect those kids like I would my own. (Interview 24, Sponsor)

The notion of parental comparison is primarily structural but is patronizing and orientalist towards the newcomers and why they deserve support (Macklin et al., forthcoming).

There was a continuous reassurance from the sponsors as to why they chose to take part in the Initiative that emphasized a paternalistic nature. Sponsors highlighted their involvement as contributing to Canadians' compassion and generosity in helping the less fortunate, with one sponsor saying that Canadians "saved the Syrians" (Interview 21). Another sponsor referred to Syrians as "helpless," stating:

> I'll be honest, at first, I wasn't really thrilled when my wife volunteered for a [sponsorship] group. But then you see these things [referring to the photo of Alan Kurdi and other images on the news in 2015] and how can I not help? They have nothing else, so I have no choice. (Interview 24, Sponsor)

The sponsors belief of having no choice but to participate in sponsorship because Syrians "having nothing else" and are "helpless" demonstrates the principle of confinement where refugees from the global South are characterized as passive bodies that need to be saved by Westerners, who disregard the refugees' own authority (Kyriakides et al., 2018b). Such interpretations exhibit orientalist ideas of newcomers, who are infantilized and therefore not capable of self-rescue and self-sufficiency, often indicated in the sponsors believing they knew what was best for the newcomers over the newcomers themselves (Kyriakides et al., 2018a). Conflict can arise and the sponsors and community can fail to meet the needs of newcomers when the autonomy of Syrians is not recognized as a result of paternalistic actions (Kyriakides et al., 2018b).

Furthermore, some participants discussed the idea of unequal power relations stemming from the Initiative because of Estill himself (Interview 15; 16; 22, Syrian women). One sponsor stated that to gain the financial resources that Estill was providing, like monthly cheques and furniture donations, everyone had to follow the rules he put forward. Regulations such as pushing for the newcomers to gain employment immediately and take certain jobs when they did not feel ready were discussed (Sponsor, Interview 25). One Syrian participant said that there were some sponsorship groups that pushed back against what Estill was calling for because the jobs were often not suited for what the newcomers actually needed (Interview 20, Syrian man). This caused some sponsorship groups to break away from the Estill Initiative and work independently, giving their own financial resources to the project so the newcomers would not have to follow Estill's employment guidelines (Interview 22, SSW). Both a sponsor and a newcomer shared that Estill was known for making it impossible for the newcomers to find work in Guelph if they went against his ideas, supposedly causing many sponsors and newcomers not to speak up over the fear of reprisals (Interview 26, Sponsor; Interview 20, Syrian man). A Syrian man shared through an interpreter:

> Jim is powerful here. He wants them to get a job, they get a job. He took a job through a connection of Jim's just because he didn't know how to safely refuse it. He thought he would get in trouble. His sponsor told him it was a good idea; they were friends with Jim. (Interview 20, Syrian man)

Conditions of paternalism in Guelph from both the social sponsors and Estill reflect literature showing that often sponsors are driven by their own ideology on how newcomers should become self-sufficient (Agrawal, 2018), and has been referred to as a form of discrimination (Hyndman et al., 2006, p. 18). Furthermore, this paternalism is not the failing of the individual sponsors but is instead a structural barrier that developed out of power imbalances being embedded into the structure of the PSRP itself (Lorinc, 2019). Indeed, paternalism arises through the refugee settlement programs and narratives that create a strict oppositional binary of who is seen to belong in the host community and who does not (Bauder, 2008; Hyndman and Giles, 2016; Macklin et al., forthcoming). Kyriakides et al. (2018a) found SAHs' recommendations for what sponsors should organize are not always accurate or suitable, such as suggesting the sponsorship groups draw pictures of various household appliances. While perhaps useful to newcomers who had never used such appliances, the sponsorship group knew enough about Syrian culture and Syria as a middle-income country, that they understood that drawing pictures about how to use household appliances that they regularly used prior to displacement would infantilize the newcomers. Furthermore, the PSRP provides very little regulation of the sponsor-sponsored relationship, habitually creating circumstances of inequality and paternalism to develop in some individual sponsorships (Lim, 2019; Lorinc, 2019; Hutchinson, 2018).

This chapter has evaluated the access to social networks that Syrian newcomers had in two differently sized cities including one with a unique coordinated sponsorship initiative led by one individual, the GTA and Guelph. This project aims to unsettle the notion of integration as the newcomers' responsibility, and instead emphasizes reciprocal two-way integration. Furthermore, within the PSRP outcomes are dependent on the individual sponsorship group, as the newcomers' access to services was dependent on the sponsors' own awareness of such supports (Smith et al., 2017).

Due to the large pre-existing Arabic-speaking community present in the GTA, the Syrian participants said they largely relied on their co-ethnic communities. The newcomers interviewed shared that they chose to build relationships within their cultural enclaves over the host community because they felt more comfortable with those who were similar to them, such as those who spoke the same language they spoke fluently. While reliance on social bonds is common for newcomers, there are disadvantages, such as limited ability to build social capital or civil engagement. Secondly, there were structural barriers for the newcomers to access and develop social networks with the host community in the GTA. The interviews showed that the newcomers' lower English language ability limited their ability to access social networks outside of their ethnic enclaves with homogenized English language classes and structural barriers exacerbating their ability to do so. The Syrian participants all resided along the city's periphery, where there was more affordable housing and ethnic enclaves. This impacted who the newcomers were able to have regular and daily interactions with, as the sponsors often lived closer to the city's centre. One exception was identified in my study, with one young man having extensive social bridges because he went to high school in Toronto upon arrival and was able to

develop wider social networks. Thirdly, the limitations and geographic barrier of sponsorships in the GTA was identified through the study. The unevenness of sponsorship experienced by the Syrian participants was largely produced by the geographic separation between where the Syrians and their sponsors lived or lack of spare time. None of the eight Syrian participants had any connection with their sponsorship after the twelve-months were complete. The distance demonstrates the importance of propinquity that frequently influences the strength and regularity of the relationship between the sponsor-sponsored. Finally, whether newcomers wished for social networks with people who spoke the same language or relationships with the wider host community was largely time-dependent and was seen to shift over time as they settled in the GTA.

Four sets of findings were discussed relating to access to social networks for Syrian PSRs that were settled in Guelph. The first finding explored the better geographic access newcomers experienced in the smaller urban centre compared to the GTA. Whilst both the Syrian PSRs in the GTA and Guelph lived in the periphery of the cities due to affordability and availability, Guelph's smaller size allowed for its city periphery to be geographically closer to the rest of the city than the GTA's. The Syrians settled in Guelph were able to have easier physical access to their sponsors because of the city size, whilst those in the GTA largely relied on their co-ethnic networks in their individual neighbourhoods due to geographic confinement. Syrians in Guelph were widely seen to be able to have the means to purchase their own vehicle, due to having lower costs of living compared to the GTA. The small city size also allowed one central organization in the Estill Initiative to streamline the services and resources for Syrians who were sponsored by Estill.

Secondly, Guelph's smaller geographic size positively impacted the Syrians' experience, allowing them to have increased visibility to the host community (Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). Due to greater visibility, the newcomers were able to interact more and create stronger relationships with the wider community. The Syrian PSR participants stated that they predominantly interacted with the host population in Guelph, over people in their own co-ethnic communities. Many of the social networks developed were structured through those who had sponsored them, with the sponsor-sponsored relationships being seen as stronger than those in the GTA. Third, the smaller city size of Guelph offered the newcomers less of an Arabic speaking and/or Syrian community than the GTA. Newcomers in Guelph shared they felt isolated and were willing to travel or move from Guelph in order to access co-ethnic network was found. Syrian participants in Guelph specifically discussed the desire to move to the GTA for strong Arabic enclaves. As a result of the distance of the GTA from Guelph, newcomers expressed the desire to be able to move there, rather than just travel in between (as seen in Valade, 2017). However, whilst Guelph did not offer the Syrians the co-ethnic communities they sought, the city did offer more affordable housing, the ability to afford to buy cars and quality employment than is in the GTA.

Lastly, Syrian participants experienced one-sided expectations of integration and felt they were solely responsible for the integration process in Guelph. The host community in Guelph largely encouraged "Canadian-ness," through laying importance on English proficiency and speaking English "accent-free" in order to better integrate into the city. Experiences of sponsors' infantilization towards the newcomers were shared throughout various interviews, with sponsors giving little autonomy or independence to the sponsored. Experiences of paternalism also pointed towards the newcomers' requirement to change as a means of integration. The findings in Guelph demonstrate that the occurrence of paternalism is not inherently the sponsors fault, but instead is intrinsic in the PSRP's structure, as it establishes space for infantilization to develop in the sponsor-sponsored relationships. Such infantilization can be and has been seen to be resisted by both the newcomers and sponsors, so it is not a necessary outcome.

The experiences analyzed in this chapter are from a small group of individuals who were involved in Syrian PSR settlement in the GTA and Guelph. The 27 participants represent just a fraction of the lived experiences of social integration of Syrian newcomers who have settled in Southern Ontario, as the Syrian experience is "actor-dependent, situated, and emergent" (Kyriakides et al., 2018b, p. 295). Furthermore, the group of Syrians that were settled throughout the country were extremely diverse and do not just re-emerge as a single identity of "refugee" on settlement in Canada (Kyriakides et al., 2018b). Due to the small number of participants in this study, this analysis compared common ideas shared by participants in the GTA and Guelph to wider literature on newcomer integration to establish broader shared themes, and to acknowledge/ensure the homogeneity of individual experience. While this section focused on social networks, the next will focus on geographically contrasting privately sponsored Syrians' access to employment in the GTA and Guelph. Access to social networks and employment are located in separate chapters, but they are highly interconnected and will be discussed in relation to one another in the last chapter of this project (Haugen, 2019; Hynie, 2018a).

Chapter Four: A Comparative Analysis of Privately Sponsored Syrian Newcomers' Access to Meaningful Employment

An important indicator of newcomer integration is secure and meaningful employment (Hynie et al., 2016; Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Kaida et al., 2019). Workforce participation is important to long-term settlement success and, assists with developing the newcomers' sense of belonging within the host community and assists with income levels, identity development and social contact (Chung et al., 2013; Kaida et al., 2019; Mawani, 2014). There is also a clear correlation found between the newcomers' mental health and their access to quality employment (Hynie, 2018c). While employment is a significant marker of successful settlement, recent studies have found that the majority of newcomers to Canada identify that their largest problem has been accessing employment (Wilkinson, 2017; Wright and Parada, 2019). Regularly, newcomers who settle under the status of refugee have the highest rates of unemployment and the lowest income compared to Canadian-born equals and other categories of immigrants (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016). Newcomers are also more likely to be overqualified for the jobs they are able to access, as they are often limited to unskilled, low paying and seasonal or temporary labour that is physically demanding (Brunner et al., 2010; Mawani, 2014; Phillimore and Goodson, 2008; Sherrell et al., 2005). Various barriers shape this limited access, including lack of official language skills and Canadian work experience or education, little recognition of foreign skills and education, absence of networks for obtaining employment, and; discrimination and structural barriers (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Derwing and Krahn, 2008; IRCC, 2019). Such barriers are also often experienced by other immigrants; however, they are exacerbated by the unique refugee experience (Wilkinson, 2017).

Geography impacts how newcomers are able to access employment. Urban centres are typically thought to have better economic opportunities for newcomers and are thus seen as geographically desirable for newcomers (Hyndman et al., 2006; Sherrell et al., 2005). However, some studies have shown that newcomers in bigger urban cities do worse economically than newcomers who settle into smaller centres (Valade, 2017; Wright and Parada, 2019). Therefore, the variable of geography of settlement is a defining element of newcomers' access to employment opportunities and is therefore crucial in analyzing the Syrian settlement context and access to employment (Bauder, 2003).

The category of Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR) also correlates with higher rates of employment, compared to Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) (Kaida et al., 2019). Two to three years after arrival to Canada, 60% of Syrian PSRs were employed, whilst only 43% of Syrian GARs had found work (IRCC, 2019, p. 8). Furthermore, 40% of the PSRs reported that they had earnings from employment within their first few months following arrival, compared to 5% of GARs (IRCC, 2019, p. 8; Kizitlan, forthcoming, p. 12). Higher labour market participation is often seen amongst PSRs as one of the central goals of the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP) is to help newcomers achieve self-sufficiency before the sponsorship period is complete (Kyriakides et al., 2018a; 2018b; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). However, Kumin (2015) insists

that we be critical with this finding as PSRs may be pushed more quickly into taking employment by their sponsors. The result of this is newcomers accessing low-end positions, rather than continuing with language classes or requalification, which hinders their long-term employment opportunities (Hyndman, 2011; Kumin, 2015). The higher earnings of PSRs over GARs is regularly no longer meaningful by years 3-8 (Kaida et al., 2019, p. 16).

Various settlement factors shape both the newcomers' access to other integration indicators and sense of belonging within their new community (Hynie et al., 2016). Newcomer access to employment therefore must be examined beyond economic contribution in order not to reduce settlement success simply to achieving employment as, "while employment matters, not all employment has positive outcomes" (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016, n.p.). Employment can be divided into two basic categories: meaningful and remedial, and both result in distinct outcomes for settlement experiences and success. Remedial employment is work that is temporary, low quality and offers no opportunity for permanent nor more enhanced work (Codell et al., 2011). In contrast, meaningful employment is seen as secure, long-term, stable and adequately waged positions with opportunity for advancement and upward mobility (Lamba, 2003). A Settlement Support Worker (SSW) from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) defined this concept further, stating:

> Meaningful employment is first, something that will be enough for you to live decently. Meaningful means something that is a career, not just simply a job. You're not an engineer or a lawyer who is wrapping sandwiches or driving an Uber. It's not to take away from people who are wrapping sandwiches or driving an Uber, that is great, it's a good income but in the end, this is not what you love to do, it's not what you enjoy doing…So, one of the instances, we [the organization] had a lawyer who came from Syria and this lawyer picked up on construction in Lebanon at some point. He came here and we asked him, what do you want to do? And he was like I want to stay in construction. Perfect, so this is meaningful [employment]. Some people look at this and say he's a lawyer, but no, he enjoys construction. It's something that provides him a good income. That is what meaningful employment is. (Interview 3, SSW, GTA)

The consideration of quality of employment is essential to analyzing Syrian settlement because frequently the jobs newcomers have access to are precarious and lead to downward social mobility through un/underemployment (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Brunner et al., 2010). Furthermore, whether newcomers have access to meaningful employment is central to whether they continue living in a community or move, as it allows newcomers to become self-sufficient and develop feelings of belonging and community (Sherrell et al., 2005; Valade, 2017). Additionally, rapidly finding work on arrival leads to newcomers "deskilling," as privately sponsored Syrians generally have higher levels of education compared to past groups of refugees (Agrawal, 2018, p. 14). Agrawal (2018) found that only three individuals in the seventeen families interviewed had found jobs in the same fields they had been in in Syria, as there were many barriers to accessing meaningful employment, such as foreign credential recognition. While Agrawal (2018) provides nuanced understanding, IRCC (2019) does not as they determined economic success through quantifying whether Syrian newcomers had entered the labour market and their earnings, but not what type of positions the

newcomers were working. IRCC (2016a) reported that the most common category of employment for Syrian GARs and PSRs were Sales and Services. However, research also stated that Syrians did wish to continue in careers that they had worked pre-displacement, but foreign credential recognition restricted the newcomers' ability to access similar types of employment (IRCC, 2019). Such findings challenge neoliberal definitions of integration based solely on the newcomers' employment input to the Canadian economy and lead to a narrative of newcomers as "burdens" if they do not quickly contribute to the economy (Lenard, 2019, p. 66; Wiginton, 2013, p. 7). The following chapter will examine access to *meaningful* employment to analyze how employment shapes the integration experience of Syrian newcomers.

This chapter will focus on Syrian newcomers' access to meaningful employment in the GTA and Guelph, to contrast the central themes identified in both cities. The experiences shared by newcomers have several similarities between the two city spaces that will be discussed, such as how the power imbalances within the sponsorships impact newcomers' access to meaningful employment. Each city differs in terms of what it means to access quality employment, for example, helpful employment resources are not equally distributed throughout the GTA whereas Guelph had a strongly homogenized framework for pathways to access employment. The following sub-section of this chapter will explore employment findings from the GTA, analyzing socially created barriers faced by Syrians, the uneven power relations and the geographic difficulties that were experienced in the large city centre. The last sub-section of this chapter will juxtapose the findings from the GTA with those of the City of Guelph. In particular, this sub-section will analyze the lack of importance placed on differentiating newcomers' access to remedial or meaningful employment, the ineffective emphasis on a neoliberal pathway to integration developed by the Estill Initiative and the unique power dynamics that were created within this approach.

4.1 Employment in the Greater Toronto Area

In the GTA, participants revealed numerous difficulties and barriers for Syrian newcomers to access meaningful employment. This section will discuss the three distinct themes that emerged in findings: the socially created barriers to accessing employment and upward mobility experienced by the newcomers, such as discrimination; the prominence of uneven power relations in sponsorship and their influence on newcomer ability to access employment and, the physical barriers that result from settlement in a large urban area.

Participants from the GTA extensively discussed that general social narratives negatively impacted the availability of meaningful employment, such as experiences of discrimination. One Syrian woman shared how she believed there was a Western-centric narrative of the Arab people that create barriers for newcomers gaining employment opportunities (Interview 5). Though this was one woman's opinion, similar sentiments of systemic racism in employment has been identified in wider research (Drolet et al., forthcoming; Kosny et al., 2018). Another Syrian woman spoke of the discrimination she experienced in the workplace, where she had a

supervisor make numerous negative comments on Islam and immigrants (Interview 4). When this woman attempted to report this harassment, she was fired from her job, explaining:

> I told the manager that this supervisor was rude, cut my shifts, would tell me she didn't vote for Mr. Trudeau because she didn't want immigrants coming to Canada. I knew she was saying me, she didn't want me there… She told me to be Canadian I shouldn't wear my hijab. So then I told my manager everything about her and see if I can work different shifts than with her. Not to get her in trouble, but just to not work the same as her. He said he would figure it out, then emailed me and said he was making me off now, you are off all shifts next week. Then he says to me that I can't work there anymore because I didn't get along with the other workers. (Interview 4, Syrian woman)

Discrimination in the Canadian labour force has been widely found, largely operating through subtle forms of prejudice that make it difficult for the newcomers to speak out about these abuses, such as experiences of unfair dismissals or poor treatment (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Hynie, 2018a; Kosny et al., 2018). Such discrimination often deepens feelings of insecurity, which undermine outlooks on social cohesion and may lead many newcomers to increasingly rely on their social bonds over bridges, further impacting their ability to access employment (Dion et al., 2009).

Additionally, a Syrian woman shared her feelings of shame and suffering when she realized she could no longer work as a nurse because her qualifications acquired in Syria were not valid in Canada (Interview 5). This newcomer was told she must return to school in order to practice again, with the program costing over $10,000 and requiring higher levels of English proficiency than she held at the time of the interview. She was not hopeful that she would ever have the ability to regain her qualifications in Canada, as she was already struggling to learn the language while working a remedial job in order to afford to continue living in the GTA and raising three young children. Another Syrian woman discussed her entire family's struggle with finding meaningful employment in their field of expertise, despite having extensive previous experience in Syria:

> I have one boy [son] is married. Then another girl [daughter], who is single. She was an accountant and was studying French in Syria. My son was a chemist, went to school for that. Now, he has been dropped after three or four months in construction. My daughter works at [name of retail store], part-time, just three days of the week. My husband don't have job [sic]. Sometimes he worked three times, for one week. He hasn't job now [sic]. I work from, today, three months at [name of café]. I look for job many times but didn't find easily. (Interview 4, Syrian woman)

Valade (2017) found that the time needed for newcomers to match their previous employment ranks, both in quality of job and salary, is slower in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver compared to anywhere else in Canada (p. 43). Newcomers widely have had trouble having their previous education and experience recognized; with employers demanding Canadian experiences and credentials has been identified as "a manifestation of racism" (Kosny et al., 2018, p. 11). Furthermore, these barriers were found to be worse for newcomers "if they are racialized, women, or Muslims" (Valade, 2017, p. 43). Though this is not unique to refugees, such barriers can be exacerbated by the refugee experience, as they must deal with additional obstacles, such as a lack of foreign credential recognition (Wilkinson, 2017). Through this finding, it is seen

that this process of shame and suffering shared above has continuing consequences for newcomers in Canada's largest urban centre, creating larger and longer barriers to accessing meaningful employment.

There is also a strong socio-economic and financial influence of who can find meaningful employment through requalification, as this requires time and money that newcomers who arrive under the category of refugee often do not have. Race, gender and age also impact the newcomers' experience accessing employment (Kosny et al., 2018). Half the Syrian participants believed that newcomers who have higher English proficiency on arrival do better on settlement than those without (see also: Kaida et al., 2019; Nawyn et al., 2012). A sponsor echoed this finding, identifying the pattern of families with previous education and high English proficiency had fewer obstacles to gaining meaningful employment, stating:

> I worked for [settlement support agency] and the sponsorship groups that had Syrians who had spoken English before, who had gone to school learning the language or spoken it at home, were quicker to integrate. I saw that most, if not all, of these people came from very high-class families in Syria and therefore had more of a western education, if you will. That made all the difference, because as much as Canada wants to be multicultural, the way the government portrays integration is to become like wider society, like the European settlers. I disagree with this and we [her husband and her] tried to think critically about this in our own sponsorship, but I know that's what most people did with the Syrians. If they were more like us as Canadians, spoke English, some were lighter skinned, blonde hair, that kind of thing. One man had gone to the UK for university and that was seen as a great thing, he got a job like that [snaps fingers]. I hate to admit it, but it did make their settlement easier, especially finding a job in the field they wanted. It shouldn't have mattered, but it made a huge difference. (Interview 12, Sponsor)

Another sponsor shared that she often received emails from a settlement organization containing various employment opportunities from companies looking to hire Syrian newcomers (Interview 10, Sponsor). The companies seeking Syrian newcomers to apply for positions did so due to the Canadian Syrian Initiative, as there was good publicity garnered from the call to be inclusive and supportive of the newcomers. However, all these positions required high levels of English proficiency to apply and only those who arrived with knowledge of the language already had a chance to access these (Interview 10, Sponsor). With a connection between English proficiency and higher economic standing pre-displacement in Syria, socio-economic status shapes access to meaningful employment (Nawyn et al., 2012; Statistics Canada, 2019). There was also a lack of social and corporate understanding in the high requirements mandatory in order to access meaningful employment, increasing the large number of barriers newcomers are faced with. In order to find meaningful employment, newcomers in Canada frequently are required to have higher levels of English language knowledge in order to access this work (Hynie et al., 2016). However, learning a new language has been found to be improved when it is used and spoken within sites of employment (Hynie et al., 2016). Newcomer economic outcomes are more positive when there is better recognition of pre-migration work experiences and education, flexibility of employers that meet the skill levels and backgrounds of the newcomer and greater acceptance of the period of time it can take newcomers to learn the language (Hyndman, 2014; Hynie et al., 2016; Sherrell et al., 2005).

Furthermore, a younger Syrian participant who was beginning his higher education in the GTA was optimistic about finding meaningful employment in the future (Interview 7, Syrian man). As other Syrian participants faced great obstacles when they held Syrian qualifications or work experience, this younger Syrian man felt confident he would not face such challenges because his qualifications and experience would be from Canada. This echoes Wilkinson (2017), who finds that the younger generation of newcomers will have fewer barriers, due to their Canadian education and experience. Such findings emphasize the putative barrier of Western notions of holding superior levels of education and knowledge. The younger Syrian man stated:

> I see my family, my father, not be able to get a chance at any job except driving Uber or Lyft. My father was a civil engineer and now Uber won't even let him drive for them because someone reported him for not speaking English. It's very hard to work in Canada if you don't speak English… He's taking ESL classes but he's 53 years old, so it's very hard for him to learn and for old[er] people it's different… For me, I know it's going to be easier for me to find a job. If I wanted to be a civil engineer and went to a university here [in Canada], I know I would have no problem finding a job. I just started school at [university name] and already have a placement for next semester.
>
> I'm grateful for knowing I'll be okay… but it [English] shouldn't be a requirement for people like my dad, his university degree from back home should transfer, Syria is a very developed country. He shouldn't have to start over just because Canada thinks Syria is below them or not advanced enough. He was a civil engineer since he was my age and just because we were forced to move that's taken from him. If he wants that back he'll have to learn the language and pay a lot. He says it's not worth it to him, he could put me and my brothers and sisters through university for the same price as it would cost him to get all of his stuff [requalify], so he won't do it. (Interview 7, Syrian man)

However, irrespective of their socio-economic background pre-arrival, refugee newcomers still face a magnitude of societal barriers (Hynie, 2018c). The Canadian Syrian Initiative in 2015 prioritized many of the most vulnerable refugees in the selection of newcomers for settlement. Most GARs, for example, had lower levels of education (Statistics Canada, 2019) and half of the Syrian PSRs had knowledge of one of the national languages, while eight percent of GARs had knowledge of either language (IRCC, 2019, p. 3). Newcomers who settled in Canada as PSRs are often more highly educated than those who arrived through the GAR program, and therefore regularly have higher levels of English language proficiency (IRCC, 2019; Statistics Canada, 2019). Consequently, language barriers still occur for those within the PSRP, but it is important to acknowledge that within the cohort of Syrian newcomers themselves there are divergences seen due to socio-economic position, both pre-and-post arrival (Hynie, 2018c).

A second theme found within the GTA was the uneven power dynamics between the sponsors and the newcomers, as observed by the participants. In government data PSRs show higher rates of employment than GARs (IRCC, 2019). Hyndman (2011) noted that PSRs' quicker transition into the labour market may be related to a push to attain employment by their sponsors (Agrawal, 2018; Kumin, 2015). Half of the Syrian participants in the GTA discussed the pressure from their sponsors to take the first employment opportunity that was available, which was commonly remedial work. One Syrian man noted that he felt forced by his

sponsors to take a service job over focusing on his language acquisition (Interview 13, Syrian man). This participant stated that he wished to continue English classes because this would help him find more meaningful employment in the future (also found in Interview 7, Syrian man). Another Syrian man explained that his sponsors convinced him to accept a job in the food industry for the sake of taking care of his older parents who were struggling to integrate, saying:

> I found a job in a shawarma store, like three months after [arrival], in [district in Toronto]. It wasn't what I wanted to do but [name of sponsor] said think of your parents. They are older and struggled to learn English and do labour so they said this would allow me to take care of my parents. Of course, when they put it that way, of course I'm going to take it. How do I say no to taking care of my parents? The people in the store only were speaking Arabic. Me working there was solely for work, for money. We never hang out outside of work, we never went to each other places. It was just come at nine PM and stay till four AM and just go home and sleep. (Interview 2, Syrian man)

A participant found that with sponsors prioritizing quick labour market participation, it was easy for newcomers to have opportunities in sales or services, "but to find meaningful employment, a career or something you have experience with previously in Syria or other places you were in, that is where the difficult[y] lies" (Interview 11, Syrian man). Carter (2009) similarly found that a higher percentage of PSRs are employed, but often in low paying sales and services, with half feeling overqualified for their current position. Furthermore, these positions are often found to be at the expense of the newcomer being able to attend language classes and become proficient in English (IRCC, 2016a; Kumin, 2015).

One sponsor, who also had worked for an SSW, spoke of regularly seeing this push for remedial employment within the sponsorship community, stating that:

> Some [sponsors] felt that if the person or family, or whoever they sponsored, didn't find employment in the one year of sponsorship, that the sponsorship was a failure. And we heard that a lot. If they were transitioning to government assistance at the end of the sponsorship, in a way, they failed. From that, we heard there was a lot of pressure from the sponsors for the Syrian refugees to get jobs right away (Interview 12, Sponsor).

Wider research also identified the perceived failure of the sponsorship if newcomers did not reach the high expectations the sponsors held for the newcomers' self-sufficiency within the twelve-month sponsorship period (Kaida et al., 2019; Kumin, 2015). Driven by this fear of failure, sponsorship groups often push remedial employment on the newcomers to avoid the newcomers going onto social assistance post-sponsorship and being seen as unsuccessful (Lenard, 2019). Often sponsors focus on their own outlook of the best strategies to help the newcomers become self-sufficient, without taking into consideration the long-term implications of such choices (Agrawal, 2018). Additionally, Lenard (2019) finds a common concern that part of their role as sponsors were to ensure that the newcomers did not, nor did not expect to, end up on social assistance. Though some sponsors felt like the newcomers were forced into making difficult choices, many newcomers did access the labour market at the expense of language classes, due to the sponsors emphasizing that social assistance was not acceptable for them to rely on (Lenard, 2019).

Taking remedial employment over language training in the name of self-sufficiency can "lead to lower-paying, even dead-end jobs" (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016, n.p.). There was an overall consensus shared that the individual positionalities of the newcomers were often not considered, such as expectations on how long English learning would take different newcomers, depending on various circumstances, such as the individual's age. One sponsor noted that the approach each sponsorship group took in regard to employment was a significant factor in the newcomers' accessibility to meaningful employment (Interview 12). She found that certain sponsorship groups honoured the newcomers' agency but were there to assist if needed, whilst others took on a parental position seen to "steer them in the direction the sponsors believed to be correct" (Interview 12, Sponsor; see also: Macklin et al., forthcoming). Sponsors recognizing the newcomer's choice and autonomy as embodied individuals is important in the success of the PSRP (Kyriakides et al., 2018b).

Sponsors largely focus on the newcomers' rapid economic integration because of a rhetoric invoked by the government and the PSRP, which encourages integration to be accomplished through participating in the labour market in order to support living within Canada (Kyriakides et al., 2018b). However, approximately thirty percent of all PSRs do require some social assistance at some point after their twelve-month sponsorship period (Lenard, 2019, p. 79). While social assistance should not merit the sponsorship being seen as a failure, the perceived shame of not having helped newcomers find a job through the encouragement and function of the program leads sponsors to push remedial employment on the newcomers (Macklin et al., forthcoming).

Five out of the eight Syrian newcomers interviewed also spoke of being hesitant to make choices that went against what was suggested or told to them by their sponsors. The unequal power relationships in the sponsorship groups allowed the sponsors to sway the newcomers to take remedial employment opportunities, even if the individual newcomer did not think it was best. As stated previously, one Syrian man shared that his sponsors convinced him to take a remedial job that he did not wish to take by leveraging the need for taking care of his parents (Interview 2). Another Syrian man shared:

> I started working after six months, in August as a salesman at [name of a shop]. My sponsors wanted me to start working before the year was up so they would know I was going to be okay. My wife didn't like it. She told them [the sponsors] that I should focus on getting back in business like I had in [city in Syria], but what could I do? [Name of sponsor] wanted me to get a job, the sponsorship was half [complete] already, we needed to pay for us.
>
> I didn't know where to start. [Name of sponsor] said maybe the grocery store but that was it. I felt lost. They wanted me to work when I was unsure, but they didn't have any connections to share or didn't help me go. My friend who I met through a Syrian group went and took me to apply [for jobs].
>
> It was very difficult because I only knew a little bit of English and all of them [his colleagues] spoke English quite well. [Name of sponsor] said I would learn through a job and yes, I can practice with the workers and customers and I learned something new… but it's not easy… and I didn't really make

> friends with people at the store, just talk while I was there. But [name of sponsor] wanted me to do it and said she was proud when I told her where I got work, so I did it. (Interview 11, Syrian man)

An SSW stated that this power difference is at the root of this issue in the PSRP and its narrative of homogenizing what integration and success should look like for everyone (Interview 1). The unequal power dynamic and the encouragement to take remedial jobs has been seen to have negative long-term effects on the newcomers' ability to access meaningful employment, hindering their language acquisition and social development when stuck in remedial positions the sponsors wanted them to take (Kumin, 2015).

The final theme identified in the GTA was the influence of the large city size on newcomers' access to meaningful employment. Larger urban centres are often thought of as having more economic opportunities for newcomers, but that is not always the case. Studies show that poverty and unemployment rates among newcomers are higher in large cities compared to the host community than in smaller centres (Valade, 2017; Wright and Parada, 2019). Likewise, research has found that stronger social bonds within large urban cities can often obstruct the newcomers' wider economic integration (Bauder, 2003). Co-ethnic networks, like those largely found in the GTA, can prevent individuals from developing official language skills and cultural capital, as these are often more easily developed in informal settings with the host community (Wilkinson, 2017). Whilst there are many advantages of the strong fellow Syrian or Arabic-speaking networks in the GTA, there are protective effects of ethnic enclaves. However, co-ethnic networks also can often be seen as isolating factors, acting as a disadvantage in accessing employment outside of ethnically owned businesses (Bauder, 2003). Additionally, Hynie and Hyndman (2016) found that newcomers' having cross-cultural social connections increase the quantity of employment opportunities available for the newcomers. The strength of fellow Arabic-speaking communities that Syrian newcomers' have developed in the GTA can lead to separation from the mainstream economy through a lack of social bridges and, thus making access to meaningful employment more difficult.

Additionally, there are large gaps in the knowledge of resources and services being offered throughout the city. Numerous sponsors and SSWs spoke to the difficulty of creating a collaborative network of information across the GTA because of the large geographic size. This difficulty was further exacerbated as sponsorship groups in the Syrian initiative had less experience helping newcomers find employment than previous sponsorship groups (Macklin et al., 2018). Furthermore, knowledge of resources varied greatly between each sponsorship, depending on what connections and training each had as a group. One Syrian man stated that during the first year of settlement his sponsors did not refer his family to any organizations, even when they had various issues (Interview 2; also seen in Interview 11). Only after his sponsorship was complete did he himself find dozens of organizations that could have assisted him with the various issues he had gone to his sponsors about, including support in finding employment. Disparities in knowledge of employment assistance for Syrian newcomers meant many were unable to utilize the resources that were available. The

accelerated nature of the Canadian Syrian Initiative left communities and sponsorship groups without the proper training needed to assist in the successful settlement of the newcomers (Veronis et al., forthcoming).

The sheer size of the GTA makes it difficult for newcomers and sponsors to navigate resources and know what best suits their individual needs. The findings suggest that there are inconsistencies between each sponsorship group. An example of this can be seen when comparing two sponsorship groups' experiences supporting the newcomers' search for employment. One sponsor said "I felt like we weren't really helping. We weren't giving very much guidance" in terms of accessing employment (Interview 9). In the same interview this sponsor said that there are "a lot of white Canadians who don't actually know how to look for the kind of jobs that would be available to someone who doesn't speak English and has literally a grade seven education." The newcomer he sponsored wished to find a job in construction like he had previously held in Syria, but the sponsor admitted "I literally have no idea how to help him find a construction job" (Interview 9). The newcomer did not end up finding a job in construction and at the time of the interview worked in a service position. In contrast, another sponsor stated that the individual she sponsored, who also previously worked in construction, was able to find meaningful employment by completing a construction trades program (Interview 12). This program specifically targeted Syrian newcomers and had English training as part of it, offering connections to construction companies upon completion. This sponsor was only able to share this resource with the individual she sponsored because she came to know about the program through working with an SSW. This comparison shows that there are services and programs in the GTA that can assist newcomers in accessing meaningful employment, however, the sponsors' knowledge of them is uneven. While these programs exist, the size of the city makes it exceedingly challenging for all sponsorship groups to have access to the same knowledge of programs and therefore many resources go unutilized (Interview 9; 10; 12, Sponsors).

All but one participant shared that the involvement of their sponsor had a weak impact on searching for work. Only one sponsor spoke about the Syrian newcomer she worked with finding meaningful employment, however, this was linked to her connections to a program through her own employment (Interview 12, as described above). Additionally, a sponsor noted that there was no requirement for the sponsorship groups to attend training or information sessions before starting their sponsorship (Interview 12; Lim, 2019; Lornic, 2019). This leads to gap in information that could be potentially helpful to the newcomers' settlement success and economic integration.

This sub-section has reviewed the three main themes found in my research in the GTA in regard to Syrian newcomers' accessing employment. First, the experiences of participants on facing socially created barriers that hindered the newcomers from accessing employment and upward mobility, such as discrimination, were examined. Secondly, this section discussed how the uneven power relationships in the

sponsorship groups impacted the newcomers' access to meaningful employment in Canada. Finally, the limitations posed by the geographical size of the GTA, such as accessing resources to help with the job search and acquisition process was reviewed. Fourth, the lack of experience and knowledge of the sponsors limited opportunities for the newcomers. The next sub-section will discuss the findings of Syrian PSRs' access to meaningful employment in the smaller sized city of Guelph.

4.2 Employment in the City Guelph

In Guelph, the neoliberal emphasis on the importance of employment in the sponsorship program and the Estill Initiative manifested in an unparalleled way as a result of the city's geography. This section will analyze the three distinct sets of findings around the Syrian PSRs' access to meaningful employment in the city of Guelph. First, the lack of emphasis on whether remedial or meaningful employment was being acquired and how the geography of Guelph influenced what jobs were made available for the Syrians is examine. Secondly, the Estill Initiative's emphasis of a neoliberal pathway to integration for the Syrian newcomers through quickly entering the workforce is discussed. Finally, the issue of the unique power imbalances between the sponsors and Syrians that were created through the Estill Initiative in Guelph is analyzed.

In the city of Guelph, all interviews emphasized the importance of newcomers accessing employment, but within the interviews with sponsors and SSW there was little discussion about the type of employment that could be accessed. There was little to no distinction made between the type of employment, remedial or meaningful, that the Syrians were able to access. Currently, Guelph has the lowest unemployment rate in all of Canada, which means that there is a need for workers in many businesses throughout the city (Carty, 2019; City of Guelph, 2018). One SSW shared that she:

> was driving my son to his basketball game in [neighbouring city name], so I'm driving and every business and building on Highway 24 leaving Guelph has a hiring sign. Every single one…They were hiring for drivers, forklift carriers. They were pretty manual jobs but that's the type of businesses they have. But every single company I drove by was hiring. That I think is a very healthy climate for having new people come into because everybody is looking for more employees and the pool that is here, currently isn't meeting the need. So that kind of takes that pressure off and no one [in the host community] is afraid for their jobs. The refugees aren't seen as a threat. (Interview 22, SSW)

A Syrian woman stressed that, although there were many job openings, there were few opportunities for employment outside of factory work (Interview 19).[42] She added that this factory work is largely manual and physically straining. Furthermore, to be able to access employment outside of this sector, newcomers usually had to have a strong knowledge of English pre-arrival. A sponsor shared that the head of the family she sponsored was proficient in English upon arrival and therefore found employment through the university in the tenth month of their sponsorship (Interview 24). This reflects a similar theme found amongst participants in the

[42] See also: Valade (2017) for discussion of gendered access to employment for newcomers.

GTA, for whom pre-arrival English proficiency resulted in fewer obstacles to accessing meaningful employment.

The ability to speak English pre-arrival is often a result of individuals having had higher socio-economic positions and access to higher and/or Western types of education in Syria (Bubbers, 2015; Statistics Canada, 2019). In the interviews with SSWs and sponsors, the predominance of factory work amongst accessible employment for the newcomers and how their socio-economic position impacted job availability was questioned. An SSW stressed that she did not see a potential socio-economic barrier in employment accessibility because:

> The jobs they can get, what we offer in Guelph is important because it gives them [the newcomers] a wage and a purpose. These jobs have allowed them to start making long-term plans because they don't fear they'll lose their jobs. They get to wake up every morning and do something. They can pay their bills, they can afford things, so it's significant work. Many refugees don't even get that in other places and Guelph is giving that to them. (Interview 23, SSW)

The sentiment that factory work should be viewed as meaningful work was also expressed by a sponsor (Interview 25). However, another sponsor suggested that the Syrians should "focus on learning English if they want better jobs" and that "they can't expect to just be handed all these fancy jobs when they don't even speak English" (Interview 21). The lack of critical thought that was shared from the SSW and sponsor participants was in stark contrast to the responses from the Syrian participants.

Even amongst the Syrian participants, there was a debate about the meaning of 'meaningful work'. A Syrian man shared that he was able to access a factory position, which was long-term, stable and offered adequate pay, but it was unrelated to what he had previously done (Interview 17). Moreover, this position was not what he envisioned doing upon arrival in Canada, stating that it was physically taxing, so he was doubtful of its long-term sustainability. Another Syrian man had similar thoughts, stating through a translator:

> His job is good, full time and pays for everything for his family. But it's not what he wants to do... Before in [Syrian city name] he worked in a lab, he went to school for science. Now he's packaging things in a warehouse all day. He's grateful for the money and for having a job but he wants to do what he did in Syria but doesn't think he'll be able to again. (Interview 14)

The lack of emphasis put on whether the Syrians themselves found the work meaningful is crucial when analyzing access to employment in Guelph. Meaningful employment allows the newcomers to access suitable and purposeful work, not just through economic stability and routine, but through personal fulfillment as well. Sherrell et al. (2005) find that there may be "a spatial mismatch between the jobs available in a city, and the job experience and skills of the refugee", amending the definition of meaningful employment (p. 18; see also: Agrawal, 2018; Hyndman et al., 2006; Wiginton, 2013).

The second theme identified in the research was the Estill Initiatives' belief that the best pathway to integration was through the neoliberal approach of newcomers' rapidly gaining employment. One sponsor discussed how employment was so highly valued as a part of social integration because Estill had the belief that it was only through economic participation that newcomers truly belong in the community. In Guelph, economic participation and financial independence was often seen by the Estill Initiative as the most important determinant of successful settlement; it was raised in every interview conducted in the city. One sponsor shared that Estill's answer to most challenges experienced by the newcomers was for them to "just get a job" and "get them working right away" (Interview 25). Another sponsor debated with her husband about Guelph's view on what successful settle would look like:

> Sponsor: Estill always said, we are successful when our newcomers are…
> Husband: Paying taxes or something?
> Sponsor: Well, I was going to say going to the places we go. Once they are not going to foodbanks or accessing refugee support services. But once they're members of the community.
> Husband: I thought he always said, "just get to work"?
> Sponsor: Well he was, and we can get into that, but I didn't want to start up with something so aggressive [laughs]. (Interview 24, Sponsor)[43]

The sponsor later called the Initiative Estill's "own sponsorship *scheme*" (Interview 24). Estill himself wrote that "success is 50 families to safety. 50 families working, paying taxes and buying groceries where you and I buy them...I have failed if any of them end up on welfare" (Estill, n.d).

A Syrian man shared that there was a large push for him to find employment mere months after coming to Guelph and before he felt ready (Interview 20). The participant felt obligated to take a part-time, unskilled position because of his lack of English proficiency and Canadian experience (Interview 20). This push for employment was said to be justified to create a sense of belonging and routine; and lead newcomers to becoming financially independent and secure (Interview 22; 23, SSW). Unfortunately, the narrative of sponsorship groups pushing newcomers to take remedial employment, such as factory work, instead of focusing on English language acquisition for long-term success is a common theme found in both sized cities, as well as other research (Hyndman, 2011; Kaida et al., 2019; Kumin, 2015). One SSW who worked with the Estill Initiative said that while English language learning was the main focus of the first year in settlement, Estill believed that both language classes and employment "were good and both are required" (Interview 22).

The Estill Initiative developed programs to support this vision of settlement, connecting newcomers with various companies, including Estill's own company, Danby (CBC News, 2015; Keung, 2019). An SSW said that the Estill Initiative promoted programs both to create self-sufficiency and strengthen the Syrians'

[43] Interview 24 (Sponsor) was conducted in the participants home, meaning her children and husband came in and out of the room on occasion. Though her husband was not being interviewed, I believe the dialogue between the two of them demonstrates an important topic of what the Estill Initiative encouraged.

English through informal conversations at their place of work (Interview 22). However, Syrian participants said that in their experience, there was little to no room to develop language skills in the factories. Three Syrian men described having great difficulty learning a new language on a factory floor because there was very little communication between workers (Interview 17;18; 20, Syrian men). One sponsor stated that Estill's "ideal role model" for the sponsorship program were the few individuals that were able to successfully navigate holding employment and language training simultaneously (Interview 24). Though this may work for a select few, a newcomer explained that he had great difficulty working and learning English concurrently, and was only doing so because he felt obligated to do so by his sponsors (Interview 18, Syrian man).

Other regionalization strategies, similar to the PSRP in Guelph, have been established in Canada in order to develop the economy by increasing immigration and thus the size of the workforce (Wilkinson, 2017). Estill similarly urged other executives at companies in smaller cities to mimic his settlement approach to newcomers to help build the employment sector (Mann, 2016). Hyndman et al. (2006) argues that newcomers are often regarded as a humanitarian obligation, instead of "an economic strategy to revitalize smaller cities" (p. 5). While it is important to create positive narratives around newcomers, noting how they are beneficial to the health of the economy and community in the long run, there still must be *quality* employment for this success to occur (Wilkinson, 2017).

One Syrian man disclosed that by Estill placing an economic value on the newcomers, he did not help the creation of a sense of belonging for Syrians in Guelph (Interview 17). He stated through an interpreter:

> He says he is extremely grateful for the opportunities that Jim has given him, that he gave him access to other companies that may hire Syrians in Guelph. But he felt that he was pushed to take the jobs by the city. Almost as if it was expected that a few months after everyone got here [to Guelph] that they were to take up working. Jim allowed [Syrian man's name] and his family to come here and to be safe. So he says when he was told by his sponsors that Jim wants him to take a job, he didn't feel like he could say no…Guelph and Jim have gotten a lot of positive attention because of the sponsoring… he says it's hard to think that this didn't cross anybody's mind when they were planning to bring all the Syrians here [to Guelph]. (Interview 17, Syrian man)

The emphasis placed on newcomers quickly entering the labour market on arrival is not beneficial to newcomers' access to meaningful employment in the long-term (Agrawal, 2018; Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Kaida et al., 2019) A Syrian man explained through an interpreter:

> It (factory work) doesn't give him opportunities to speak to other people really. He said he was told when he started he'd be working with a lot of different people and get opportunities to practice his English and improve, but that hasn't been the case. His English is still very poor, but he doesn't have energy to take anymore classes. (Interview 14)

By impacting the Syrian man's ability to learn the language, factory work did not allow this individual the ability to move into other roles with the company or change career pathways, as "he feels stuck because he can't learn the language and doesn't think anyone else will give a man his age a job without knowing English"

(Interview 14, Syrian man). This emphasis on employment affects perceptions of successful settlement, as it incorrectly overemphasizes the role of the newcomers' economic measures.

The third finding in Guelph is the imbalances of power that developed in the Estill Initiative, through the sponsors' active involvement in all aspects of the Syrians' integration, especially employment. Hyndman (2014) stresses "the economic outcomes of settled refugees are less a reflection of their human capital or integration potential and more a result of the age cohort and support provided upon arrival" (p. 2). Stevens (2016) echoes this sentiment, affirming that refugee employment is significantly established by what social connections are available. A significant benefit of the PSRP is that newcomers have social connections to their sponsorship group (IRCC, 2016a; Wilkinson, 2017). These social connections built through the PSRP are incorporated social bridges that may lead to labour market connections and opportunities, reducing one of the barriers that newcomers experience in accessing employment (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016). Furthermore, through Estill and his company, Danby, Syrians received support through a city-wide mobilization. Wiginton (2013) finds that there is great influence on community perceptions when there are supportive employers in place for the newcomers, as beyond increasing job opportunities, they also become sites where connections can be made between the newcomers and the host community. At the same time, the functioning of the PSRP has allowed a strong imbalance of power to develop between the sponsors and newcomers, as coercion may develop as the newcomers have difficulty accessing employment (Lornic, 2019). The newcomers can then "be either subjected to social control deployed by welfare professionals or to labor exploitation" (Garnier et al., 2018, p. 7). The PSRP is generally characterized by uneven power dynamics, however, with one person and organization funding and systematizing the Initiative in Guelph, along with the city-wide mobilization, the power relations transpired in a particularly unique way.

Estill contributed to the financial sponsorship while community volunteers provided the social support, but it was reported that the Guelph Refugee Sponsorship Forum (the Forum) and the community volunteers often overlapped on economic and social sponsoring responsibilities (Coorsh, 2017; Estill, 2015; 2016; Haugen, 2019). Wiginton (2013) finds that when the employers are the newcomers' only provider of support, whether social or financial, a further vulnerability of the newcomer being mistreated is developed. For example, one sponsor discussed how the Forum was quite selective with the distribution of the financial and material donations, if the newcomers or sponsors were not following the Initiative's employment directions (Interview 24). Three interviews disclosed stories of sponsorship groups separating from the original Estill Initiative because they disagreed with pushing the newcomers into employment before they were ready (Interview 15, Syrian woman; Interview 22, SSW; Interview 26, Sponsor). Others expressed similar sentiments of various sponsors disagreeing with the timeline of employment that was developed by the Estill Initiative (Interview 16, Syrian woman; Interview 17; 20, Syrian men). Furthermore, a sponsor shared that many Syrians

and sponsors disagreed with Estill but were scared to complain because of fear of backlash or consequences, explaining:

> Now, I don't say this lightly, but I don't ever remember seeing Jim Estill working with the refugees. Now, it's two and a half years ago or so too, but no, he wasn't involved in that stuff, so I don't think he knew what was best for them. But, he would meet with the sponsors. Now he's technically the sponsor and we're just whatever. I forget what we were called, but we considered ourselves sponsors, because we were the ones doing the day-to-day work. Out of this he would also say get them a job, get the Syrians jobs, get them working, over and over again. There were a few sponsorship groups that broke off from him because of this mentality, but some of us couldn't financially afford to take over all of the sponsorship so we had to stay in the group. The Syrians, I mean even us as sponsors, we felt stuck between a rock and a hard place because on one hand Jim brought these people over, but at the same time taking the jobs that were provided could ruin any chance of them being what they wanted to be, being a teacher, a nurse, a whatever they were in Syria. But us as sponsors were even scared to speak out because we've heard that the group (the Forum) doesn't like when you don't follow what they think should happen. Apparently, rumour has it, they've made it difficult for some of the refugees who left with their sponsors to find employment. Now, I don't know if that's true or not, but it scared us all! We knew the jobs weren't right but at the same time having a bad job was better than possibly maybe defying the head of the group and make it even more difficult to find work. Knowing that if I tried to speak up we could potentially harm one of our new families? Nope, I've kept my mouth shut. (Interview, 26, Sponsor)

Sponsorship groups leaving the Estill Initiative due to disagreements with how integration should occur creates an important narrative around the power inequalities in Guelph's PSRP. The imbalance of power between the Estill Initiative and newcomers is clear; as the newcomers and the social sponsors were not comfortable coming forward on issues they had with the financial sponsors' thoughts on employment. Yet, the process of sponsorship groups leaving the Estill Initiative shows the newcomers' [and sponsors'] agency, as they renegotiate power within the relationships. Garnier et al. (2018) says "it would also be a mistake to ignore the ways in which refugees exert their agency to *negotiate* access to resources and *persuade* bureaucrats and employers of their credentials" (p. 7). The functioning of settlement requires a process of undoing and reworking control through sponsorship and the agency seen in Guelph shows the negotiation of the host community's roles and power.

With the financial influence of Estill in the sponsorships and in the city, and the media praising him as a "hero" for his sponsorship, his beliefs held authority regarding the Syrian newcomers' settlement conditions (CBC, 2017, n.p.). However, a Syrian woman disagreed with the newcomers gaining employment before they were ready, as her husband worked in an isolated position in a factory at the expense of attending English classes, deeply affecting his ability to learn English (Interview 27). Through his language limitations, she stated that he has struggled to develop community, leading him to "detach and not leave the house other than going to work" because "he doesn't need to be reminded he doesn't feel like he fits" (Interview 27, Syrian woman; see also: Nawyn et al., 2012). Through an interpreter, the husband expressed his desire to continue language classes in order to requalify to work in trades, like he had previously done in Syria (Interview 20). But his sponsors thought that starting work sooner was a better idea for the stability of their family, especially

because they had found a position for him. His wife asserted that "we owe so much to them [the sponsors], how could be say no? We felt like [a] burden and didn't want that" (Interview 27). She stressed that through this push into taking a remedial position "he still cannot talk to next-door [neighbors] or other parents at kids' school, he will not be able to go to school to get the job he wishes for" (Interview 27, Syrian woman). The imbalance of power within the sponsorship on accessing employment is seen to deeply affect settlement, often inhibiting access to meaningful employment for newcomers. Additionally, the tension between being grateful and appreciative of the sponsors, while wanting to be independent and find more meaningful employment was emphasized in multiple interviews (Interview 15; 27, Syrian women; Interview 17; 18; 20, Syrian men).

The uneven power relations of sponsorship reduced the agency of the Syrians, as noted above (Interview 15; 16, Syrian women; Interview 17, Syrian man). This blocking of agency led to many Syrians taking up remedial jobs instead of working towards developing meaningful employment. Agrawal and Zeitouny (2017) similarly found that sponsors in Edmonton did not or could not find the Syrian newcomers' meaningful employment. Bauder (2003) found that while midsize cities may present improved employment opportunities for newcomers, there will always be individual factors influencing the newcomers' ability to access these prospects, such as language ability and community factors. Not every newcomer's journey follows the same path, as Syrians in Guelph found: "what is the priority for the person? We must let them make their own choices because the outcomes of any decision are born by the person who made the decision" (Interview 22, SSW; Interview 27, Syrian woman). Other research contests the Estill Initiative's belief that short-term economic development is beneficial for integration and shows that remedial jobs ultimately regularly disadvantage newcomers (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Kumin, 2015; Wilkinson, 2017).

This chapter has analyzed Syrian newcomers' access to employment, comparing the GTA and Guelph in order to find the similarities and differences between the city sizes. In the GTA, the primary barriers to accessing meaningful employment were discrimination and lack of foreign credential recognition. Furthermore, the uneven power dynamics influenced the newcomers' settlement experiences, for example, the sponsors encouraged remedial employment in the name of self-sufficiency and at the expense of taking language classes that would improve newcomers' employment prospects. There was also a common narrative of the sponsorship being seen as a failure if the newcomers did not have employment before the 12-month sponsorship period was complete, no matter if it was remedial or meaningful employment. The large city size also created a geographic barrier, that made it difficult to be aware of the high number of resources available to assist newcomer settlement. Both sponsors and newcomer participants were not given the proper training on how to access useful employment services, creating a gap in the knowledge able to be utilized.

In Guelph, there was no distinction between whether the newcomers were able to access remedial or meaningful employment, as the majority of jobs available for the Syrians involved factory work. Furthermore,

the pre-arrival socio-economic privilege was analyzed. The Estill Initiative, which led sponsorship in Guelph, followed a neoliberal model of integration, encouraging the newcomers to enter the labour force rapidly in order to integrate properly into the city. Though Guelph boasts the lowest unemployment rates in Canada (Carty, 2019; City of Guelph, 2018), the access to jobs available in the city did not translate into meaningful employment (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016). The factory jobs that were largely available to the newcomers were isolating for the Syrians. Meaningful employment was not easily accessible for most of the Syrian newcomers in my study based in Guelph, which shaped their integration and participation in the city. Furthermore, the neoliberal approach was emphasized within the Estill Initiative despite this model being criticized by wider research, as it often negatively impacts newcomers' English language learning ability and creates barriers to access meaningful employment in the long-term (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016; Kumin, 2015; Wilkinson, 2017). However, while there were negative assessments of the Estill Initiative's viewpoint of employment, participants discussed that they were still grateful to have opportunities for work and the ability to be able to afford costs of living.

The Estill Initiative's neoliberal model of integration was found as a dominant finding in this research, partly due to only interviewing those who were part of the Initiative. However, the emphasis this model placed on newcomers quickly gaining employment saw resistance, as newcomers pushed back against this idea and sponsorship groups left the Initiative to grant the newcomers' more agency in their employment decisions (Interview 15, Syrian woman; Interview 26, Sponsor). Similar to the experiences of those interviewed in the GTA, uneven sponsorship relationships were found in the interviews in Guelph, specifically in regard to the newcomers' agency and positionality. The neoliberal model pressed by the Estill Initiative, with one central person and organization in control of the sponsorship, created problematic power relations, demonstrated in the unequal distribution of donations and the newcomers and sponsors fearing consequences if they went against the push for employment.

Although a neoliberal approach was specifically encouraged by the Initiative in Guelph, emphasis was placed on the financial independence of newcomers in both centres of study. The PSRP predominantly incites such support for rapid economic integration, as successful integration is partly defined as obtaining employment in order to attain self-sufficiency outside of the private sponsorship (Kyriakides et al., 2018b). The sponsors' focus on the economic outcomes of newcomers is due to the government evoking a narrative that encourages economic success as one of the main goals of the PSRP (Lenard, 2019). Therefore, the functioning of the PSRP constructs the idea that newcomers need to become self-sufficient in the official 12-month sponsorship period (Lornic, 2019). Through this push, often remedial employment is encouraged and leads newcomers to hold jobs that are unskilled, low paying and seasonal or temporary, that have short-term benefits but long-term consequences. Private sponsors can reproduce or contest such rhetoric on successful settlement, dependent on their own knowledge, but "inequality of social, economic, legal, linguistic and

political status is not a provisional feature of sponsor-refugee relations; it is the premise of the scheme" (Macklin et al., forthcoming, p. 24). Due to the operative of the PSRP, the newcomers were often forced into difficult choices surrounding employment, as seen throughout my research in both the GTA and Guelph. Though newcomers are generally beneficial from an economic perspective to the country, this research emphasizes the importance of not simply focusing on newcomers as a "good investment for Canada" and rapid integration into the economy (Wilkinson, 2017, p. 97). Instead, it is crucial to focus on the experience of the newcomers and their access to meaningful employment that will ensure stability and agency; as well as financially benefitting the host community and newcomers.

The experiences shared and discussed in this chapter are from a group of 27 participants who were involved in PSR settlement in the GTA and Guelph. Those who were interviewed represent only a small percentage of the understandings and experiences that occurred during the Canadian Syrian Initiative in Southern Ontario. Additionally, though the topics of newcomer access to social networks and employment have been separated into individual chapters, they are mutually dependent and together influence complete newcomer integration (Hynie et al., 2016). The next chapter will bridge the two themes, in order to discuss the reciprocal impact on integration both social networks and employment have in the GTA and Guelph and; the wider impact of my findings. The next section will additionally present my final thoughts and recommendations established through my research, concluding how my thesis enhances and supports wider research to question the current structure of the PSRP.

Chapter Five: Does City Size Matter? Conclusions and Implications

The five chapters of this thesis have analyzed Syrian Privately Sponsored Refugees' (PSR) settlement and how the size of the city of (re)settlement has impacted experiences of integration. It is essential to critically analyze newcomer integration and settlement success, as the UNHCR and other civil society actors have continually encouraged the global North countries to further use resettlement, and private sponsorship specifically, as a response towards the growing number of international refugees (United Nations, 2016). Resettlement is the most concrete and "truly durable solution" available in response to the continual displacement and forced movement of communities around the world (Kumin, 2015, p. 2; UNHCR, 2018). Subsequently, strategies to improve and optimize refugee (re)settlement have developed in order to guarantee advantages for both the newcomers and host society (Esses et al., forthcoming). The Global Refugee Settlement Initiative (GRSI), launched in December 2016, aims to disseminate the idea of private sponsorship beyond Canada's borders to create new resettlement in partnership with civil society and with support from UNHCR, the Canadian Government, the Open Society Foundation and others (Hyndman et al., 2017; Hynie et al., 2019; Kaida et al., 2019).

Since the beginning of the Canadian Syrian Initiative in 2015, over 60,000 Syrian newcomers have been (re)settled throughout Canada (Statistics Canada, 2019, p. 2; Veronis et al., forthcoming, p. 439). A significant portion of the national mobilization was due to the participation of private citizens in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP). The PSRP has been globally recognized, as newcomers are socially and financially support by private that take on this work as volunteers (Macklin et al., 2018; Kyriakides et al., 2018a). The analysis of PSRs' settlement is critical to ensure the program's best practices are offered as Canada begins to export the initiative internationally. Furthermore, the resurgence of interest in the PSRP has led to an increase in research on the program, including various constructive critiques of private sponsorship.[44] It is also important to analyze the PSRP for Canada's own use, as the country has (re)settled four times more PSRs in 2019 than in 2015 (Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019, p. 6).

Chapter Three and Chapter Four reviewed this project's findings of important integration indicators in the larger city of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and the smaller centre of Guelph. Syrian participants' access to social networks was analyzed, including relationships with co-ethnic communities (social bonds), and with the host community (social bridges). I also examined the findings of the newcomers' access to meaningful employment in both cities of study. This final chapter will bridge both cities and bases of integration. The first section below will compare similarities in the settlement experiences shared in the GTA and Guelph, followed by the contrast of differences of integration in both cities. I then answer my research question: "does city size

[44] For examples see Hyndman et al. (2017); Kyriakides et al. (2018a); (2018b); Lim (2019) and Lorinc (2019).

really matter to private sponsorship?" Following this, I detail recommendations for future study and summarise my final research considerations.

5.1 Similarities in the settlement experiences in the Greater Toronto Area and Guelph

This section consolidates the main similarities that were identified between the GTA and Guelph pertaining to integration indicators of Syrian PSRs' access to social networks and employment. First, participants from both cities found newcomers' access to social networks, with *both* co-ethnic links and with the host community, to be fundamental for successful settlement to transpire. Second, Syrians' pre-displacement identity and socio-economic position were determinative to settlement outcomes in both sized cities. Lastly, interviews in the GTA and Guelph both emphasized newcomers' experiences of being encouraged and pushed by their private sponsors to take the first employment opportunities that they were able to find. Furthermore, these employment prospects predominantly required newcomers to take remedial employment that is not conducive to other aspects of integration.

Foremost, participants from both cities spoke extensively about social networks as one of the most significant factors for their integration, if not the most important element. Sixteen of the 27 participants disclosed that social networks were one of the primary factors for integration, while the remaining eleven participants believed that social networks were *the* most important factor for integration. All interviews also emphasized that two-way, mutual integration was essential for the development of successful settlement and must include both the newcomer and the host community. Furthermore, there was an emphasis on the category of social networks being influential, as development with social bonds with the newcomers' co-ethnic networks, social bridges with the cross-cultural host community or with both categories of relationships shaped settlement experiences. Drawing on Ager and Strang's (2008) model of integration and adding the recent Canadian extensions to this conception (Hynie et al. 2016), Syrian participants indicated that they needed to be able to access both social bonds and social bridges, regardless of their location of settlement. Relationships with fellow Syrians and Arabic-speaking communities buffered the initial shock of (re)settlement, despite the attention and support of sponsors (see also: Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Menjivar, 1995). Co-ethnic networks also created connections for the Syrian newcomers with their cultural, linguistic and religious identities that are valuable to them. Hynie et al. (2016) found "subjective variables, like feelings of belonging and a sense of community, may be as important in the integration process as the more objective and functional markers of housing, employment and language" (p. 3). Therefore, having co-ethnic networks can create valuable feelings of belonging within (re)settlement. Interviewed sponsors and settlement support workers (SSW) echoed such beliefs, identifying that they also understood why social bonds were crucial in settlement, especially initially.

There was a difference identified between the Syrian understanding of the value of cross-cultural social bridges and that of the sponsors and SSWs participants. One sponsor in the GTA and all four sponsor

participants in Guelph shared the belief that social bridges with the host community were crucial and a requirement for integration. All participants recognized that having social bridges is valuable to settlement, as they help create informal spaces for language learning and allow for newcomers to access higher quality of employment (see also: Putnam, 1995; Wright and Parada, 2019). However, the majority of Syrian participants in both cities still stated that they prioritized building further co-ethnic networks during their initial settlement over accessing relationships with the host community during this time. The category of social connections that the participants wished to cultivate and when they wished to access such relationships was socially significant to the newcomers' sense of belonging and cultural identity, and therefore of crucial importance amidst settlement. Newcomer interviewees in the GTA said that their motivation for wanting further social bonds was due to their geographic distance from the greater part of the host community. However, newcomers in Guelph primarily depended on relationships with their sponsors, as fellow Syrian and Arabic-speaking communities were substantially inaccessible in the smaller city. Therefore, Syrian participants in Guelph sought heightened co-ethnic networks for reasons such as cultural understandings.

Following initial settlement, Syrian participants in both cities began to develop more connections with the host community. In my study, the desire for increased social bridges was, however, related to the age of the participant. Syrian interviewees between the ages of forty to sixty years predicted that they would never be able to develop strong cross-cultural relationships in Canada, mainly due to their lack of English language proficiency. Therefore, participants in this age group noted that social bridges were harder for them as they were dependent on their ability to learn a new language. Syrian newcomers between the age of twenty to forty years discussed that they similarly experienced a lack of English language proficiency that hindered their ability to develop social bridges. However, this age group still expressed a desire to begin building cross-cultural social connections. Despite barriers, younger Syrians reported that what types of relationships they sought shifted over time to include social bridges.[45] Ultimately, participants in both the GTA and Guelph said that newcomers require and desire access to both co-ethnic networks and with the cross-cultural host community. One Syrian suggested that:

> It doesn't matter if they will use them [the networks] or not, but we must have access to them, some sort of way to connect with both people like us and the rest of Canada, whether the refugees want relationships with the rest of Canada or are able to have them and when they want them. When we learn English and are dealing with everything that has changed and everything that has happened before being here [in Canada], some refugees may not want to be around non-Arabic people and that's okay. But they still should be given the ability to change their mind, even years down the road, they still should be able to have the ability to make that connection. (Interview 1, Syrian man, GTA)

[45] Only one younger Syrian participant stated that he was already able to develop strong social bonds and bridges because he went to high school in the GTA and was able to access appropriate spaces to be able to have diversity in his relationships. This unique exception is discussed in the third chapter of this paper.

Social relationships can be time-dependent, as they can change over time; are based on the unique individual and both types of social networks are beneficial to integration.[46] Therefore, this study found that successful settlement requires newcomer access to both social bonds and social bridges, no matter the city size.

Despite a small sample size in the study, Syrian's pre-displacement identity was also found to influence the settlement experiences and outcomes of newcomers in both the GTA and Guelph. The geography of residence pre-and-post arrival, education, and religion, strongly shaped Syrian participants' ability to access social networks and employment opportunities (Drolet et al., forthcoming; Hyndman, 2001; Lokot, 2019). Interviews affirmed that those with previous high socio-economic positions in Syria often experienced fewer barriers to integration and were able to have better settlement outcomes than those who were from lower socio-economic backgrounds, independent of city size (Bubbers, 2015; Valade, 2017). Higher pre-arrival socio-economic standing is linked to newcomers' having greater English language proficiency due to increased access to education pre-displacement (Nawyn et al., 2012; Statistics Canada, 2019). The newcomers' ability to speak the national language on arrival also impacted the ability to build relationships with the host community. Therefore, Syrians who spoke English prior to arriving in Southern Ontario were able to develop stronger relationships with their English-speaking sponsors, therefore granting them possible increased support through the sponsorship.[47] While Syrian permanent residents or citizens who were once refugees still face barriers, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds, their pre-displacement-and-arrival socio-economic standing shaped settlement, regardless of the city size. Similar themes developed with regard to newcomers' socio-economic position also influencing Syrian participants' access to meaningful employment in both cities. Participants in the GTA and Guelph shared related experiences through the need and ability to requalify for previous levels of employment, reflecting on the protectionist requirement for Canadian or Western work experience and credentials. Furthermore, newcomers noted the necessity of high English language proficiency in Guelph and the GTA in order to gain meaningful employment, which is regularly only practically achievable if a newcomer had knowledge of the language pre-arrival. Again, official language ability matters regardless of city size.

Another similarity that was identified between the GTA and Guelph was newcomers extensively being encouraged by sponsors to take the first employment opportunity that was made available. Many research participants stated that taking the first available job was done in the name of self-sufficiency but came at the expense of the newcomers participating in language classes and requalification. Syrian participants reported having to take remedial jobs that were unrelated to the careers that they had held pre-arrival. All Syrian

[46] See Putnam (1993); Ager and Strang (2008) and Hynie et al. (2016) for further information on how both social bonds and social bridges are advantageous for newcomer integration.
[47] See Macklin et al. (forthcoming) for how increased affective bonds between the sponsors and sponsored can be linked to the strength of support that newcomers are able to receive through private sponsorship.

participants that experienced a push by their sponsors to take remedial employment also described their struggles to defy what their sponsors suggested. PSRs being pushed by their sponsors to take on remedial employment quickly after arrival is, unfortunately, a prevalent critique of the program's structure, unaffected by city size (Agrawal, 2018; Hyndman, 2011; Kumin, 2015; Lenard, 2019).

This section has reviewed similarities among newcomers' access to social networks and employment between the GTA and Guelph. First, both social bonds and social bridges are needed and must be accessible for newcomers on (re)settlement in order for successful integration to occur. Second, the pre-displacement socio-economic position of the newcomers determined the severity of the barriers to integration that were experienced and was independent of city-size. Lastly, in both the GTA and Guelph, newcomers reported sponsors persuading the sponsored to quickly take remedial employment over the long-term ability to gain access to long-term, meaningful employment.

5.2 Differences in the settlement experiences in the Greater Toronto Area and Guelph

This section will summarize the analysis of the differences between the two cities and the influence of differing city size. First, the comparison of the social networks that were accessible for the newcomers in the two cities will be discussed. The GTA provided newcomers with expansive ethnic enclaves, while newcomers in Guelph had stronger cross-cultural relationships with the host community. Next, the distinction of proximity will be analyzed, taking account of the newcomers' proximity to their sponsors, and Guelph's proximity to fellow co-ethnic networks, found principally in the GTA. Third, the influence of city size on newcomers' access to resources, acting as an advantage and a disadvantage for settlement concurrently, will be analyzed. Finally, the imbalance of power relations within the architecture of PSRP experienced in different ways based on the size of the city will be examined.

The first difference between the two cities of analysis was the type of social networks that were accessible to the Syrian newcomers. The GTA provided expansive ethnic enclaves, allowing the Syrians that settled within this large urban city to reside predominately in neighbourhoods that are made up of fellow Arabic-speaking communities (Government of Canada, 2017a; Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). As the GTA gave the Syrian newcomers' access to social bonds, it also offered them the ability to rely on community that was culturally, linguistically and religiously similar to themselves, in order to buffer the initial stressors of displacement and settlement (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Menjivar, 1995). All Syrian participants in the GTA discussed settling into areas of the metropolitan hub that isolated themselves from the host community, while simultaneously granting them co-ethnic networks and support upon arrival. The social bonds that occurred in the large urban centre permitted the newcomers to initially rely on their co-ethnic networks for support. As time went on, they increasingly sought to develop social bridges with the host community. However, the strength of social bonds created numerous barriers for the newcomers to develop social bridges

with the host community, such as preventing access to informal spaces that support English language development. In contrast, participants in Guelph cited that there was a stronger relationship between the Syrian PSRs, and the host community compared to in the GTA. The strength of the Syrians' social bridges is due to the newcomers having little access to other social capital, such as relationships with fellow Arabic-speakers. The lack of access to social bonds required them to depend predominantly on cross-cultural relationships and support, contrasting the experiences shared in the GTA.

Syrian participants in both cities explained that they wished for access to the type of community that their city of settlement lacked, and that the other city offered. Interviewees in the GTA suggested that the large urban centre lacked adequate access for Syrian PSRs to build wider social networks outside of their co-ethnic communities. However, the large urban centre was able to offer the Syrian participants extensive and strong cultural enclaves that are essential for initial newcomer settlement. Participants in Guelph reported stronger sponsor-sponsored relationships, leading Syrians to report more expansive social networks with the host community than in the GTA. Nonetheless, Guelph was not able to provide sufficient fellow Syrian or Arabic-speaking communities for the newcomers.

All Syrian participants in Guelph reported that because co-ethic networks are largely inaccessible, they want to travel or move to better access and form these relationships. Syrians in Guelph commonly travel to the GTA in order to engage with their co-ethnic community, which they said is fundamental to their cultural identity and feelings of belonging in Canada.[48] Understandably, this was not experienced in the GTA, as the large city centre is revered for extensive ethnic enclaves and multiculturalism that allowed the Syrian newcomers to easily access fellow Syrian and Arabic-speaking communities (Government of Canada, 2017a; Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). Guelph is located approximately 100 kilometres from the GTA, which is an estimated one and a half to two-hour drive for the newcomers to make, if they have access to a car. Every Syrian participant in the smaller city considered this distance as unsustainable to travel regularly, and therefore it is not a pragmatic source for social bonds. The difficulty of the commute for the newcomers in Guelph was not discussed in the interviews with the sponsors or SSWs, as they instead spoke to the closeness to the GTA being a great benefit to the newcomers. Such lack of recognition by the sponsors and SSWs, yet the overwhelming responses from all interviewed Syrians, could be due to two reasons. First, as researcher, I did not ask the sponsors and SSWs about commuting between the cities, mainly because the interviews with them

[48] One Syrian in Guelph mentioned that they were able to access social bonds with fellow Syrians and Arabic-speaking communities in Kitchener-Waterloo (Interview 19, Syrian woman). Kitchener-Waterloo is a destination centre for GARs and is approximately 30 kilometres west of Guelph and an estimated 30-minute drive from Guelph (Government of Ontario, 2019).

were conducted before those with the Syrian newcomers.[49] Secondly, Guelph is ambiguously close to the GTA, as the distance between the two cities is technically a viable option to travel, but is also far away and costly, both financially and temporally. This finding emphasizes the ambiguity of the definition of propinquity and what can reasonably be defined as accessible for newcomers. While Guelph is technically close to the GTA, it cannot be presumed that newcomers can afford, either financially or temporally, to commute such a distance. While this commute is challenging for the newcomers, the participants nevertheless continued to travel between the cities until they were able to move closer to the GTA, as the community that was available to them in the larger urban centre was so significant to them.

The differential accessibility of social bonds or social bridges in the GTA and Guelph is due to the size of each city. The geographic distance between the newcomers and sponsors within the city also impacted how easily available settlement support was received. In Guelph, sponsors had easier access to the Syrians they supported than in the GTA. The PSRs' propinquity does not always and automatically equate to better settlement support, as other factors also contribute to support received, such as the individual knowledge of the sponsorship group and the quality of contact (Hynie, 2018a; Massey, 1993; Walton-Roberts et al., forthcoming). However, the role of distance and vicinity of both the newcomers and the sponsors within the community of settlement is still central to social relationship formation (Hyndman, 2011; Reagans, 2011). Individuals will always be more apt to have contact, and therefore build social networks and community, with those who are geographically immediate to themselves, as "the most basic source of homophily is space" (McPherson et al., 2001, p. 429). Therefore, participants emphasized variations of settlement outcomes due to the proximity between the newcomers and their sponsors, with the city sizes of the GTA and Guelph impacting propinquity.

[49] This is a shortcoming of the recruitment process that was used to connect with those interviewed. In the GTA, I quickly established a extensive group of Syrian newcomers that wished to participate in my project. However, as the population of PSRs in Guelph was smaller than those in the GTA, and because I did not have many initial connections to individuals in Guelph, the process of building a sample of Syrian newcomers proved difficult for me. While I was able to develop connections with the Syrian community in the smaller centre through attending various community events, those who I met during the initial development period did not wish to be formally interviewed. Therefore, I employed the assistance of the SSWs I interviewed in order to connect with Syrians that would be interested in participating in my research project. I understood that through accessing individuals from connections with the host community that uneven power relations would be deepened, as the SSWs regularly hold immeasurable power over the newcomers due to the framework of the PSRP (Oudshoorn et al., 2019). I attempted to combat such shortcomings by implementing multiple measures, such as purposely not gaining connections with newcomers through sponsors, as private sponsors have a more complex and deeper unevenness to their power relations with the PSRs than SSWs (Lim, 2019). Furthermore, I specifically used an interpreter who was actively a part of the Syrians' community and therefore had trusted relationships with the newcomers, who stressed the importance of the informed consent principles to the newcomers before beginning the interview process.

One of the overarching themes that was discussed in the GTA was how the size of the city affected the distance between the sponsors and sponsored. The implications of the large geographic separation between where the newcomers lived and where their sponsors resided had negative implications on the Syrians' ability to access spaces to build relationships with the wider host community. Though the PSRP's very design should theoretically grant newcomers the ability to access cross-cultural community through the function of the sponsorship group, the large distance between sponsors and newcomers did not allow this to occur. The newcomers reported mainly living in the periphery of the city, in neighbourhoods such as North York and Scarborough, due to more affordable housing, as the GTA has increasingly high costs of living, and it is generally where ethnic enclaves in the GTA have developed (Government of Canada, 2017b). The majority of sponsors in the GTA lived in central locations within the various metropolitan areas, technically residing in the same "community" as their sponsors, under the definition provided within the PSRP as it was still within a shared urban area, the GTA (RSTP, 2019, n.p.). However, the geographic distance prohibited strong cross-cultural relationships to develop (Government of Canada, 2017a). As the PSRP predominantly relies on personal relationships for social support, the geographic distance due to the city size and, therefore, high cost of living, created a great barrier for relationships to grow and the newcomers to access more personalized support (Kyriakides et al., 2018a; 2018b; Lim, 2019).

Similarly to the GTA, newcomers in Guelph also lived in the periphery of the city because of housing availability and cost. Due to Guelph's smaller size, even while the newcomers were not living in the city centre, they still were in closer proximity to their sponsors, the wider host community and various settlement supports. Furthermore, Syrian newcomers, sponsors and SSW participants all discussed the importance of the Syrian newcomers purchasing their own vehicles soon after arriving, due to the sporadic public transit and the lower costs of living in Guelph (Interview 14; 17; 20, Syrian men). The vehicles offered the PSRs increased agency, but also improved more immediate access to settlement supports and social bridges, that newcomers in the GTA struggled to develop (Haugen, 2019; IRCC, 2019). Of course, they needed quality jobs to pay for the cost and upkeep of these vehicles. Throughout the interviews, Syrians in Guelph stated that they had strong relationships with their sponsors as they were geographically near and easily accessible because they had vehicles. For example, a Syrian woman shared that the women from her sponsorship group would often drop by her house on their way home from work (Interview 19, Guelph) and a sponsor discussed her sponsored family riding their bikes to her house to go swimming in her pool during the summer (Interview 26, Guelph). Such stories emphasize the importance of the close proximity of the newcomers and their sponsorship group, and therefore the wider host community, that the smaller size of Guelph facilitated. Newcomers in Guelph experienced increased visibility within their new community, due to its small size and their relatively close proximity to sponsors. They had more regular interactions with the host community.

The national and city-wide mobilizations to support Syrian newcomers' settlement in Guelph impacted post-arrival settlement experiences (Kyriakides et al., forthcoming). The smaller city size and increased proximity between the Syrians and the host community allowed the newcomers to be more noticeable and create feelings of familiarity for both parties involved. Furthermore, the visibility of Syrians in Guelph was further enhanced because visible minorities make up only 15% of Guelph's total population, which is below the national average (Seto, 2018, n.p.). Participants in Guelph emphasized that the newcomers were easily identifiable and national and city-wide initiatives called on the host community to interact with the Syrians to create feelings of belonging and, therefore, developed more social bridges. For example, one Syrian woman mentioned that parents at her children's school approached her to introduce themselves because they could identify her as a Syrian newcomer based on her appearance and that they knew all the other parents due to the school's small size, therefore, identifying her as new (Interview 27). However, in the GTA visible minorities make up a larger percentage of the total population, as 51.5% of Toronto's population, 49.2% of the region of York (north of Central Toronto) and 62.3% of the municipality of Peel (west of Central Toronto) identify as visible minorities (Peel Data Centre, 2017, n.p.; Statistics Canada, 2017b, n.p.). Therefore, not only are the newcomers isolated from their sponsors because of the large city size and distances, but six out of eight Syrian participants emphasized that they also have less literal visibility within the GTA's diversity and are more anonymous. While the importance of proximity to sponsors and visibility of newcomers is noteworthy as an important difference between the two city sizes, it is difficult to change. Smaller cities may have certain settlement advantages in terms of the geographic distance between newcomers and sponsors and the impact this proximity has on settlement experiences and outcomes.

Another difference between the two cities was the impact size of the city made on the distribution of settlement information and support. As the GTA is Canada's largest metropolitan area and is the number one destination for newcomer (re)settlement, the city has developed a magnitude of provisions and programs for newcomers to utilize for support (Wright and Parada, 2019). Yet, due to the large city size, it was difficult for newcomers and sponsors alike to have access to the best-suited programs for the individual issues that developed, such as specialized employment or language training. In contrast, the small city size in Guelph, along with there being one dominant private sponsorship donor for the majority of those sponsored, allowed one central organization to develop. The Guelph Refugee Sponsorship Forum (the Forum) was the principal organization that acted to evenly distribute settlement information to both newcomers and sponsors (Smith et al., 2017). Sponsor and SSW participants stated that having one central organization made the sponsorship experience more linear, as all participants had access to the same organization and their settlement approaches.

While there is an obvious and built in imbalance of power between the newcomers and their sponsors in both the GTA and Guelph, the unevenness showcased itself in different ways depending on the size of the city. The interviews in the large urban centre demonstrated unequal power between the sponsors and sponsored

in regard to economic integration, with newcomers experiencing financial control and sponsors pushing Syrians to take remedial employment. However, the issue of uneven power relations within social connections was not as apparent throughout the interviews in the GTA, as it was in Guelph. The absence of such discussion in the GTA occurred as Syrian participants emphasized being socially distant from their sponsors; the geographic distance between where the two parties lived primarily was noted as the source for the social separation experienced (Interview 4, Syrian woman; Interview 11;13, Syrian men; Interview 9; 10; 12, Sponsors).[50] The geographic division, and therefore, additionally the social division, may explain why there was less discussion of uneven power dynamics in the participants' cultural integration in the GTA than seen in the interviews in Guelph. Though it was not apparent in the interviews conducted, an SSW and a sponsor, who also worked for a settlement support organization, discussed that they had observed imbalanced power within social relationships in numerous sponsorship groups that they had worked within the GTA (Interview 3, SSW; Interview 12, Sponsor). Five out of the eight Syrian newcomers interviewed in the GTA stated that they were hesitant to make choices related to employment that went against what their sponsors wanted, and six out of the eight interviews said they felt pressured by their sponsors to take the first employment opportunity they received. The PSRP requires sponsors to ensure the sponsored newcomers are independent after the twelve-month sponsorship period is complete (Lenard, 2019). Whereas, the newcomers prefer to consider and concentrate on their longer-term integration and meaningful employment objectives through requalification and language acquisition.

Participants in Guelph additionally spoke of how the uneven power relations between the sponsored and sponsors impacted the newcomers' economic integration, through examples such as sponsors comparing the sponsored adults to children; sponsors controlling the finances of Syrians and the newcomers speaking about being afraid to disagree with their sponsors for fear of consequences. Furthermore, all interviewees in Guelph discussed themes of paternalism, as sponsors exerted control over the newcomers they sponsored.[51] Similar findings of disproportionate authority, where private sponsors pressure those they sponsor into doing what they believe is the best pathway to integration, frequently involving paternalism and the newcomers quickly obtaining employment, has been widely found in other research (Agrawal, 2018; Kaida et al., 2019; Lenard, 2019; Lim, 2019).

[50]Though none of the Syrian participants in the GTA had continuing or close relationships with their sponsors, a sponsor discussed having an ongoing relationship with the Syrian family she sponsored (Interview 12). Furthermore, other studies have found quality friendships and connections that subsequently persist beyond the end of the official sponsorship period (Lenard, 2019). Instead, the findings of my project address the experiences of project participants and cannot speak on the wider themes throughout the GTA.

[51]An imbalance of power was directly discussed in eight interviews with Syrians; one interview with Sponsor; one interview with SSW. However, three Sponsors and one SSW indicated stories that indirectly discussed paternalism and uneven power relations.

Furthermore, the smaller city size allowed for one central organization, the Guelph Refugee Sponsorship Forum (the Forum), to unify the execution of the PSRP in Guelph. While there are benefits to having one central organization, newcomer participants in Guelph found that such linear supports also had negative consequences. For instance, all interviewees in the smaller city stated the Estill Initiative and the Forum encouraged a limited and standardized approach to Syrians' settlement success, extensively focusing on the newcomers' ability to quickly acquire employment after arrival (Estill, n.d). This arguably neoliberal approach to integration is potentially detrimental to newcomers if getting employment quickly impedes longer-term training for success in the labour market in Canada (Hyndman, 2011; Kaida et al., 2019; Kumin, 2015). Participants in Guelph emphasized greater imbalances of power, as the Estill Initiative was a variation to the national model and separated the social and financial sponsorship between two parties. Therefore, there was a further power relationship concerning the newcomers, social sponsors and financial sponsor, as the Forum controlled settlement resources and outlooks. Syrians noted many experiences of the Forum regulating who was allowed to access various resources, such as furniture donations and employment opportunities, based on who followed Estill's integration strategies that required newcomers to quickly join the labour force (Interview 24; 26, Sponsors). Multiple participants also stated that Estill's status in the city and the business sector made them fearful of consequences if they went against his guidelines, such as being blacklisted from future employment opportunities or from donated resources. However, there was pushback from some sponsorship groups to the power indifferences that were experienced by the separation of financial and social sponsorship that sought to acknowledge the newcomers' authority and ability to renegotiate their own agency (Interview 15; 16, Syrian women; Interview 17; 20, Syrian men; Interview 22, SSW; Garnier et al., 2018).

As uneven power relations are attributed to the architecture of the PSRP, participants in both cities of study emphasised imbalances of power within sponsored-sponsor relationships. However, the experiences of power inequality in the program were dependent on the size of the city of settlement. The expansive size of the GTA caused the relationships of the participants to be weaker and more unsteady than what was experienced by those interviewed in Guelph. The small city centre was limited by one central organization, that homogenized and limited supports and resources that both newcomers and social sponsors could access. The Syrian PSRs in Guelph also lacked access to co-ethnic networks that would grant them social support outside the sponsors, which led to Syrian participants stating that they were then reliant on their sponsors for most of their settlement support. The imbalances of power between sponsors and the sponsored do not speak to the distinctive effort or intentions of the individual sponsorship groups as: "the formal obligations that structure sponsors' experiences of sponsorship build in a tension between providing guidance and support on one side and recognizing sponsored refugees' autonomy and promoting independence on the other" (Macklin et al., forthcoming, p. 19). Therefore, instead, the power inequalities that were emphasized throughout the interviews are part of the design of the PSRP itself, as there are limited requirements, direction and training for what the sponsors are to provide in settlement (Lenard, 2019).

This section of the chapter has reviewed the central differences that were identified between privately sponsored Syrian newcomer participants' settlement experiences in the GTA and Guelph. First, the contrast by city size of the type of social networks that were available for the Syrian PSRs were examined. The large urban centre provided ample co-ethnic networks for the newcomers, while lacking accessibility to the wider host community. Whereas the smaller city had strong connections amongst the newcomers and host community, but social bonds with fellow Syrian or Arabic-speaking networks were unattainable for participants. Next, the proximity between the newcomers and their sponsors and support each city provided was dependent on city size. The substantial distance separating the sponsored and sponsor participants in the GTA negatively impacted the settlement support and the access to social bridges available to the PSRs. In contrast, participants in Guelph experienced close sponsored-sponsor relationships due to the geography of the smaller city, increased access to vehicles and pre-and-post-arrival visibility. Furthermore, Guelph's own ambiguous proximity to the GTA affected the results found in the smaller city centre. The differing city sizes also impacted the distribution of settlement information and support. Finally, while participants in both cities discussed imbalances of power, the uneven relationships were experienced differently as a result of city size.

5.3 Does City Size Actually Matter?

The project's findings and conclusions are based on an analysis of data that was shared by 27 research participants and their individual experiences within the PSRP in the GTA and Guelph. The social and economic integration of each Syrian newcomer is distinct, and the number of people in the study limits the generalizability of the findings. The Canadian Syrian Initiative involved a diverse group of newcomers and mobilized hundreds of communities across the country. As such, I do not aim to standardize Syrian PSR settlement and integration but to instead examine and emphasize the patterns and commonalities of participants' involvement and experience in (re)settlement. The analysis and conclusion are weighted in comparison to broader research on newcomer settlement to combat the relatively small size of this project to determine more comprehensive findings and to honour the distinctiveness of the settlement experience.

The research findings confirm that the size of city of settlement does impact the newcomers' settlement outcomes and experiences. Social networks are dependent on city size as sponsored-sponsor proximity and where newcomers could obtain either co-ethnic networks or cross-cultural connections were distinctive based on the size of the city of settlement. The social networks that were available for newcomers in one sized city were those the other sized city was missing and vice versa. The strong ethnic enclaves in the GTA allow newcomers to develop social bonds, whereas such co-ethnic community was largely inaccessible for those in Guelph. However, the newcomers in the smaller city had notable social bridges, while Syrians in the large urban centre encountered barriers to attaining similar relationships with the host community. Furthermore, as the GTA has long been a primary destination for newcomers, the large urban centre has

developed numerous supports and, settlement services and programs. However, the large city has ever-increasing costs of living that generated a considerable geographic distance between where the newcomers and sponsorship groups lived. Guelph, in contrast, had enhanced social capital with the host community, more affordable housing and ability to afford to own their own vehicles rather than rely on poor public transportation like many in the GTA did. Yet, the smaller city provided limited access to co-ethnic networks and extensive settlement services, and power imbalances between the newcomers and sponsors were amplified due to the smaller city size.

While the research demonstrates that city size may provide advantages or disadvantages to newcomers' social networks, it demonstrated no clear influence on access to meaningful employment. Syrian participants in both cities detailed their sponsors greatly pushing them to take on quick, remedial employment, as opposed to the newcomers requalifying in order to gain meaningful employment in the long-term. In the GTA and Guelph, sponsorship groups believed that it was their responsibility as sponsors to find employment for the newcomers before the twelve-months of official sponsorship was complete. Moreover, the Syrian and sponsor participants expressed they did not have the right tools or knowledge in order for the newcomers to find and access meaningful employment. Newcomers in the GTA and Guelph found it challenging to navigate the Canadian labour market and the pathways to requalify for their desired employment fields. Syrians, sponsors and SSWs additionally stated that private sponsors frequently did not have the appropriate skills or networks to assist the newcomers in finding meaningful employment. The lack of sponsor support was twofold as sponsors had difficulty locating appropriate positions outside of sales and services because of the newcomers' skill set, habitually without Canadian recognized experience and education, as well with limited English proficiency. Furthermore, sponsorship groups were frequently unable to provide the appropriate assistance needed to find meaningful employment, as they often did not have the knowledge nor social networks to navigate what was needed to requalify or to gain employment in the various fields the newcomers wished to work within. PSRs' access to meaningful employment and economic integration were not contingent on the size of the city of settlement.

Based upon the findings above, the relationships that smaller cities offer newcomers may have certain benefits and resources that provide solid long-term integration results. However, each smaller centre will produce distinct results, as the community's own proximity to other centres, services, and resources will shape settlement outcomes differently. While smaller centres may be advantageous due to their city size on some fronts, geographic location in large cities also offers the settling newcomers access to crucial social bonds with fellow co-ethnic networks. Creating social bonds can be achieved in various ways, such as settling larger numbers of refugee cohorts together and actively encouraging relationships between them or purposely settling newcomers into a smaller centre that is near to a large urban city that has developed ethnic enclaves. Sponsors and SSWs in Guelph stated that the Estill Initiative presumed that the smaller city's proximity to the GTA

would be advantageous for newcomers (Interview 22; 23, SSWs; Interview 21; 24; 25; 26, Sponsors). It was believed that Guelph and the GTA's propinquity would allow newcomers to consequently retain the benefits of residing in the smaller city, while still having access to co-ethnic communities in the large urban centre close-by. Though the PSRP never had the intent of spreading resettled refugees out more evenly, findings demonstrate that the PSRP could possibly be utilized as an approach to develop more geographically even settlement of newcomers. However, the smaller cities that participate in this program are more likely to be successful if they develop strategies to combat the lack of co-ethnic networks available for the newcomer or are in closer proximity to a larger city that provides such community

Furthermore, while city size was seen to affect newcomer integration and does matter, the size of the city is not definitive, as every centre will be distinctly different from others, as the employment situation in Guelph was unique. City size is therefore not a stagnant variable for analysis, as it is neither conclusive, nor fixed. Instead, a newcomers' sponsorship group was found to be the most significant factor in determining integration outcomes. How sponsors approached the sponsorship, their individual knowledge on the supports available, their positionality and the power imbalances within the relationship were all decisive in determining the newcomers' success of settlement. Therefore, the newcomers' access to support was shaped by who their sponsors were, if the newcomer or sponsorship group had valuable social links, labour market connections or additional financial resources and whether they had sufficient knowledge on settlement resources available. Such conclusions also confirm why there is such a wide range and unevenness of sponsorship within the PSRP, as the settlement support, experience and outcomes that the Syrians had were predicated on who the individual sponsors were. Broader research on PSR settlement and integration further validates the significance and impact of who the sponsors are, as "the economic outcomes of settled refugees are less a reflection of their human capital or integration potential and more a result of… support provided upon arrival" (Hyndman, 2014, p. 2; see also: Kumin, 2015; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019).

The various limitations of the PSRP are established and cultivated within the very structure of the program. Shortcomings, such as imbalance of power relations, limited accountability or monitoring of sponsorship groups and the absence of crucial training for both newcomers and sponsors outside of destination communities for Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) that provide knowledge and support on topics such as meaningful employment, language and education are built into the program itself. While the individual sponsors can challenge the shortcomings of the program, a certain 'paternalism' characterizes its structure and embeds social, economic and political inequities. It is difficult for sponsors to evade these unequal power relations (Macklin et al., forthcoming). The problematic structure of the program was additionally amplified by the expedited timeline of the Canadian Syrian Initiative, which additionally left many newcomers and sponsors without sufficient prearrival orientation, training or settlement support (Veronis et al., forthcoming). In order to ensure more even and successful settlement of newcomers in Canada, ample time to plan is needed. The PSRP

is extensively volunteer-based, making any additional work difficult to mandate and could increase the program's initial expenses. However, the PSRP's shortcomings may inhibit successful integration and have long-term consequences for both the newcomers and the host country if left unaddressed. It is therefore essential to critically analyze and adapt the program, as it intensely affects newcomers, the hosting communities and Canada as a whole, particularly as the country begins to export the program abroad.

5.4 Recommendations

The 2015 Canadian Syrian Initiative represents a unique mobilization, with hundreds of communities across the country participating in the (re)settlement of tens of thousands of Syrian refugees (Statistics Canada, 2019; Veronis et al., forthcoming). The last time that there was such an extensive effort within the PSRP was during its original development in 1979-1980, which saw 60,000 Indochinese refugees (re)settled throughout Canada (Hyndman et al., 2017, p. 4; Hynie, 2018b, p. 1). Furthermore, the geopolitical climate in Canada and the global North has become progressively less welcoming to refugees (Cecco and Agren, 2019; Harris, 2019a), a narrative that Canada was able to stave off until recently (Hynie, 2018b). It is unclear if another pro-refugee political moment will occur again to support the (re)settlement of such a high number of refugees to Canada. The rising tide of anti-refugee rhetoric is discouraging for refugees and their allies globally. However, it does provide a period for the Canadian State and settlement support agencies to reflect on the PSRP and develop additional tactics for more meaningful private sponsorship and (re)settlement.

Increased meaningful private sponsorship would focus on the newcomers' longer-term development over the current program's approach, that encourages quick integration through employment, but considerably hinders the newcomers' long-term success. Meaningful (re)settlement would also require the mutual effort of both the newcomer and host community to ensure integration success (see also: Ager and Strang, 2008; ECRE, 2002; Garnier et al., 2018; Kyeremeh, 2019). While the PSRP has been considered a model for other countries to emulate, there have been many suggestions for revisions to ensure the durability of settlement, both for the newcomers and host community, to overcome its uneven social and economic integration for PSRs (see Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017; Drolet and Moorthi, 2018; Kaida et al., 2019; Veronis et al., forthcoming). Despite the success of the program, there are still opportunities for continued development to ensure more consistent and balanced sponsorship outcomes, as sponsors are the most influential variable to successful settlement (Lorinc, 2019; Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019).

The PSRP has allowed the process of (re)settlement to become more privatized, as the State has increasingly shifted the responsibility of settlement onto private citizens by increasing the number and proportion of PSRs (Labman, 2016; Lim, 2019). The structure of the program greatly encourages PSRs to rely solely on their individual sponsors, without having sufficient access to settlement support from other sources, who can provide more suitable assistance (Agrawal and Zeitouny, 2017). However, the program was initially

created as a means for the government to work in partnership with private citizens in order to increase refugee resettlement numbers (Hyndman et al., 2017). The State's minimal role has further contributed to a neoliberal ideology of integration, where settlement costs are borne by volunteers who are sponsors and newcomers are increasingly encouraged to join the labour market as quickly as possible (Ritchie, 2018). Therefore, there is a need to restructure and revise the PSRP in order to adapt the program to the present-day reality of private sponsorship and newcomer settlement. The following section will briefly review some of the proposed amendments to the program that were made by Syrian, sponsor and SSW participants throughout this project, that are additionally couched in wider research in order to further improve the program to encourage the successful (re)settlement of newcomers.

First, all interviews conducted in both the GTA and Guelph emphasized that it is essential that there is more oversight and accountability within the PSRP. Uneven experiences and settlement outcomes are identified within private sponsorship due to the fluctuating knowledge, effort and abilities of each sponsorship group (Reynolds and Clark-Kazak, 2019). As private sponsorship does not mean the privatization of (re)settlement (Oudshoorn et al., 2019), there is a need for enhanced support at the macro level to ensure successful integration within policy and programs that promote and facilitate more even sponsorship and settlement outcomes (Mawani, 2014).

As a means to further foster more uniform integration results in the PSRP, there is a need for increased access to resources, training and education for both the newcomers and sponsors. While not all Syrians came from refugees camps, a number of the newcomers were quickly removed from stable refugee camps, and neither sponsors nor newcomers were provided the time nor resources to receive adequate training before the sponsorship (Veronis et al., forthcoming). Furthermore, past PSR cohorts have received uneven pre-arrival orientations, varying from minimal introductions to Canadian society to zero pre-arrival training (IRCC, 2019). Sponsors are also not legally required to participate in training, but rather are simply encouraged to take part in various training programs (Interview 10; 12, Sponsors, GTA; Interview 22, SSW, Guelph; Lim, 2019). Sponsors and SSW interviewees in the GTA and Guelph largely asserted that there must be better training available for PSRP participants in order for truly successful settlement to occur (Interview 1; 3, SSWs, GTA; Interview 10; 12, Sponsors, GTA; Interview 22; 23, SSWs, Guelph; Interview 24; 25, Sponsors, Guelph). Syrian participants additionally noted that a predominant limitation within their sponsorship was the lack of resources, knowledge and training for both themselves and their sponsors (Interview 6; 7; 11; 13, Syrian men, GTA; Interview 5, Syrian woman, GTA; Interview 14; 20, Syrian men, Guelph; Interview 19; 27, Syrian women, Guelph). Agrawal and Zeitouny (2017) suggest that it is critical that PSRs have access to settlement services as well, as solely relying on their sponsors' support can further lead to uneven power dynamics. Some participants even went so far as to suggest that sponsors should be required to take compulsory training before participating in private sponsorship, in order to address the unevenness of knowledge and resources that

sponsors were able to provide for newcomers (Interview 5, Syrian woman, GTA; Interview 11; 13, Syrian men, GTA; Interview 14, Syrian man, Guelph; Interview 15, Syrian woman, Guelph).

Many participants additionally made the recommendation about the possible importance of pre-arrival contact between newcomers and sponsors. Participants in Guelph mentioned that the Forum was able to have some communication with Syrian newcomers pre-arrival, whole none of the social sponsors were have said to have accessed such contact (Interview 21; 24; 25; 26, Sponsors, Guelph; Interview 22, SSW, Guelph). Sponsors suggested that having this contact could be useful in order to give familiarity for participants, allow sponsors to understand what the newcomers may need on arrival and would give both parties the opportunity to discuss sponsorship expectations. Some Syrian participants in Guelph said that they were told that they were going to be settled into Toronto before they arrived in Canada (Interview 14, Syrian man, Guelph; Interview 22; 23, SSW, Guelph). These individuals only found out that they would be actually be going to Guelph once they arrived at the airport in Toronto and their sponsors told them they were going 100 kilometres outside of Toronto. Pre-arrival communication between participants may allow for more clarity and communication before newcomers arrive, in order to prevent misinformation, greatly influencing post-arrival outcomes.

Increased ability to receive training and education for all PSRP participants would begin to remedy many of the limitations that are within the design of the program, including the uneven experiences, settlement outcomes and management of sponsorship expectations for both newcomers and sponsors. Furthermore, newcomers' and sponsors' ability to secure resources and knowledge would work as a way to address the PSRP's problematic focus on quick integration through remedial employment over accessing meaningful employment for longer-term settlement success. It is necessary to stress through guidance that (re)settlement is an individual process, with varying timelines and is distinctly different for each newcomer (Kyriakides et al., 2018b). When newcomers rapidly enter the workforce, it may obstruct their official language acquisition and social network development, hindering the ability to integrate successfully in the long-term (Hyndman, 2011). As PSRP participants obtain clarification that not all newcomers will be, nor need to be, completely self-sufficient and/or have employment at the end of the twelve-month sponsorship period (Lenard, 2019) through education, the push that is often experienced by PSRs may be reduced. Furthermore, all sponsors interviewed in the GTA and Guelph discussed how they believed their role as a sponsor was not to pressure those they sponsored to take employment, but merely advise on what to do. However, Syrian participants viewed their sponsors' suggestions as requirements due to the ambiguity of settlement roles within the uneven sponsorship groups' relations. The lack of clarity is not the fault nor intention of the individual sponsors, but instead the PSRP's shortcoming. For newcomers to truly be a "good investment for Canada" in the longer-term, education must underscore that sustainable integration needs to be favoured over perceived short-term achievements (Wilkinson, 2017, p. 97).

Although my project's participants stressed that PSRP participants must be able to obtain more access to resources, training and education, Syrians in both cities of study also emphasized the importance of the wider host community's rhetoric surrounding newcomers. While the general Canadian public was welcoming, Syrian participants still faced challenges due to lack of awareness or knowledge on displacement and (re)settlement in Southern Ontario. Throughout interviews, newcomers discussed experiences of discrimination, such as people questioning whether they were "real" refugees that truly needed assistance, saying they did not look or act as refugees "should" and that the newcomers were a financial burden to Canada (Interview 1; 7; 11; 13, Syrian men, GTA; Interview 4; 5, Syrian women, GTA; Interview 18, Syrian man, Guelph; Interview 15; 16; 19; 27, Syrian women, Guelph). It is, therefore, important to oppose such rising popular narratives in the global North, such as imagined refugee-ness or who qualifies as a "good" or "bad" refugee (Cecco and Agren, 2019; Harris, 2019a; 2019b; UNHCR, 2019a). (Re)settlement policies and programs "can affect refugee integration both directly, by enhancing or limiting their access to the more functional aspects of integration, and also indirectly by influencing social environments to be more or less welcoming" (Hynie, 2018a, p. 267). Through defying possible harmful representations of refugees and forcible displacement, a more welcoming host community can be created that will better facilitate newcomer integration through countering settlement challenges and producing community inclusion and participation.

5.5 Opportunities for Future Research

This project occurred during a time of increased research on the Canadian Syrian Initiative and the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP). As such, there are numerous opportunities for future research that would further support and comprehend the integration outcomes of newcomers in Canada.

First and foremost, there must be continued analysis on the Canadian Syrian Initiative to examine the long-term integration of the Syrian cohort, including PSRs, GARs and BVORs.[52] The national mobilization rapidly occurred in order to achieve a political promise and left little time for training of new sponsors, and therefore a deficiency in knowledge, for both newcomers and sponsors. Settlement support organizations often did not have adequate resources to support the expansive number of newcomers quickly being settled (Veronis et al., forthcoming). All of the interviews took place following the completion of the participants' official sponsorship period, approximately one and a half years to two years after arrival for most of Syrian interviewees. While the official sponsorship obligations were completed at this time, the settlement experiences and outcomes were preliminary and based on initial findings. As the first Canadian Syrian Initiative newcomers arrived in late 2015, settlement outcomes are still foundational and will additionally

[52] See: Bond and Kwadrans (2019); Haugen (2019); Kyriakides et al. (forthcoming); Lenard (2019); Macklin et al. (forthcoming); Reynolds and Clark-Kazak (2019); Veronis et al. (forthcoming) and Walton-Roberts et al. (forthcoming) for examples of the continuing analysis of the Canadian Syrian Initiative and the longer-term integration of the Syrian cohort.

develop, shift and continue in the following years. Tracing and analyzing the long-term settlement implications, is vital and being done through pioneering research led by Dr. Michaela Hynie at York University whose team is compiling a four-year longitudinal dataset on the education, housing, economic, health and well-being experiences of Syrians who arrived from 2015 onward (Hynie et al., 2019). However, "current data suggest that integration is a long-process, that we may not have a clear picture of the effectiveness of our programs until 10 or 15 years after refugees have landed in Canada" (Hynie and Hyndman, 2016, n.p.). Therefore, there must be an ongoing and further longer-term analysis of the Syrian cohort for many years to come.

Future research considerations could include: how, if at all, does a push by sponsors on the newcomers to take remedial employment quickly after arrival affect the (re)settlement of Syrian PSRs? How, if at all, did the remedial employment push impact the newcomers' long-term access to meaningful employment? What are the long-term retention rates of PSRs in Guelph, as participants shared the desire to move to the GTA to access co-ethnic networks? Proximity is an important issue that requires more research in the context of the PSRP. What are the implications of distance between where the sponsors and newcomers live? Such research would be especially beneficial when geographically contrasting larger and smaller centres' settlement outcomes.

Secondly, as global North countries continue to encourage newcomer settlement outside of large urban centres, it is imperative to further research smaller centres' proximity to larger urban cities, in order for co-ethnic networks to be accessible to newcomers. As Guelph's propinquity to the GTA demonstrates, proximity and regular accessibility cannot be unsubstantially presumed as identical for everyone. Therefore, it will be important to question how such contentions can be negotiated within the PSRP or regionalization tactics in order to provide newcomers with co-ethnic bonds that are predominantly located in bigger cities. Furthermore, research into contesting potential attrition following the official sponsorship period in smaller centres is critical for the success of the PSRP in smaller centres.

The Estill Initiative in Guelph assumed that bringing a large group of Syrian PSRs to the city would authorize the development of automatic co-ethnic networks amongst each other (CBC News, 2015; Interview 20, Syrian man; Interview 21, Sponsor). The Initiative assumed that the newcomers would be instinctively connected because they shared similar traits, like a common language and country of origin, but this did not always happen (Interview 14; 18, Syrian men; Interview 15, Syrian woman). Social relationships are not necessarily developed based on shared identity but must rather be maintained and supported (Hanley et al., 2018; Menjivar, 1995). The individual case of PSRs also needs to be taken into account, as even within Syrian PSRs, there were a multitude of religions, classes and ethnic groups that do not materialize as a single group once being resettled (Kyriakides et al., 2018b). Syrian social networks are habitually bounded by condensed

networks of intimate family and friends (Hanley et al., 2018; Stevens, 2016). There has been no evidence that settling a greater number of a cohort of refugees together has produced the type of co-ethnic networks that the newcomers in Guelph were searching for. Nonetheless, such an idea could be a potential area of analysis to see if the (re)settlement of a larger group of newcomers outside a large urban centre would grant the necessary social bonds and support.[53]

Next, a central theme during the 2015 Canadian federal election was the country's immigration policy, specifically surrounding the response to the Syrian refugee "crisis." However, there has since been an extensive divergence in the Canadian public's approach and support of immigration and refugees, accentuated in the 2019 Canadian federal election, where immigration was a central topic, but instead had Canadians calling for more controls over seeking asylum and refuge (Harris, 2019b; See also: Cecco and Agren, 2019; Harris, 2019a). It would therefore be of great consequence to research the possible implications of the general population's shifting attitudes towards newcomers to Canada on the Syrian cohorts' integration and settlement outcomes. Inversely, was such a shift in attitudes a possible side effect of how the Canadian Syrian Initiative unfolded, as hurried and uneven, therefore seen as a possible strain on Canadian resources? Furthermore, will such altering notions of refugees and immigrants impact future cohorts of newcomers and Canadian participation in the PSRP?

5.6 Final Considerations

This project has analyzed how geography and city size of settlement shapes the integration experiences of PSRs in two differently sized cities in Southern Ontario, probing newcomer access to social networks and meaningful employment. City-size matters in terms of access to social networks, as both differently sized cities provided newcomers with various opposing resources that were beneficial for settlement. The GTA was able to deliver strong co-ethnic social relationships with fellow Syrian or Arabic-speaking communities due to the urban centre's extensive ethnic enclaves, while restricting connection with the host community and sponsors due to the large city size. In contrast, Guelph provided solid social bridges with the host community, as the smaller city size allowed the newcomers to live in closer proximity to their sponsors and allowed the Estill Initiative to develop. There was also increased newcomer visibility and, more enhanced social connections, affordable housing and transportation in Guelph that the GTA seemingly did not provide. Yet it lacked the settlement services and co-ethnic networks of the GTA, a hub for immigrants of all background but also government-assisted refugees. Moreover, due to the city's geography in relation to the GTA, there was a geographic barrier for PSRs in Guelph to access inhibitors of integration that were missing in the smaller city, but present in the large urban centre. Neither sized city is more advantageous in providing

[53] The assumption that all Syrian newcomers would have similar understandings of social networks is ambiguous and oversimplified, as there are diverse religious, class and ethnic groups within the Syrian classification. Research and potential future recommendations would have to take this further into account based on the individual group.

meaningful employment for newcomers over the other, as both cities had numerous barriers in order for the PSRs to access meaningful opportunities for work and participants in the GTA and Guelph shared similar experiences of PSRs being encouraged to take remedial employment by their sponsors. Therefore, city-size was not seen to necessarily matter when it came to Syrians' ability to access meaningful employment.

The Syrian, sponsor and settlement support work participants revealed various barriers to successful (re)settlement, as the private sponsorship of refugees program is paternalistic by design. However, the experiences shared throughout the interviews represent a unique encounter between civil society volunteers and prospective citizens remaking home. This paper has encapsulated just some of the experiences within a historical national mobilization that has begun to provide insights on how to further strengthen the program of private sponsorship of (re)settlement. Further enhancements will allow the program to work in addition to State (re)settlement, to provide newcomers with distinct and valuable social relations and economic connections that will ensure private settlement as a truly durable and long-term solution to human displacement.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide

I. Interviews with Syrians:

General Inquires:

1. What is your age and what gender do you identify as?
2. When did you come to Canada? How did you end up in Guelph or the GTA?
3. Did you have expectations on what you would experience before arriving? What were they? Were your expectations met?
4. What does integration mean to you?

How do social connections and networks influence resettlement?

5. How supportive have you found your [geographic] community and wider public since coming to Guelph or the GTA?
6. Is the one-year sponsorship period over? (If so) do you still see your sponsors at all?
7. Can you tell me about what support you have had since arrival? (Example: sponsors, agencies, neighbours, extended family members, etc.)
8. Are you or your family members part of any non-Syrian community organizations, faith-based organizations, or clubs?
9. Do you communicate regularly with non-Arabic speakers or non-Syrians? If so, who are they? Do you feel like this is an important process to occur to feel like you belong and are 'integrated'?
10. What is your personal sense of belonging? (ex: a sense of community, security etc.)

How does employment shape Syrian social connection and relationships within Canada?

11. What did you do before arriving in Canada?
12. What were your expectations on working in Canada before arriving?
13. What is your current position of employment/ unemployment at this point? How do you feel about it? (for example: happy, frustrated, temporary, a long-term possibility, etc.)
14. What do you see yourself doing in in 5/10 years? Is it in Guelph/the GTA?
15. Do you think about returning to Syria or moving elsewhere?

II. Interviews with Settlement Support Workers:

1. What does integration mean to you?
2. Can you tell me about your role in relation to Syrians within Canada?
3. How often do you/ would you interact with Syrians within the GTA or Guelph? What do those interactions look like and include?
4. What have you found frequently discussed when in conversation with Syrians? (such as inclusion, exclusion, what they liked about the city, did they discuss anything they didn't like, what sort of needs and questions did they have?)
5. What do you feel your role is/was in refugee resettlement? How long do you feel like you or other organizations play an active role within this process?
6. In your personal experience of working with refugees, what are the most important aspects you saw for their resettlement and integration? (employment, building social networks, etc.?)
7. In what you have seen, do you see employment as a large factor in integration? If large or small, why do you think that? What are the biggest barriers or forms of assistance that you see within employment of Syrians?
8. Do you see any gaps within what was provided for the Syrians by the State or sponsorship programs and what they actually needed? If so, what are they?
9. Are there any challenges that you face in your work as a settlement support worker? If so, what do they look like? (ex: stigma, barriers of community, etc.)

III. Interviews with Private Sponsors:

1. What does integration mean to you?
2. Is the one-year sponsorship period over? If so, do you still see those you sponsored? If not, how often do you see and speak to those you sponsored? What do those interactions look like?
3. During the sponsorship period, what was/is required of you as a sponsor? (finding housing, helping with finding English classes, transportation etc.?)
4. What have you found frequently discussed when in conversation with Syrians? (such as inclusion, exclusion, what they liked about the city, did they discuss anything they didn't like, what sort of needs and questions did they have?)
5. What do you feel your role is/was in refugee resettlement? Did you feel like you played a big or small role? How long do you feel like you play an active role within this process?
6. Since you have been or are involved in the resettlement process, what do you see are the most important aspects to refugee resettlement and integration?
7. What was your role when it came to the subject of employment? In what you have seen, do you see employment as a large factor in integration? If large or small, why do you think that? What are the biggest barriers or forms of assistance that you see within employment of Syrians?
8. Do you see any gaps within what is provided for the Syrians by the state or sponsorship programs and what they actually needed? If so, what are they?
9. What were the highlights during the sponsorship process (for either you or that you saw with those you sponsored)? What were the largest challenges that were faced?

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Study Name: Geographies of Syrian Settlement, Integration and Isolation in Southern Ontario *(previous name, at time of interviews)*

Researcher name: Amy Drury, Geography- MA, York University, amydrury@yorku.ca

I am Amy Drury, a Master's student at York University. I am doing research on Syrian social integration within different sized locations in Southern Ontario, including smaller centres (Guelph) and larger cities (the Greater Toronto Area). I am examining quality of life factors amongst Syrians, including accessibility and importance of employment and social networks. The research will be conducted through one-on-one interviews with Syrians, private sponsors, and refugee serving agencies in both Guelph and the GTA. In these conversations, you will be asked to reflect on your personal experience with the Syrian integration process and encouraged to share stories and knowledge about this topic. The time commitment for each participant is estimated at one (1) hour. Each participant will receive an inducement of $15 on a cafe or grocery card of their choice. This will be given even if you decide to withdraw from the project at any point in time. The research produced will be used to advocate for enhanced public policy surrounding stronger social integration for Syrian refugees entering Canada, particularly Southern Ontario. This project intends to influence and inform public policy by providing evidence-based social research that government officials, policy makers and urban planners can use to improve the process of integration and lives of newcomers, namely Syrians (and other groups) in their first years of resettlement. You are invited to take part in this research because we feel that your personal and/or professional experience can strongly contribute to the research and understanding of processes of social integration. This information will be used for the researcher's Master's thesis (final research paper). We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

If this form contains anything that you do not understand please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later please ask me for clarification at any point within this process.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers, study staff or organization you are affiliated with and/or connected to this project through. If you decide to stop participating, you may withdraw without penalty at any time, and you will still receive the promised inducement. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality: All information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. The data will be collected through handwritten notes and audio tapes and securely stored in a locked facility and securely stored on an electronic device. Only the researcher, her supervisor and the translator will have access to this information. This data will be stored indefinitely, in an anonymized format for potential future research purposes. When the research project is complete and all identifying parts of it will be deleted. All information that will be kept will not include identifying factors except ages and gender, and steps will be taken to insure confidentiality even after the project is complete. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. Any secondary use of anonymized data by the research team will be treated with the same degree of confidentiality and anonymity as in the original research project.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact the researcher at amydrury@yorku.ca or their supervisor, Jennifer Hyndman, at jhyndman@yorku.ca. You may also contact the Graduate Program in Geography at gradgeog@yorku.ca and/or 416-736-5106.

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Delegated Ethics Review Committee, which is delegated authority to review research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures: I, _____, consent to participate in "Geographies of Syrian Settlement, Integration and Isolation in Southern Ontario" conducted by Amy Drury, MA. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

_____ **Date**_____
Participant (Signature)

_____ **Date**_____
Principal Investigator (Signature)

Additional consent

1. **Audio recording**

☐ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

_____ _____
Participant Signature: Date: