

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Newcomer Engagement in Rural Communities report released**

GUELPH, ON, June 30, 2017 – When newcomers and other community residents enjoy mutually beneficial relationships, rural communities are more likely to be healthy. ROI's most recent report: [Newcomer Engagement and Social Capital in Rural Communities](#) explores how rural communities are engaging newcomers in their civic life.

Newcomer Engagement and Social Capital in Rural Communities examines the views and experiences of 202 stakeholders in three rural Ontario counties: Dufferin, Huron and Northumberland regarding civic engagement and social capital generated with and by newcomers. This community-based, case study approach showcases effective engagement and social capital from the perspective of individuals who live in these three counties.

"We can do better by understanding our history, being more welcoming, and providing those networks that have always helped people survive and be successful here because we sometimes have the narrative of the self-made pioneer who came with nothing but in truth, they always had community support, the support of their church, the support of their family," says Sinead Cox of Huron County Museum. "So we as a community need to continue to provide those things."

The report presents thematic conclusions based on the input of stakeholders, and offers lessons learned to other rural communities wishing to maximize social capital and civic engagement as they welcome newcomers in their midst.

"More than two hundred participants had much to say regarding civic engagement and social capital. The vast majority were enthusiastic to discuss their experiences," shares Andrew Bartley of Platinum Leadership. "We witnessed gracious appreciation for – and the abundant gratitude of – newcomers in all three counties."

The project includes a final report, an assessment tool, case study reports, infographics and videos. All of the documents and tools can be found on the [Measuring Rural Community Vitality](#) page.

ROI conducted a RFP and commissioned [Platinum Leadership](#) to undertake this comprehensive consultation process that began in June 2016.

Newcomer Engagement and Social Capital in Rural Communities is one project under the [Measuring Rural Community Vitality](#) initiative. Project funding is provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

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