

## IRCC cuts mean promise of welcome to newcomers is being broken

### CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE

programs, and being forced to lay people off, roles that are primarily held by racialized women.”

Neighbourhood Houses in B.C. provide a range of settlement services, including the federally funded language instruction for newcomers to Canada, childcare, seniors' programs, digital literacy, food security, trauma services, case management and employment readiness.

Programs at risk at the The South Vancouver Neighbourhood House that has lost two-thirds of its funding, include mentorship of high school youth and immigrant women, information and orientation into Canadian society and a host of employment programs including job search skills and labour market data.

As one of the most racially diverse ridings in Canada with 80% visible minorities, 56% percent of which are immigrants, and 68.6 % who have a non-English first language, these cuts have significant impact.

The event included representatives from other organizations impacted by the cuts, including the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA), Immigrant Services Society of B.C. (ISSBC) and Vancouver Community College, which is itself facing a shutdown of its Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program in light of the cuts.

Chris Friesen, Chief Operating Officer of ISSBC, echoed Lepps on the need to push back on disinformation and outlined the integral role of immigration in Canada's economic growth.

“In British Columbia alone, a 2024 Labour Market Outlook Report projects a labour force gap of 1,120,000 within the next decade as more people age out of the workforce than will enter it. Almost 50% are expected to come through new immigrants,” said Friesen. “We urgently need political leadership to bring us together as a country to develop a renewed long-term vision for immigration. Our

economic prosperity, our pension plans and our collective future depends on it.”

A study conducted in 2023 (see link at end of story) by the Conference Board of Canada drew a clear link between investment in settlement supports and retention rates of newcomers.

The REVUE reached out to Sunita Dhir, MLA for Vancouver-Langara and Parliamentary Secretary for International Credentials who provided the following: “We know that settlement services are essential to support newcomers in B.C., and the recent announcement by the federal government

regarding funding cuts, including to neighbourhood houses, is concerning. The province has made historic investments in newcomer services, and the federal government must do its part. We continue to monitor developments and engage with service providers to understand the impact.”

Also in attendance at the event was Jenny Kwan, Member of Parliament for Vancouver East and NDP Critic for Immigration. According to Kwan, “Newcomers are being used as a political scapegoat for Canada's failed housing policy. Government and the official opposition members playing the blame game are dangerously fanning anti-immigrant sentiment.” She added that the recent cuts “are dismantling invaluable infrastructure that the

community took decades to build up to help integrate newcomers. A neighbourhood house is the living room of a community. Gutting their settlement services funding by 50 – 100%, harms the very social, cultural and economic fabric of Canada.”

Lepps concurred saying, “For generations, Canada has offered a promise of welcome, safety and inclusion for people seeking opportunity or displaced by crises. “With the direction we're headed in, that promise is being broken. We're at risk of losing who we are as a nation.”

Link to A Study of Immigrant Retention Trends in Canada  
[https://forcitizenship.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/print\\_the-leaky-bucket\\_2023.pdf](https://forcitizenship.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/print_the-leaky-bucket_2023.pdf)



*The South Vancouver Neighbourhood House is one of the agencies impacted by funding cuts by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.*

## VOKRA

VANCOUVER ORPHAN KITTEN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

### ADOPT. DONATE. VOLUNTEER.

info@vokra.ca

vokra.ca

604.731.2913

@vokra

/vokra

@vokratweets

VOKRA's mission is to end cat overpopulation and homelessness.

We rescue, heal, then place cats - first in our network of foster homes, then in carefully matched, loving, forever homes. We are a passionate, volunteer-driven charity with extensive cat care experience.

We believe that no kill is the only responsible approach to rescue, that Trap-Neuter-Return works and that cats are AWESOME!



## The Window Cleaners

Gutter Cleaners & Pressure Washers



## Call 604-437-0774

or REQUEST A QUOTE ONLINE AT  
<https://thewindowcleaners.ca>

## WE DO A GOOD JOB AT A REASONABLE PRICE

- ✓ Cleaners Are Safe for Children, Pets & Plants
- ✓ Streak-Free Windows
- ✓ Clean Undamaged Gutters
- ✓ Safely Power-Washed House, Patio and Walkway
- ✓ Interior House Cleaning

### OUR PROCESS

We made the process as convenient as we could. You do not need to be present if the work is done outside. We will protect your exterior furniture and plants and leave everything the way it was... only cleaner. And our billing is even more convenient.

### OUR GUARANTEE

Our guarantee is simple: you do not pay for the job unless you are fully satisfied and happy with the job.

