

Theoretical analysis of the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program and the Francophone
Immigration Strategy as policy interventions to attract highly skilled immigrants to Manitoba

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Political Studies

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Winnipeg

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ABSTRACT

In the era of globalization, Canada is one of many industrialized countries involved in the worldwide race for talent (McHale 2003). Thus, Canada plans to accept 401,000 immigrants by 2021 by giving preference to economic immigrants to strengthen the country's middle class (IRCC, 2020e). Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia are the top intended destinations of newcomers (Statistics Canada 2010; IRCC 2015; IRCC 2018). Consequently, smaller provinces do not fully benefit from immigration. Equal distribution of immigrants among provinces and territories is a key issue in Canada. Since immigration is a shared responsibility, there are policies designed to address it in both federal and provincial levels. This research is focused on two such programs: the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) and the Francophone Immigration Strategy. The MPNP is based on federal-provincial agreements to meet Manitoba-specific labour-market needs. The second initiative is designed to enhance vitality of French-speaking minority communities outside Quebec through immigration (IRCC 2019). By focusing on the province of Manitoba, this study uses new institutionalism and nudge theory to examine both programs that aim to attract highly skilled immigrants to the province. The research methodology is mainly qualitative as it applies a case study approach and uses thematic analysis of government documents related to both immigration programs. Through this analysis we can learn how the theories help us understand Manitoba's immigration programs and make useful policy recommendations. This combination of innovation and learning can be a powerful tool for developing effective policies to build a better future for Canadian- and foreign-born peoples.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Andrea Rounce for helping me achieve my potential throughout my studies and helping me craft this thesis. I would also like to thank my graduate committee members, Dr. Levasseur and Dr. Wilkinson, for their valuable feedback. I would also like to acknowledge all of the staff and faculty members of the University of Manitoba Political Studies department.

I would like to acknowledge the financial support I received from the Duff Roblin Fellowship: it was a valuable support for my research and education.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my friends and family. I would not have been able to achieve the success in my education without their support.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

Canada is widely known as one of the most attractive destinations for migration (Hawkins, 1988; Satzewich, 2015). According to the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada held between 2001 and 2005, nearly half of respondents explained their decision to stay in Canada due to quality of life, followed by a second popular argument related to prospective future for families (Schellenberg & Maheux, 2007). In the 2021 Best Countries Report prepared by U.S. News & World Report (2021), Canada unprecedentedly takes the top spot overall. It is recognized as a global leader in quality of life and social purpose, with a good job market, national commitment to human rights and social justice (U.S. News & World Report, 2021).

The Government of Canada has been increasing its population by welcoming immigrants from all over the world, particularly thanks to well-elaborated points-based immigration policy since 1967. Immigration plays a crucial role since it drives the country's economic growth, spurs innovation and helps to respond to local labour needs (IRCC, 2020b). The government's interest in attracting an overseas workforce is driven by national demographic and economic needs. According to statistics, by 2036 the number of Canadian senior citizens is expected to double while the working-age population will decrease (Statistics Canada, 2010). This in turn creates a significant labour gap that can be filled by qualified newcomers. Thus, there are two main advantages of welcoming more immigrants: firstly, it will assist in addressing the demographic challenges of an aging population and secondly, it will help to compete in the global race for talent (IRCC, 2020b). Consequently, immigration policies often become research subjects of various scholars in the social sciences, and this study is one of these immigration-related policy research projects.

In the era of globalization, Canada is involved in the worldwide race for talent along with many other industrialized countries (McHale, 2003). According to an OECD review, Canada has "the largest and longest-standing skilled labour migration programme and the highest educated immigrant population in the OECD" (OECD, 2019, p. 1). Following the 2021-2023 Immigration Levels Plan, the Government of Canada plans to admit up to 421,000 newcomers annually by

giving preference to high-skilled economic immigrants in order to strengthen the country's middle class (IRCC, 2020e).

Following national reports, Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia are the top intended destinations of newcomers (Government of Canada, 2018; IRCC, 2015; Statistics Canada, 2010). Consequently, relatively smaller provinces like Manitoba do not fully benefit from immigration and keep struggling with a labour force shortage. This, in turn, requires federal as well as provincial governments to set clear goals and develop solutions towards regionalization, which refers to equal distribution of newcomers among provinces and territories.

Given the fact that immigration is a shared responsibility in Canada under the Constitution, the federal government in cooperation with provincial authorities has developed several policies to attract and retain highly skilled immigrants. This research is focused on two such programs: the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) and the Francophone Immigration Strategy.

The PNP is based on federal-provincial agreements to meet province-specific labour-market needs and is aimed to solve the regionalization issue. Interestingly, the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) was one of the first provincial initiatives, and was implemented in 1998 (Government of Manitoba, 2019b). Thus, the MPNP gives Manitoba the right to select and nominate immigrants according to its local demographic and economic needs.

The Francophone Immigration Strategy (FIS), which was presented in 2019, is another government policy¹ designed to enhance the vitality of French-speaking minority communities by attracting francophone immigrants to the provinces and territories outside of Quebec (IRCC, 2019a). So why is it relevant in relation to Manitoba? Firstly, the French language is the mother tongue for 3.4% of Manitoba residents, and 9% of the Manitoban population speak both English and French (Government of Manitoba, n.d.-b). Secondly, the Government of Manitoba is committed to keep supporting the provincial francophone immigration strategy by prioritizing French-speaking applicants who meet the eligibility requirements in one of the MPNP streams (Government of Manitoba, 2017a). Thus, the province's francophone communities continue to

¹ The immigration policy of Canada is collaborative but distinctive federal/provincial policy.

support a target of 7 percent of all Manitoba's immigrant landings to be French-speaking (IRCC, 2018a, p. 3).

1.2 Research objectives

Following this context, my research has a particular focus on Manitoba's immigration policy and applies a theoretical lens to get a better understanding on how governments have been shaping the immigration policy between 2015 and 2019. When I say governments, I consider federal government represented by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) department, and the Government of Manitoba since immigration is a shared jurisdiction. In case of provincial authorities, it is important to note that the immigration-related department has been often renamed: the Ministry of Labour and Immigration (2003), Ministry of Education and Training (2017a) and Ministry of Economic Development and Jobs nowadays (Government of Manitoba, n.d.-a). In this regard, I do not refer to a particular provincial department and use *the Government of Manitoba* as a general term for provincial authorities managing immigration policy.

The study also has a specific temporal scope, and there are several reasons for choosing this period of time. Firstly, it starts from 2015, the year when Canada launched Express Entry. It is a flagship application management system "to manage the intake of applications for permanent residence under specific economic immigration categories (*including the MPNP*), while also facilitating the selection of individuals who are most likely to succeed in Canada" (IRCC, 2019c, p. 4). Secondly, this period also covers the improvements and renewals of the MPNP. And lastly, this period ends in 2019 to exclude the effects of the global pandemic and Canada's specific immigration policies related to it.

I concentrate my research on high-skilled newcomers as they make a significant portion of economic immigrant level which meets national economic and labour needs. So, who are high-skilled immigrants and what value do they bring to Canada and Manitoba particularly? Canada traditionally recognizes 3 main immigrant categories: economic immigrants, family class (usually parents and close relatives of economic immigrants) and refugees. For the purpose of the study, I focus on economic immigrants. Economic immigration is the most common immigration class for people with specific in-demand occupational skills to contribute to

Canadian economy (IRCC, 2019c). This includes management (e.g. company or restaurant managers), professional (e.g. doctors, architects) and technical occupations (e.g. electricians, chefs). Noteworthy, business immigrants who intend to land in Canada and make investments into local economy are also included to this category. However, unlike skilled workers, business immigrants are valuable for Canada based on their wealth and funds that they are going to invest to local businesses rather than their professional experience and skills. For this reason, I exclude them by focusing on internationally educated high-skilled professionals.

It is important to be precise about how high-skilled immigrants are defined. Following its points-based immigrant selection system, Canada welcomes migrants with high human capital which refers to age, education, work experience, and language skills (IRCC, n.d.-a). Consequently, the average successful economic immigrant is in early 30s, with at least undergraduate degree, one-year full time work experience and proficient knowledge of English or French (IRCC, 2015, 2019a). According to Triadafilopoulos and Smith (2013), in contrast to temporary foreign workers, highly skilled immigrants are both ‘wanted and welcomed’:

They are wanted because, as a consequence of their human capital, they satisfy particular economic needs in ever more important sectors of the economy such as information technology (IT), health, and other emerging “knowledge industries.” They are welcome because, unlike their low-skilled counterparts, they possess the class and status criteria needed to tap into and take advantage of social networks, both in the workplace and in society at large. Put differently, they have access to the “social capital” needed to successfully integrate into receiving states and hence become successful members of their adopted political communities. From the perspective of the receiving country, highly skilled immigrants satisfy economic needs without unduly impairing the ongoing process of community formation, which in contemporary parlance, is often equated with preserving and enhancing “social cohesion.” (p. 2)

Concerning a theoretical framework for analysis, I refer to two different schools of thought. First is new institutionalism which puts emphasis on the crucial role of institutions (in my case federal and provincial governments) in shaping policy and political outcomes. In contrast to formal legal style of scholarship considered as old institutionalism, new institutional

theory embraces various different approaches to explain the complex nature of institutions and their impacts. Unlike rational choice and sociological streams, historical institutionalism with its idea of path dependency fits in Canada's longstanding points-based immigration system. Concept of layering, which is part of the theory's historical dimension, refers to incremental internal changes within the system that can lead to significant policy changes. I suggest that this concept can explain best the renewals and adjustments made in the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program between 2015 and 2019.

The second school of thought is nudge theory developed by Thaler and Sunstein (2008b) as a behavioral approach. It notes the importance of studying how individuals make decisions, taking into account the fact that any policy is designed to change people's behaviour. I claim that government is a main "choice architect" who through policies nudges people toward making certain decisions. In the immigration policy realm, it is interesting to apply this theoretical approach to understand how federal and provincial governments nudge high-skilled immigrants to choose the MPNP immigration pathway to settle in Manitoba.

Due to in-depth analysis of immigration policy in Manitoba through the lens of two theories, I consider that qualitative methodology is the best way to answer my research questions. Thus, I apply three qualitative methods: case study, documentary analysis and thematic analysis. As the study is focused on two concrete policies, I consider the MPNP and FIS within Manitoba as two case studies. The collected data are various government documents (legislations/regulations/policies/press releases) which are specific to each case. By applying the theoretical frameworks, I use thematic analysis to examine the collected documents and answer my research questions.

To sum up, my research has a particular geographic focus on the province of Manitoba and is based on theoretical analysis of the MPNP and FIS between 2015 and 2019. As a researcher, my goal is to look at the roots of new institutionalism and nudge theory to understand how these two programs work in order to attract immigrants to Manitoba. My key research questions are the following:

1. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the MPNP?
2. To what extent does nudge theory explain the MPNP?

3. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the FIS?
4. To what extent does nudge theory explain the FIS?
5. Which theory helps us better understand both policies?

1.3 Research significance

This thesis has a research value. There is no doubt that immigration that plays a crucial role in Canada as it addresses the country's demographic, economic and cultural needs. This in turn highlights the relevance and importance of the study. I think that the originality of the current study (no previous research applying new institutionalism and nudge theory in Canadian immigration policy context) can encourage other researchers to conduct a similar case study for other provinces or even end up with wider research by using comparative approach not only among Canadian regions, but also in the international scope. For practitioners who are directly involved or manage policymaking process in both federal and provincial levels, this combination of innovation and learning can serve as a good insight to help design policies addressed towards a better future for its Canadian- and foreign-born peoples.

The study consists of 6 main chapters. Chapter 2 is dedicated to the literature review – it explains immigration policy in global and Canadian contexts, and refers to previous studies on the MPNP and Francophone Immigration Strategy. The third chapter is about the theoretical frameworks to be implemented – new institutionalism and nudge theory. Chapter 4 is dedicated to methodology – data collection and the analysis plan. The fifth chapter is about the discussion of study results, its advantages and limitations, which are then summarized and concluded in the sixth chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Migration as the oldest practices of mankind is a cross-cutting research area; therefore, this subject attracts attention from scholars across a wide range of humanities and social sciences, starting from anthropology to public policy and economics.

Before starting a research project, it is important to review the previous studies conducted in this field. This chapter is dedicated to a review of various literature, and based on the following questions:

- What is immigration policy and what policy fields does it cover?
- Why are many host countries interested in high-skilled immigrants?
- In light of Canadian federal government structure, how are immigration-related responsibilities shared between federal and provincial authorities?
- What immigration pathways does Canada offer to highly skilled newcomers?
- How are high-skilled immigrants selected and admitted to Manitoba?
- What is the MPNP and how in full does it contribute to Manitoba?
- What role does the Francophone Immigration Strategy play in Canada's immigration policy, particularly in the MPNP?

Based on the diversity of the questions, the chapter is divided into 2 sections that examine immigration policy in global and Canadian context as well as in Manitoba particularly.

2.1 Immigration Policy in global and Canadian context

In a time of globalization industrialized countries compete with each other in attracting the best and brightest from all over the world. Luring global talent, in turn, requires a well-developed immigration policy. It is important to define what immigration policy is, what fields it covers and what role it plays in the global arena and particularly in Canada.

To understand what immigration policy means, we should first understand what migration is by examining its diverse definitions. From the epistemological perspective, the term “migration” is used in a broad sense as human mobility and considers important public policy.

Based on the Glossary on Migration developed by the International Organization for Migration² (2019), migration governance is defined as follows:

The combined frameworks of legal norms, laws and regulations, policies and traditions as well as organizational structures (subnational, national, regional and international) and the relevant processes that shape and regulate states' approaches with regard to migration in all its forms, addressing rights and responsibilities and promoting international cooperation. (p. 138)

Bjerre, Helbling, Römer and Zobel (2015) see migration policy as a part of migration governance and define it as “government’s statements of what it intends to do or not do (including laws, regulations, decisions and orders) in regards to the selection, admission, settlement and deportation of foreign citizens residing in the country” (p. 559).

Depending on the direction of movements, migration embraces emigration (moving out of the country) and immigration (moving in the country). In this regard, immigration policy means the same thing as Bjerre et al.’s (2015) use of the term “migration policy”.

Immigration policy constitutes one of the fundamental components of state sovereignty and addresses the control of entry to a country’s territory, varying from physical control of borders and visa requirements to immigrant integration in the host country (Green, 2011). From a historical perspective, immigration policy usually refers to the response of governments in developed countries towards migration pressures from less developed countries since World War 2 (Green, 2011).

Following all these definitions, one can conclude that immigration policy is a policy (government’s intentions to do or not do presented through laws, regulations, decisions and orders) addressed towards the selection, admission, settlement and deportation of people arriving from other countries. Consequently, it is one of the crucial policy fields that directly refer to the state sovereignty which varies from physical control of the state territory to visa requirements for

² The International Organization for Migration is the leading inter-governmental organization with 174 member states. It works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners to promote humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all (International Organization for Migration, n.d.).

newcomers. In the case of Canada, major immigration waves refer to post-war times and this led to the development and implementation of a national points-based immigration system which functions still today (Hawkins, 1988).

Green (2011) distinguishes five dimensions of immigration policy: (1) labor migration, (2) political asylum, (3) immigration of dependents, (4) ethnic immigration and (5) integration of newcomers (pp. 1147–1148). The first three categories refer to well-known Canadian immigrant categories: economic immigrants, refugees and family class respectively. Ethnic immigration, in contrast, refers to selective policy by giving preference to newcomers of particular ethnicities over others. Finally, immigrant integration plays a crucial role in immigration policy since successful integration is a source of wealth for both government and immigrant individuals. As the research purpose is related to economic high-skilled immigrants, I further focus on labour migration.

Labour migration underpins the immigration policy of many developed countries. People migrate seeking better living conditions, while states look for a skilled workforce to benefit local economic needs. Green (2011) distinguishes between low-and high-skilled labour migration by arguing that high-skilled labour migration was revived in the late 1990s due to points-based immigration systems originally pioneered in Canada and Australia (Green, 2011, p. 1147).

Canada's points-based immigration system, which ranks potential immigrants based on various criteria including education and work experience, confirms the fact that Canada is interested in admitting the best and brightest from all over the world – highly skilled immigrants. So, who are these in-demand immigrants?

As per the UN definition of immigration policy on high-skilled immigrants,³ this immigrant type “generally include[s] highly qualified workers with post-secondary technical or professional education or job experience, especially with qualifications or skills in demand in the host country” (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013, p. 13).

³ It “indicates Government’s policy to influence the level of immigration of highly skilled workers into the country” (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013, p. 13).

Freda Hawkins (1988) foresaw an inevitable increase of so called “transient” type of migration (moving to a country temporarily) due to the growing demand for a professional and skilled labour force, which is still relevant in present day Canada. She also suggested that national economic development and individual professional capacity have become the main factors in international migration. With globalization and significant progress in technology, “the pursuit of skills and talents by governments is worldwide, as is the keen response of professional and skilled immigrants to opportunities in affluent countries” (Hawkins, 1988, p. 3). This clearly explains the global race for talent and its important role in Canada.

Likewise, Triadafilopoulos and Smith (2013) argued that high-skilled newcomers are both wanted and welcome, compared to temporary foreign low-skilled workers. First, they are wanted because of their human capital which can be positively contributed to Canada’s rapidly evolving knowledge industries. Second, high-skilled immigrants are welcome because, in contrast to their low-skilled counterparts, they possess the class and status criteria to tap into and benefit social networks in the workplace and society in general. Thus, they have access to the “social capital” which is an essential part of the integration process and therefore they become successful members of their adopted political communities (Triadafilopoulos & Smith, 2013). The scholars also argued that the increasing need for highly-skilled labour in industrialized western societies is explained by two key reasons. Firstly, the twin phenomena of increasing life expectancy and decreasing birthrates have led to a demographic imbalance. Secondly, there is a skills shortage in a range of sectors, particularly information technology (Triadafilopoulos & Smith, 2013).

Edmonston (2016) also fairly pointed out the cost newcomers pay when they make a decision in favor of immigrating to Canada:

Perhaps the most important contribution of immigrants is their children. Many immigrants have made enormous sacrifices for their children’s welfare, including the decision to settle in Canada. Immigrant parents often have to work in multiple jobs, and sometimes in occupations well below the status they would have received if they had remained at home. These sacrifices have meaning, because immigrant parents believe that their children will have better educational and occupational opportunities in Canada than in their homelands. Immigrant parents push their children to excel by reminding them of their own sacrifices. These high expectations for the children of immigrants

generally lead to high motivations for educational and occupational success. (pp. 105–106)

Indeed, all this is valid in the Canadian case; as in many developed countries, Canada faces demographic challenges that are directly reflected in its tertiary economy largely based on providing services (IRCC, 2018b). By and large, immigration policy plays a crucial role in any country; in Canada, it is a nation-building policy that directly affects national economic and social policies.⁴ It is a broad policy sphere that embraces not only immigrants' selection, but also their attraction, integration and retention processes. There is a wide range of scholarly literature dedicated to Canadian immigration policy that will be further discussed.

2.2 Immigration Policy in Manitoba

Immigration is a shared jurisdiction in Canada; thus, provinces and territories also play a key role in national immigration policy. Prior to focusing on immigration policy in Manitoba, let's discuss what role it plays at a national level.

Ruggeri, Steinnes, Evans and Tantia (2018) note that “policies are population-based interventions that aim to guide behaviour to the optimum outcome in the most efficient way over the lifespan of the choice” (p. 4). Thus, public policies are elaborated in the name of the public good. Since immigration is a nation-building policy, Canada is committed to responsibly increasing the population by welcoming more immigrants for the benefit of Canadian citizens. Given the fact that immigration drives economic growth, spurs innovation and responds to labour needs⁵ by helping employers access the talent they need to thrive, Canada has created a highly competitive selection system to admit global talent from all over the world (IRCC, 2019a, 2020a).

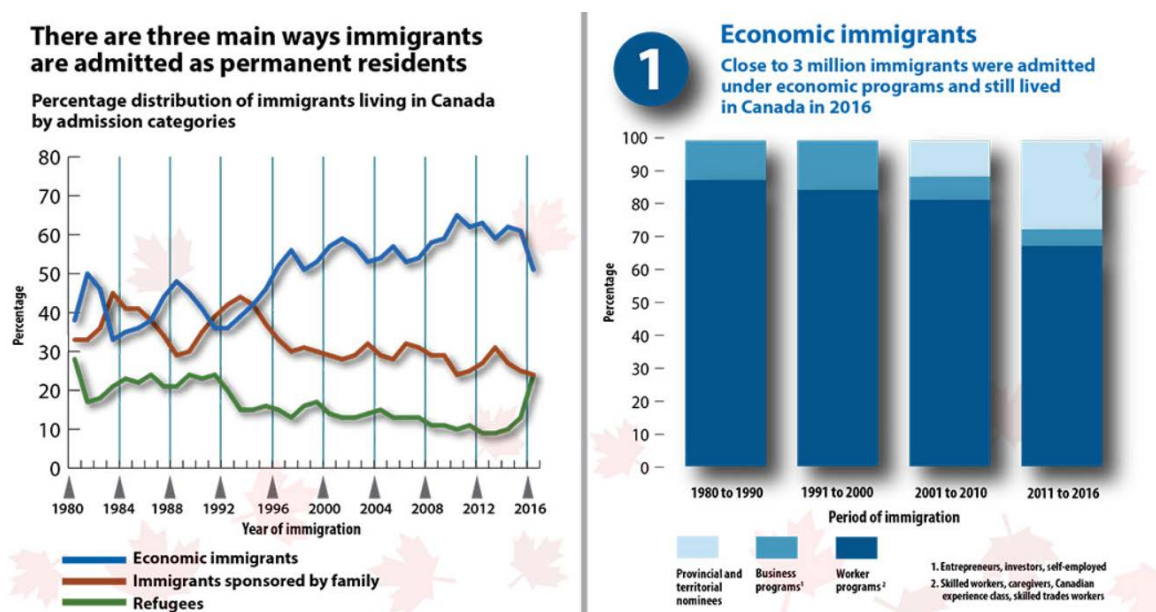
⁴ Immigration's impact on economic and social policy is mainly driven by demographic challenges which cause need in high-skilled immigrants filling labour gaps in the country.

⁵ Given the fact that the high portion (roughly 60%) of newcomers in Canada arrive prior to their 30th birthday, a majority of immigrants spend most of their lives in the labour force (Wilkinson, 2008).

The 2016 Census shows that 1 in 5 Canadians are foreign-born individuals who arrived in Canada through immigration (Statistics Canada, 2017). The increasing proportion of the foreign-born population is explained by “the large number of immigrants admitted into Canada each year, the gradual rise in the number of deaths and the relatively low fertility levels in Canada” (Statistics Canada, 2017, p. 1). Regarding immigrant categories, Canada selects newcomers based on three main objectives: (1) economic immigrants to promote economic growth, (2) family class to reunite families, and (3) refugees to fulfill Canada’s international obligations and support its humanitarian tradition (Statistics Canada, 2017). Following statistics, almost 6 in 10 immigrants were admitted under the economic class; 48 percent of them came through the skilled workers program and 27.3 percent under the provincial and territorial nominees program (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Figure 1

General Immigration Pathways to Canada



Adapted from *Gateways to immigration in Canada, 2016 Census of Population*, by IRCC, 2017, (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2017029-eng.htm>). Copyright 2017 IRCC.

Ferrer et al. (2012) claimed that Canada’s immigration system “is currently undergoing significant change” (pp. 2–3). This is driven by a number of goals:

- (1) a desire to improve the economic outcomes of entering immigrants, given the deterioration in labour market outcomes over the past several decades; (2) an attempt to better respond to short-term regional labour market shortages often associated with commodity booms, and (3) a desire to shift immigration away from the three largest cities to other regions of the country that are seeking more economic immigrants. (pp. 2–3)

These goals are reflected in the modification of the point system with the introduction of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) in 2002 and the implementation of a series of new immigrant programs (Ferrer et al., 2012). One of the substantial changes was the introduction of an online application management system Express Entry launched in 2015, which manages most immigration programs for economic immigrants. The purpose of this virtual system is to accelerate the application assessment process and rank candidates according to selection criteria. Its backbone is the Comprehensive Ranking System which serves to rank received applications according to the selection criteria set by the IRPA (IRCC, 2015).

Table 1

Comprehensive Ranking System Grid

Comprehensive Ranking System Factors & Point Values		Maximum Points
Core Human Capital	Age	500
	Level of Education	
	Official Languages Proficiency	
	Canadian Work Experience	
Skill Transferability	Education *with official language proficiency or Canadian work experience	100
	Foreign Work Experience *with official language proficiency or Canadian work experience	
	Certificate of Qualification *trades only; with official language proficiency	
Additional Points	Arranged Employment in Canada	600
	Provincial Nominee Program Nomination	
TOTAL		1200

From *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2015*, by IRCC, 2015, (<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/annual-report-parliament-immigration-2015.html>). Copyright 2017 by IRCC.

There are 3 federal and 1 regional programs that serve as major immigration pathway for skilled workers (IRCC, n.d.-b):

- Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP) designed for skilled workers with foreign work experience; it is the most popular program among high-skilled immigrants;
- Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP) addresses for applicants who are qualified in a skilled trade; usually refers to low-skilled immigrants (butchers, bakers, machine operators etc.);⁶
- Canadian Experience Class (CEC) refers to applicants who have gained Canadian work experience; this applicant category usually includes temporary foreign workers and international students;
- Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) is created for the people who (1) possess the skills, education and work experience that correspond to economic needs of a specific province or territory, and (2) have the intention to settle in that province.⁷

In addition to these programs, the most recent Immigration Levels Plan for 2020-2022 considers the facilitation of new pilot projects like the Agri-Food and Rural and Northern Immigration Pilots as well as an Atlantic Immigration Program to address specific labour market shortages by attracting more newcomers to provinces and rural areas. It also mentioned the increased space for the Provincial Nominee Program as well as Francophone immigration outside Quebec to strengthen Francophone communities while supporting the successful

⁶ Compared to FSWP, the eligibility requirements of the FSTW include lower language skills, lower level of work experience, and do not require education.

⁷ There are 2 types of nominations – *base* nominations submitted on paper and *enhanced* nominations submitted online and processed via Express Entry. This program functions in 2 provinces and 9 territories.

integration and retention of French-speaking immigrants (IRCC, 2020b). Following the research objectives, the last two policy initiatives will be further examined by concentrating on Manitoba.

2.2.1 Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program

Taking into account Section 95 of the Constitution Act of 1867 stating that immigration is a shared responsibility, in 1998 federal and provincial governments signed the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement (Government of Canada, 2003). Referring to the provincial news release, “[t]he agreement provides Manitoba with opportunities to influence selection policies through bilateral and multilateral consultations” (Government of Manitoba, 2003). This agreement led to the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP), which aims to attract, select and admit immigrants to the province. Following the MPNP Policy and Procedures:

The Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) offers to qualified skilled workers, with characteristics indicating a strong potential of becoming economically established in Manitoba, an opportunity to be assessed as candidates who can make a positive long-term contribution to the provincial economy and are therefore nominated for Permanent Resident Status in Canada. (p. 2)

Following national statistics, the share of all immigrants to Canada who decided to settle in Manitoba was 5.4% in 2009, up from 4.5% in 2008 (Milan, 2011). Of this number, the portion of economic immigrants was much higher compared to the national average: 80.7% and 60.9% respectively. The majority of provincial nominees (69.5%) intend to work in a high skilled occupation (NOC level 0 12.6%, NOC A 21.4% and NOC B 35.5%)⁸ (IRCC, 2017a, p. 10).

According to the 2016 Census, the proportion of newcomers who landed in Manitoba has increased from 1.8% to 5.2% since the beginning of 2000. In regard to a 2017 PNP evaluation report, Manitoba is among the top 3 provincial nominees’ destinations. Compared to other Prairies, the province welcomed 24.2% of provincial nominees; Alberta and Saskatchewan - 22.4% and 19% respectively (IRCC, 2017a, p. 10). This tendency is mainly explained by the

⁸ NOC level 0 refers to managerial positions, NOC A refers to jobs that require university degree and NOC B – to technical occupations (Government of Canada, 2020).

MPNP (IRCC, 2019c; Milan, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2017). However, it is crucial to keep in mind other existing immigration pathways; newcomers might arrive in Manitoba through federal programs, or they could immigrate from other Canadian provinces and territories.

Concerning immigrant retention rates, Alberta has the highest result (95%) compared to Manitoba's 82% (IRCC, 2017, p. 28). To explain the MPNP's lower retention rate, Paquet and Xhardez (2020) referred to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Following them, once newcomers are granted permanent residence, they can benefit from unrestricted mobility rights; as a result, they have no obligation to remain in the province of the original landing (Paquet & Xhardez, 2020).

Table 2

Provincial nominations 2005-2015

Intended province of destination	PNP (2005-2009) (n=37,737)	PNP (2010-2015) (n=106,312)	Skilled Worker (2010-2015) (n=107,140)	Canadian Experience Class (n=42,151)
Nova Scotia	4%	3%	1%	1%
New Brunswick	5%	3%	0.3%	0.5%
Prince Edward Island	4%	3%	0.1%	0.1%
Newfoundland and Labrador	1%	1%	0.2%	0.1%
Ontario	4%	7%	62%	55%
Manitoba	39%	24%	1%	1%
Saskatchewan	12%	19%	1%	1%
Alberta	14%	22%	17%	26%
British Columbia	18%	18%	17%	16%
Yukon	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%
Northwest Territories	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Nunavut	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not stated	0%	0%	0%	0%

Note. Emphasis added by author

Adapted from *Evaluation of the Provincial Nominee Program*, by IRCC, 2017 (<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/reports-statistics/evaluations/provincial-nominee-program-2015.html>). Copyright 2017 by IRCC.

Following provincial data dedicated to the Program's 20th anniversary, the MPNP ensures steady demographic and economic growth for the province as well as a high retention rate of

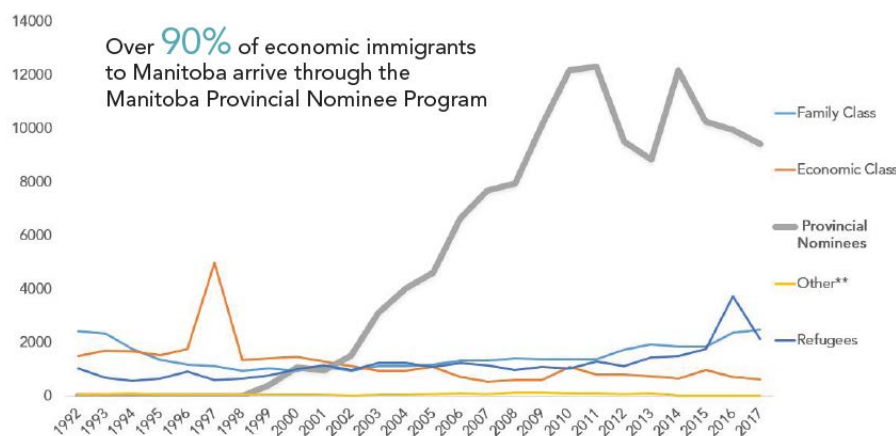
provincial nominees (Government of Manitoba, 2019c). Manitoba attracts newcomers thanks to its safe working conditions, low living costs, and high standard of health and education services (Government of Manitoba, 2019b). The MPNP is a main determinant of the province's population (positive growth since 2006) and economic growth (GDP growth up to 30%) (Government of Manitoba, 2019b). To demonstrate the program's success, the provincial government referred to statistics (p.2):

- more than 90% of economic immigrants in Manitoba arrive through the MPNP and almost 90% of them remain in the province since the launch of the program.
- over 90% of newcomers were employed within the first year upon arrival which serves as proof of quality integration services.

Indeed, the development and implementation of the MPNP have been making a valuable contribution to the growth of the provincial economy. However, while governmental data seem very optimistic, we as scholars should be cautious and also refer to other scholarly literature.

Figure 2

Immigrants in Manitoba



From *MPNP 20 Fact Sheet* by the Government of Manitoba, 2018

(<https://www.immigratemanitoba.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/MPNP20-Fact-Sheet.pdf>).

Copyright 2018 by Government of Manitoba

Jeram and Nicolaidis (2019, p. 614) defined Manitoba as a “pioneer” and an “example for other provinces” in relation to designing and implementing the PNP to pursue immigration-driven economic and demographic growth. Baglay (2012, p. 127) defined the MPNP as “one of the most aggressive and actively developing PNPs”. She distinguished 2 key factors to explain why the province lobbied for the development of a provincially tailored selection program. The first one is particular labour market needs that could not be addressed through the federal immigration programs. Secondly, Manitoba has a number of socio-demographic challenges: slow population growth, low newcomer arrivals, outmigration, and a high concentration of new arrivals in Winnipeg (Baglay, 2012, p. 126). Moreover, Manitoba uses a provincially developed points system and has several program streams.

The MPNP agreement allows Manitoba to select applicants and nominate them for immigration. The selection criteria of the program reflect 3 major strategies: (1) retaining those who are already in Manitoba through employer direct and international student streams; (2) attracting people who have family or close friends in the province and drawing on their support to provide for a broader nomination base in family and general streams; and (3) gaining the competitive edge over other destinations in Canada through flexible selection criteria which allow for the nomination of persons who are otherwise unlikely to be eligible under the federal programs or other PNPs (Baglay, 2012). The MPNP has elaborated its own selection process system which reminds Express Entry’s Comprehensive Ranking System, and “unlike some other provinces, Manitoba does not charge fees for processing PNP applications” (Baglay, 2012, p. 128).

Throughout the implementation of MPNP, the government of Manitoba initiated a number of policy renewals and developed new immigration streams. Baglay (2012) distinguishes 4 major MPNP streams:

- The employer direct stream for applicants who have been working in Manitoba for at least 6 months and who have an offer of long-term, full-time employment from the current employer.
- The international student stream addressing graduates of post-secondary programs in Manitoba who have been working for a local employer for at least 6 months and have a long-term, full-time job offer from that employer.

- The family stream refers to applicants who must demonstrate support of a close relative in the province, and potential employability by satisfying prescribed requirements for age, education, work experience, language ability, and adaptability.
- The general stream requiring applicants to demonstrate potential employability (based on the Manitoba points system) and either (a) presence of an applicant's close friend or a relative in Manitoba or (b) applicant's familiarity with life in Manitoba due to previous studies or employment.

Regarding the most recent MPNP renewals, a new international education stream has come into power in 2018 to ensure faster nomination for graduates of STEM programs⁹ who are completing internships that support industry innovation (EduCanada, 2018; Government of Manitoba, 2017a). Another new stream called Skilled Worker Overseas introduced at the same time serves as “a new pathway to nominate qualified applicants for the federal express entry program” (Government of Manitoba, 2017a, p. 1).

Following the MPNP objectives and streams, let’s understand how the nomination process works. In case of enhanced nomination processed via Express Entry, an applicant has 2 possible scenarios to be nominated for permanent residence (IRCC, n.d.-c):

- Either he/she first applies for nomination under one of the province’s streams by submitting an Express of Interest. Once the nomination is approved, the applicant creates an Express Entry profile;
- Or he/she first creates first an Express Entry profile and demonstrates the province his/her intention to settle there. If the province sends to the applicant a “notification of interest”, the applicant contacts the province directly. In case of nomination, the update automatically appears in the Express Entry profile, so the applicant can accept it electronically.

Noteworthy, the key advantage of enhanced nomination is considered in obtaining additional 600 points according to the federal Comprehensive Ranking System.¹⁰ This in sum

⁹ STEM programs refer to science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

¹⁰ see Table 1

with a core set of points (human capital and skills transferability) guarantees an invitation to apply for permanent residence at the subsequent draw from the Express Entry pool (IRCC, 2015).

The MPNP is part of a two-tiered immigrant selection system meaning that once an immigrant is nominated by the province, his/her application should be also approved by the federal government who grants permanent resident status following necessary medical and security background checks. As public servants, Crossman, Hou, and Picot (2020) prepared a review of the advantages and risks of two-step immigration selection. In a general context, they pointed out:

Compared with the US employer-sponsored economic immigration selection system, Canada's two-step selection process limits the role of the employer to the first step – the selection of temporary foreign workers in their initial job placement, while maintaining government's control in the second step – the selection of economic immigrants from among temporary foreign workers. In this sense, the Canadian system has a built-in mechanism to mitigate some of the potential risks associated with employer-selection. (p. 7)

Canada's two-step immigration selection offers several advantages over selecting economic immigrants from all over the world. Those who immigrated through this system tend to have higher initial employment rates and earnings than immigrants with no work experience in the receiving-country labour market. Two-step selection gives a possibility to improve the match between immigrant skills and labour market demands as (1) employers can directly assess skills and intangible qualities of temporary foreign workers, and (2) foreign workers can test out life in Canada before seeking permanent residency. In addition, well-performed temporary foreign workers are unlikely to face the same difficulty with the transferability of their human capital as immigrants with no Canadian experience. Lastly, a two-step system “can be an efficient avenue to fill a specific regional labour market need, and contribute to the economic development and population growth in local communities outside of major metropolitan areas” (Crossman et al., 2020, p. 8).

Given the fact that the MPNP has operated over 20 years, several program evaluations have been conducted. Carter (2009) presented a report based on interviews with the MPNP

immigrants. He concluded that “[a]lthough there were criticisms of the Program, the level of satisfaction expressed by those interviewed was quite high” (Carter, 2009, p. 7). Regarding the program administration, Carter (2009, p. 7) noted the following findings:

- A positive assessment of the nature of pre-arrival information;
- Only modest levels of criticism of administration and processing times during the application, approval, obtaining visas, and arrival process;
- Many applicants chose the program over other programs because it is faster, easier, and provides advantages for those who want to immigrate;
- Arrivals were very positive about the *Immigrate to Manitoba Website*. Ninety-five percent of those who used the website found it useful or very useful.

In their study, Carter, Pandey and Townsend (2010) pointed out that “[th]e Manitoba government has been a leader in developing and expanding its PNP, making it a prime candidate for a case study evaluating the potential of these programs for attracting, retaining and integrating immigrants in smaller provinces” (p. 3). The authors argued that the MPNP has been successful at both attracting and retaining immigrants. In comparison with the economic immigrants arriving in Manitoba through federal programs, nominees were more likely to stay in the province due to the positive labour market and social integration outcomes. The scholars also suggested that positive outcome in labour market may reflect the fact that most of the Program nominees were initially nominated due to their job offer from a local employer. However, some nominees experienced a slower rise in income, even after controlling for educational attainment (Carter et al., 2010). Moreover, as per the national PNP evaluation, Manitoba has the lowest proportion of nominees’ working in a job that corresponds to the skill level of their intended occupation (IRCC, 2017, p. 35).

So, can we conclude that the MPNP is a successful immigration pathway? Wilkinson and Kalischuk (2009) claimed that it is too early to be definitive in relation to the long-term success of the MPNP. In a similar vein, based on a comprehensive analysis of previous MPNP-related studies, Lewis (2010) suggested the program has had 2 major challenges:

First, the downloading of responsibility to lower scales of government, non-governmental actors, and immigrants - combined with the intense growth of the program - has challenged service providers and hindered integration in some cases. Second, the

selective, segmented nature of MPNP recruitment, nomination, and resettlement somewhat compromises the aim of creating economically viable, sustainable, and welcoming communities for all. (p. 257)

Some academics offer policy suggestions and prominent examples. Gibson, Bucklaschuk and Annis (2017) claimed the importance of collaboration in terms of integrating newcomers. By examining welcoming community strategies in Brandon, the scholars concluded that thanks to local and provincial partnerships,¹¹ “a community-based multi-sector collaboration has increased the capacity to integrate newcomers and improve the quality of life for all residents in this small prairie city” (Gibson et al., 2017, p. 50).

2.2.2 Francophone Immigration Strategy

Canada and Manitoba acknowledge the vital role of French-speaking immigrants as they contribute to the country’s rich cultural and linguistic diversity (Government of Manitoba, 2019a; IRCC, 2018a, 2019e). In 2016 the portion of invitations to apply for permanent residency sent to French-speaking potential immigrants through Express Entry increased by 40 percent since the system launch in 2015 (IRCC, 2018, p. 3). This is the outcome of one of the governmental initiatives known as the Francophone Immigration Strategy (FIS).

Besides the economic benefits of immigration, the provincial nominee programs aim to meet a social objective – the need to encourage the development of official language minority communities (IRCC, 2017a). Interestingly, the number of French-speaking newcomers admitted through PNPs has doubled and represented 38% of all francophone economic immigrants between 2015 and 2017 (IRCC, 2018a, p. 4). Indeed, francophone immigrants make a valuable contribution from an economic, a demographic, social, and cultural standpoint. They represent the same core working age group, but unlike the counterparts speaking English only, they add to national linguistic duality. According to the IRCC’s Evaluation of the Provincial Nominee Program (2017a, p. 8), “Manitoba is the only province with a stated objective for the PNP of increasing the social benefits of immigration to the province.”

¹¹ Brandon collaborated with various private and public organizations - Maple Leaf Foods, schools, community organizations and the Rural Development Institute (Gibson et al., 2017).

It is important to clarify that in the present chapter I use the term “Francophone Immigration Strategy” in 2 different meanings. First, it refers to general actions of federal and provincial governments addressed towards attracting more French-speaking immigrants. The second meaning is more specific; it is the formal name of the collaborative but distinctive policy introduced in 2019.¹² So what did lead to the implementation of FIS?

In March 2018 Canada has presented the Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023. Based on this collaborative 5-year plan, Canada provides around \$500 million over 5 year-period to support official languages, including \$40.8 million for Francophone immigration initiatives to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities (IRCC, 2019e).

Later in the same year a Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec was adopted (IRCC, 2018a). The document is defined as follows:

[It is] a plan that governments can implement, in collaboration with stakeholders, to improve the promotion, selection, settlement, integration and retention of French-speaking immigrants to Francophone Minority Communities (FMCs),¹³ using tools and approaches that are suitable to each community. This recognizes the diversity of FMCs across Canada – ranging from large urban centres to small rural communities. (p. 2)

The Plan’s guiding four principles demonstrates the share of responsibilities in terms of promoting francophone immigration:

- Promoting Francophone immigration outside of Quebec is a shared, federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) priority.
- Collaboration on the promotion of Francophone immigration should build on the existing efforts of FPT governments. Jurisdictions can adopt new initiatives based on respective capacity and policy alignment.

¹² As the FIS is one of my case studies, in the empirical part of the research (Chapters 4 and 5), I refer to the FIS as a particular immigration policy introduced in 2019.

¹³ Francophone Minority Communities mean communities outside of Quebec.

- FPT governments are committed to collaborative efforts that recognize the important role that immigration plays in enhancing the vitality of FMCs by mitigating labour shortages and the impact of aging populations.

- FPT ministers have a strong leadership role to play in promoting Francophone immigration, which includes engaging other government departments, communities, stakeholders and employers, who also have a role to play in increasing Francophone immigration. (p. 3)

The Action Plan focuses on three key collaboration strategies: (1) championing Francophone immigration, (2) collaborating in inclusive communities, accessible services and employment areas, and (3) reporting on progress (IRCC, 2018a, p. 4). To attract more French-speaking newcomers to provinces and territories, it is planned to enhance international marketing activities and e-tools to promote the benefits of FMC's to prospective immigrants, promoting and increasing awareness of existing immigration pathways and lastly, by holding a pan-Canadian symposium to engage a wide range of stakeholders into the process (IRCC, 2018a, p. 4).

Consequently, in 2019 the IRCC Minister Ahmed Hussein presented a Francophone Immigration Strategy as an outcome of numerous consultations held with various immigration-related stakeholders in order to better understand the immigration needs and priorities of French-speaking communities (IRCC, 2019a). By embracing the previous 2018-2023 Action Plan for Official Languages and Federal/Provincial/Territorial Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec, the document refines 3 major objectives of the Strategy:

1. Increase Francophone immigration to reach a target of 4.4% of French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec by 2023;
2. Support the successful integration and retention of French-speaking newcomers;
3. Strengthen the capacity of Francophone communities. (p. 3)

Following the Strategy, Canada plans to achieve these goals through (1) strengthening immigrant selection tools; (2) targeted expansion of promotion and recruitment support abroad; (3) joint action with key partners (such as provincial and territorial authorities as well as Francophone communities); (4) enhancing resettlement and settlement pathways; (5) coherent policies supported by evidence and outcomes (IRCC, 2019e, p. 3).

Renewed attention to francophone immigration can be explained by national statistics. Based on 1971-2016 Censuses, Canadian Heritage claimed that the demographic weight of

francophones has a declining tendency, particularly of those residing outside Quebec – 6.1% in 1971 to 3.8% in 2016 (Canadian Heritage, 2019).

What role does francophone immigration play in Manitoba? As per section 23 of the Manitoba Act of 1870 French as well as the English language have official status in the legislative and judicial spheres of government in the province (Government of Manitoba, 2012). However, in 1890, as Francophones became a minority group due to many immigrants arriving from Ontario and Eastern Europe, the provincial government abolished the official status of French in the legislative assembly, courts, and denominational schools (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2020, p. 2). Consequently, Manitoba's bilingualism was fully restored only in 1993 (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2020). In 1989 Manitoba's government adopted a French Language Service Policy aimed "to ensure that government departments and agencies provide their services in both English and French in geographic areas of the province where the French-speaking population is concentrated" (Government of Manitoba, 2012). Lastly, the Government of Manitoba adopted the *Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act* in 2016 to support the vitality of the community (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2020, p. 2).

As per the 2016 Census, only 8.6 percent of Manitoba's population is bilingual. Regarding unilingualism, the minority status of the French language is doubtless – 3.2% versus 95.5% English-speaking Manitobans (Canadian Heritage, 2019). From a demographic standpoint, a significant number of Francophone Manitobans were born in the province and reside in the south part of Manitoba.

Ka (2007) pointed out Manitoba's Francophone community was redefined in 2000 with its new constitution made by mainly French-speaking newcomers from Africa. Concerning recent data, Africa still remains the principal immigrant source country; 11% of French-speaking Manitobans were born abroad – nearly 60% of them are newcomers from Africa (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2020).

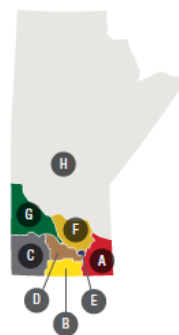
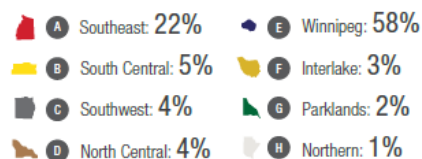
Figure 3

Francophones in Manitoba

WHERE DO **FRANCOPHONES LIVE?**

There are 16 designated bilingual areas in the province: Winnipeg and 15 rural areas. Most Franco-Manitobans live in Winnipeg, while about one third live in the south of the province.

ECONOMIC REGIONS



WHERE WERE **THEY BORN?**



From *Infographics: The French presence in Manitoba* by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2020 (<https://www.clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/statistics/infographics/french-presence-manitoba>). Copyright 2020 by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

The Francophone Immigration Strategy is not a newly designed policy. A similar strategic framework was introduced in 2006 which recognized a crucial role of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA)¹⁴ (“Developments in immigration to francophone minority communities,” 2008). Following the FCFA report, while many provinces were elaborating provincial committees on Francophone immigration, Manitoba was the province that was restructuring its existing committee. It was also noted the presence of community-run settlement agencies like the Accueil francophone du Manitoba (Bahi, 2008; “Developments in immigration to francophone minority communities,” 2008; Ferron, 2008).

¹⁴ In English the organization’s name means the *Federation of Francophone and Acadian communities of Canada*

Following the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Action Plan, the MPNP includes a francophone immigration strategy to support the ongoing growth and vitality of francophone communities in the province. Francophone communities of Manitoba “continue to support a target of 7% of all Manitoba’s immigrant landings to be francophone” (IRCC, 2018a).

Both federal and provincial authorities have been implementing the Francophone Immigration Strategy in practice since then. According to a news release, the IRCC would be providing funding of \$1.5 million to the Société de la francophonie manitobaine to help deliver settlement services to newcomers before they arrive to Canada (IRCC, 2019f). In the provincial level, Manitoba accepts requests from bilingual francophone candidates for exploratory visits to the province, which will be supported by local partner the Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (CDEM)¹⁵ in order to “help prospective immigrants establish stronger ties to francophone communities and local economic opportunities” (Government of Manitoba, 2019a, p. 1).

Regarding academic and policy research papers on francophone immigration in Canada, I have encountered two major challenges. Firstly, there are a limited number of papers focusing on francophone immigration policies in Manitoba; moreover, these papers do not cover the temporal scope of my research. Secondly, another group of interesting qualitative research papers on the experience of French-speaking newcomers in Canada are comparatively recent and mainly discussed through examining immigrant integration and retention policies in Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Alberta (Fourot, 2018; Huot, Veronis, Sall, Piquemal, & Zellama, 2020; IRCC, 2020d, 2020c, 2020f; Veronis & Huot, 2017).

To sum up, this chapter helps one understand what has been written about immigration policy is and what value it has in Canada and Manitoba particularly. Following the comprehensive review of various academic and grey literatures on the MPNP and FIS, I move forward to the empirical part of my study which starts with elaborating my theoretical framework based on two different theoretical schools of thought.

¹⁵ In English the organization’s name means the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter is dedicated to theories to be used in research analysis. Following Immanuel Kant, “[e]xperience without theory is blind, but theory without experience is mere intellectual play” (BrainyQuote.com, n.d.). Adapting the quote into public policy realm, theoretical knowledge without practical implementation is empty, while policy without a solid theoretical foundation is blind. Theories can play a crucial role in understanding and designing public policy.

Some theories point to the role that political institutions play in shaping policy. In this regard, I consider new institutionalism as the first relevant theory to understand political institutions and their relationship with public policy. Compared to the formal legal style of scholarship considered as “old” institutionalism, new institutional theory embraces various different approaches to explain the complex nature of institutions and their impacts.

The second school of thought is nudge theory developed by Thaler and Sunstein (2008) which serves as a basis of behavioural public policies. Following Strassheim’s extensive definition, behavioural public policies “includes all means and modes of public policy aiming at influencing human behavior by using insights from behavioral economics, behavioral sciences, psychology or neurosciences.” (Strassheim, 2020, p. 116). These “light-touch” interventions have become increasingly popular in recent years worldwide as they are addressed towards changing people’s behaviour for desirable public good (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008b).

These theoretical enterprises present two different approaches. New institutionalism focuses on institutions that shape and constrain policy options. In contrast, nudge theory, as a part of behavioral approach to public policy, mostly focuses on the individual level in order to develop efficient public policies for communities.

The chapter includes 3 sections. Sections one and two are dedicated to each of the given theoretical schools where their main thesis, importance and implementation in public policy, strengths and limitations are discussed. The final section summarizes the analysis of these theoretical approaches and discusses their relevance to examine Manitoban immigration policy.

3.1 New Institutionalism

Renewed attention to the role of institutions has appeared and largely been discussed among political scientists over the past few decades. André Lecours in his book *New Institutionalism: Theory and Analysis* of 2005 gave a comprehensive explanation and presented key points of this contemporary institutional approach thorough the perspective of Canadian and/or Canadian-trained political scholars (Lecours, 2005b).

3.1.1 Main Thesis

New institutionalism is a theoretical enterprise. Its main goal is not only to examine what institutions are and how they function, but rather to explain political outcomes and make attempts towards generalization. New institutionalists argue that institutions represent an autonomous force in politics and their weight is felt on action and outcomes. For this reason, it is logical to consider institutions as a starting point in political analysis, or like independent or key variables (Lecours, 2005a).

The theory has a multi-faceted nature. According to Lecours (2005), it includes three main streams. First, the historical dimension is associated with the idea of ‘path dependency’ and explains continuity and the absence of policy change. It conceptualizes institutions as formal material structures (bureaucracies, parliament, legacies, courts, and etc.) who have an overwhelming power than individuals whose autonomy is strictly limited by the logic of institutional development (Lecours, 2005a). Second, the rational choice stream emphasizes the importance of institutions (defined as rules governing the political game) in the strategic calculations of actors. Rationalist scholars note that institutions offer opportunities for action and impose constraints. Finally, the sociological approach is focused on norms, culture, values, and ideas. It states that institutions “shape the perceptions of actors through this mechanism lead to behaviour that favours the reproduction of institutions” (Lecours, 2005a).

A wide range of studies have shown that historical institutionalism is used extensively in English Canadian political science. Institutions in Canada have endured well over time. the country’s commitment to Westminster system where parliament is seen as the supreme instance of authority as well as share of responsibilities between federal and federated governments reflect the idea of path dependency, which refers to a well-worn path that is hard to deviate from

unless there is a large exogenous shock like war or crisis (Lecours, 2005b; Montpetit, 2005; Smith, 2005).

Consequently, I suggest that the theory's historical dimension is most applicable approach for the following reasons. Firstly, it describes institutions as formal structures and it is relevant in case of immigration policy; being a shared jurisdiction, it is governed by federal and provincial governments. And secondly, the concept of 'path dependency' also describes well Canada's points-based immigration system founded in 1967 which still serves as a basis of current Express Entry platform. In addition, it goes in line with the continuity of main responsibilities shared between Canada and Manitoba in terms of attracting, admitting and retaining immigrants in the province. However, in light of an extensive literature review of previous immigration studies, it is difficult to claim that there was no policy change in immigration realms in Canada. This is a reason why we need to consider other theories.

Lecours (2005) distinguished European, American and Canadian perspectives towards institutions. In the European case new institutionalism "embodies continuity rather than rupture" (Lecours, 2005a) and has never abandoned the role of the state. In contrast, during 1960 and 1970s when behaviouralist movement thrived in the U.S. political science, institutions were marginalized and seen as "anathema to deductive logic, quantification, and grand theorizing" (Lecours, 2005a). Originally emerged in American academics, new institutionalism was often criticized due to the similarity with formal-legal style of scholarship also known as 'old institutionalism' "for being descriptive, a-theoretical and parochial" (Lecours, 2005a). Finally, Canadian new institutionalism integrates a wide range of perspectives on institutions in addition to formal-legal scholarship (Lecours, 2005a).

Smith (2005) distinguished four dimensions of new institutionalism: (1) descriptive with focus on describing political institutions in formal-legal terms; (2) normative with focus on assessing the institutions' work based on some defined standard; (3) explanatory with focus on crucial role of political institutions in policy-making; (4) sociological with focus on institutions' connection to the societies in which they operate. While analyzing English Canadian literature on Canadian politics, Smith concluded that descriptive and normative demonstrations of institutionalist analysis prevail, although explanatory and sociological dimensions occur in certain sub-fields such as policy studies (Smith, 2005).

I consider that the third explanatory dimension of new institutionalism is most relevant to the research questions, as it highlights an important role of federal and provincial governments (referred as two main institutions) in managing immigration policy. So, what are institutions? Following Atkinson (1993):

Institutions can be thought of as configurations or networks of organizational capacities (assemblies of personal, material, symbolic and informational resources available for collective action) that are deployed according to rules and norms that structure individual participation, govern appropriate behaviour, and limit the range of acceptable outcomes. (p. 7)

As it was previously noted, I assume that seeing institutions as formal structures is relevant to the given research objectives. This definition notes that governments are main institutions, and it also highlights their key role in administering immigration-related policy.

Small changes can lead to a big difference; this rule also works for institutions. Following the concept of path dependency, historical institutionalists tend to focus on reproduction of institutions through small incremental changes rather than their transformation (Lecours, 2005a, p. 11). A real policy change can occur in case of significant international events like wars or global crises that are usually referred as exogenous shocks. These events can disturb internal affairs, break the cycle of institutional reproduction, and lead to institutional transformations and political change (Lecours, 2005a, p. 12).

To explain a gradual change of institutions, a leading institutionalist Kathleen Thelen (2010) described a mechanism of incremental institutional change called “layering”. The scholar gave different definitions of this notion. Firstly, layering can refer to “partial renegotiation of some elements of a given set of institutions while leaving others in place” (Thelen, 2003, p. 225). Secondly, layering can be seen as “the crafting of new elements onto an otherwise stable institutional framework” (Thelen, 2004, p. 32). Thirdly, layering includes “active sponsorship of amendments, additions, or revisions to an existing set of institutions” (Streeck & Thelen, 2009, p. 24). Finally, “layering occurs when new rules are attached to existing ones, thereby changing the ways in which the original rules structure behaviour” (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010, p. 16). Regarding immigration policy, all these incremental changes happen when Canadian and Manitoban governments organize regular consultations on managing immigration flows,

particularly considering and integrating provincial economic needs when drafting annual federal immigration levels plan, which go in line with existing Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement. Thus, I conclude that the last forth definition of the concept of layering is the most applicable definition in my research.

A European scholar Heijden (2011) conceptualized layering as “a gradual institutional transformation through a process in which new elements are attached to existing institutions and so gradually change their status and structure. It is essential that the new does not replace the old, but is added to it” (Van Der Heijden, 2011, p. 9). In contrast to path dependency, layering refers to smaller, informal, endogenous changes which can gradually transform any institution.¹⁶

In the realm of immigration policy, layering explains well slight policy shifts in Canada with no substantial change in an existing set of rules. For instance, it refers to introducing the Express Entry platform that facilitates Canada’s responsibility in selecting high-skilled immigrants. It also explains well the MPNP renewals of 2018 that correspond to Manitoba’s economic and labour needs. In addition, layering concept underlines annual consultations held between federal and provincial governments to determine major immigration targets to attract and retain immigrants in Manitoba. To sum up, layering explains best these incremental institutional changes compared to historical institutionalism. The concept of layering also explains how federal and provincial governments collaborate between each other to update existing policies.

Montpetit’s (2005) thesis on applying historical institutionalism to understand policymaking in Canada outlines the share of immigration-related responsibilities between Canada and Manitoba. He distinguished functional and jurisdictional federations based on methods of sharing competencies between federal and sub-federal governments. In case of functional federations, central government is responsible for policy formulation, while sub-federal governments handle policy implementation. In jurisdictional federations, the responsibilities are shared between jurisdictions; in other words, when both central and federated governments are responsible for policy formulation and implementation in a limited number of

¹⁶ Levasseur’s article on policy change related to the meaning of charity serves as a good example of applying an institutional perspective to public policy (Levasseur, 2012).

policy fields. Canada is seen as a prominent example of jurisdictional federation. Montpetit fairly claimed that:

Jurisdictional duplications and overlaps may justify the organization of frequent intergovernmental meetings, but in the end governments of jurisdictional federations normally possess the capacity to decide policy change alone in the sectors where they have jurisdiction. (p. 226)

The scholar concludes “political payoffs are often higher when governments decide to act unilaterally in a competitive way rather than cooperatively” (p. 226).

Montpetit’s vision on the cooperation between federal and provincial governments goes in line with how they manage immigration policy in Canada. Indeed, there are several overlaps in their responsibilities on attracting immigrants to Manitoba. For example, federal Express Entry platform and the MPNP have similar selection patterns. Manitoba can nominate candidates through the MPNP which in turn increases people’s chances to become a permanent resident in Canada. The scholar’s arguments also explain well why both governments organize annual meetings to discuss immigration targets. Nonetheless, these consultations provide useful information on provincial economic and labour needs for federal government who makes a final decision and set immigration targets, which are further announced through the IRCC Departmental Plan and Immigration Levels for the following years.

Why is it important to consider institutions? Firstly, new institutionalism theory helps us better understand the policy. Secondly, political institutions are the place where theory meets practice. In this regard, I consider new institutionalism as the most relevant theory to understand political institutions and their relationship with public policy. Compared to formal legal style of scholarship considered “old” institutionalism, new institutional theory embraces various approaches to explain the complex nature of institutions.

Based on this theory’s diverse nature, I conclude that the historical dimension and layering concept correspond best to my research objectives. The historical dimension provides a clear definition of institutions seen as federal and provincial governments who play a crucial role in immigration policymaking. It also refers to the continuity of Canada-Manitoba Agreement on sharing immigration-related responsibilities and holding regular consultations to consider

provincial labour and economic needs that can be met by immigrants. The layering concept supplements the historical approach by describing the incremental changes in immigration policy that Canada and Manitoba experienced between 2015 and 2019.

3.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages

New institutionalism is often criticized for being multi-dimensional which makes it an incoherent and non-unified theoretical school (Lecours, 2005a). For instance, historical institutionalists see institutions as formal material structures while sociological institutionalists contextualize institutions in terms of norms and values (Lecours, 2005a; Smith, 2005). In addition, rational institutionalists emphasize the role of actors who administer institutions and set the rules of the political game (Lecours, 2005a).

Indeed, the theory is “plural”, “heterogenous” and “irreducibly differentiated” (Lecours, 2005a). It embraces 3 different streams (historical, rational choice and sociological), which are not coherent and were developed in relative isolation to each other. However, all its streams consider institutions as a single key variable of any political analysis. Moreover, new institutionalism’s diversity gives it a tremendous scope and capacity to understand a wide range of political processes. Embracing traditional-historical political science, rational choice theory and sociology, new institutionalism serves as a meeting point in the evolution of these traditions; its multi-faceted nature perfectly reflects the complexity of politics.

To conclude, when applying new institutionalism in my research analysis, I refer to its historical dimension and layering concept. To reiterate the definitions, the historical dimension of new institutionalism notes that governments are main institutions who play a key role in administering immigration-related policy. The concept of layering refers to incremental, slight policy shifts that has no substantial impact on an existing set of rules.

3.2 Nudge theory

Nudge theory was developed by Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein and was well explained in the scholars’ book *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness* of 2008. Unlike prevailing rational choice supporters arguing that people are rational decision-makers, the scholars claim that “is surprisingly malleable [in other words, flexible] and

therefore dramatically influenced by context” (Soman, 2013, p. 1). As a result, they questioned where it is possible to create a context which would steer people to make better decisions for both themselves and the community in which they are living.

Based on the concepts of behavioral economics and social psychology, nudge theory refers to an individual’s behavior and decision-making processes. It explains why people behave in the ways that deviate from rationality as defined by classical economics. The scholars see nudges as little cues within the context of people’s everyday lives that can help them make better decisions. They are often inexpensive and simple to implement, and can be used by governments. Noteworthy, the purpose of nudging is not to replace conventional forms of regulation and legislation, but rather to act as a supplement to these mechanisms (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008a).

There is a wide range of scholarly sources examining the implication of the nudge approach in different public policy spheres. Several governments, including in Britain, the US, Canada, has begun to elaborate behaviourally informed policies and programs since 2010 (Policy Horizons Canada, 2017; Soman, 2013; Tannenbaum, Fox, & Rogers, 2017; Thaler & Sunstein, 2008b). To name a few of the behaviourally driven initiatives, the US Save More Tomorrow retirement savings program¹⁷ has shown to outperform other savings programs (Soman, 2013; Tannenbaum et al., 2017). Due to high demand on behaviourally informed interventions, the Behavioural Insights Team, originally founded as a government unit in the UK, has grown up into a global enterprise which serves to apply behavioural insights to inform policy, improve public services and deliver positive results for people and communities. Nowadays this Nudge Unit has offices in Australia, France, New Zealand, Singapore, the US and Canada, and collaborates with various public and private stakeholders (Behavioural Insights Team, n.d.).

Halpern (2015) defined three reasons why nudging has gone mainstream:

¹⁷ Also known as SMarT program, it was designed by Thaler and Benartzi to empower people to save more by circumventing various psychological obstacles. One of key findings states that a high portion (nearly 80%) of those offered the plan joined and remained in (Benartzi & Thaler, 2004).

First, as non-psychologists they [Thaler and Sunstein] helped to break the ideas out of psychology, and applied them in an accessible form to problems that faced economists and lawmakers. Second, they blended into these existing literatures new ideas from ‘behavioural economics’, including a more formal recognition of the widespread power of defaults and ‘choice architecture’ – or the way in which choices are presented to people. Third, they engaged directly in policy. (p. 39)

Soman (2013, p. 2) concluded that “nudge is gaining a toehold in making real policy changes”. Indeed, it is hard to neglect the importance of behavioral insights for public policy. Given the fact that every policy is meant to be towards people’s benefit, examining individuals’ behaviour first can contribute to further successful application to a broader organizational perspective, which is particularly relevant in public administration.

3.2.1 Main Thesis

Nudge theory could be best explained by a contradictory term “libertarian paternalism” (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008a, p. 5). By using term “libertarian”, they claim that “people should be free to do what they like and opt out of undesirable arrangements if they want to do so” (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008a, p. 5). The paternalism is explained by the claim that “it is legitimate for choice architects [government] to try to influence people’s behavior in order to make their lives longer, healthier, and better” (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008a, p. 5). As a result, paternalistic policies are those aimed to influence individuals to make better decisions as judged both by themselves and policy-makers.

It is important to clarify what we count as a nudge. Thaler and Sunstein (2008b) give a broad and general definition: “nudge is any aspect of choice architecture [in other words, decision-making process] that alters people’s behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives” (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008b, p. 6). In contrast, Hansen (2016) distinguished “nudge” from “nudging”. Following him, “a nudge is any part of choice architecture that should not affect behavior in principle [according to standard economic theory], but does so in practice”, while “nudging is the systematic and evidence-based development and implementation of nudges in creating behavior change” (Hansen, 2016, pp. 1–2). Thus, nudging is a continuous process that serves to evaluate the

efficiency of nudge interventions as well as “to examine the potential real-world feasibility and applicability of behavioral insights in public policy field” (Hansen, 2016, pp. 1–2).

In this regard, there are key three key characteristics of nudge interventions: (1) redirect individual decisions by slightly altering choice conditions; (2) use rationality failures instrumentally and (3) mitigate the unfavourable effects on these failures (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008b). To count an intervention as a nudge it should be “easy and cheap to avoid”, which in turn makes it more effective and cost-efficient (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008b, p. 6). In other words, nudging interventions has no mandatory nature like policies; they are optional, which means that people are free to decide whether follow them or not. The authors emphasize the importance of the context or environment in which people make decision. For instance, by placing fruits and natural juice on a top shelf (more visible for school students) and candies and pop drinks on a lower shelf at a school canteen display, the school management offered a better and most importantly healthy choice for its students who were still free to choose a whatever drink they want.

Many examples show how changes in the environment or context can influence behaviour without requiring significant changes to financial incentives or restricting freedom of choice. Soman (2013) noted that there are two choice subsets: “should” versus “want” choices. For instance, people should be honest in paying taxes, work hard, eat healthy food, but often they want to do the opposite. Taking this into account, a gentle form of policy intervention could help to construct the right context to diminish discrepancies between the “should” and “want” options (Soman, 2013).

Following Ruggeri et al. (2018, p. 4), “policies are population-based interventions that aim to guide behaviour to the optimum outcome in the most efficient way over the lifespan of the choice”. In other words, policies are the strategies and approaches that government takes to achieve desired outcomes on population levels. Policies are often discussed and compared with laws and regulations. While regulations disallow certain behaviour models, which would be punished if violated (‘the do not’), policies are an active attempt to discourage a behaviour leaving room for other options (‘the do’) (Ruggeri et al., 2018, pp. 6–7).

Following Leslie Pal (2014, p. 130), “policy design is about choosing the most appropriate instrument to deal with the policy problem as it has been defined in order to achieve a given

policy deal”. He noted two key criteria in policymaking: *effectiveness* reached by using *the least resources* (Pal, 2014, p. 130). In a similar vein, Ruggeri et al. (2018, p. 4) noted that “policies seek to either optimize (gaining the most through using up the least of finite resources) or maximize (greatest result based on available resources, typically irrespective of expense) outcomes”. The scholars also claim that policies seek to achieve consistency and effectiveness of choice and behavior (Ruggeri et al., 2018, p. 7).

Along the same lines, John (2018) juxtaposes government tools and the behavioural public policy reform agenda:

Behavioural public policy can reshape the information environment of public policy, which requires the simultaneous implementation of steps in a causal chain, where there are a variety of instruments to be deployed, which range across laws, commands, incentives, organizational levels, and networks. The tools can operate in a customary manner, with the key decision being about their authorization. But with behavioural insights, it is possible to redesign them so they function much better, whether operating outside the organisation on citizens or other organizations, or inside the organisation for its operating procedures and internal communications. (pp. 89–90)

3.2.2 Advantages and disadvantages

Nudging is often contrasted to two policy-making instruments: economic incentives (taxes, rewards) and restrictions (bans on behaviour). Compared to these traditional instruments, the main advantage of nudging is that behavioural policy interventions “nudge” desired behaviours without meaningfully altering material incentives or limiting freedom of choice (Tannenbaum et al., 2017). Indeed, government as its people’s main choice architect can affect their behaviour through various policies and even limit their freedom of choice by banning on certain behaviour.

Opponents of the theory mostly focus on ethical use of behavioural policy interventions by noting that “nudges are manipulative and coercive” (Tannenbaum et al., 2017). However, surveys in European countries and the USA found general public support for behavioural policy interventions, particularly when compared with conventional policy tools such as taxes and mandates (Tannenbaum et al., 2017). Moreover, the research showed that even experienced policymakers exhibit partisan nudge bias:

People tend to view nudges as more unethical, coercive and manipulative when illustrated by policy objectives they oppose compared with objectives they support, or when told that such behavioural interventions have been enforced by a policymaker they oppose compared with one they support. (p. 3)

The main argument of nudge opponents is that nudging is manipulative and coercive; it was characterized as ‘propaganda and mind control’ (Tannenbaum et al., 2017, p. 1). It may be partially explained by the fact that behavioural interventions are based on psychological knowledge of human behaviour. Nudge critics concern on this implicit direction of people’s behaviour compared to other policy tools. Nonetheless, the main purpose of all behavioural policy interventions remains the same – make changes for public good. Given the fact that policies are designed by people (policymakers) for people (citizens), nudges can be seen as policy tools that maintain or increase freedom of choice.

To sum up this section of the chapter, let’s reiterate key definitions. Compared to new institutionalism, nudge theory is relatively recent scholarship which becomes more and more applicable in different spheres, including policy. Compared to other policy instruments, nudge is a behavioural policy intervention that leads towards desired behaviours without meaningfully altering material incentives or limiting freedom of choice.

3.3 Summary

The aforementioned analysis of two theoretical schools can be summarized in the following table.

Table 3

New institutionalism and Nudge theory

Characteristics	Theories	
	New institutionalism	Nudge theory
Key points	institutions are the key variable in policy analysis	human behaviour is a starting point for analysis of public policy key role of context in decision making

	<p>pervasive influence of institutions on human behaviour</p> <p>institutions shape actions</p> <p>path dependency explains continuity in policies</p> <p>layering – small, endogenous, incremental changes in institutions can alter or shape current paths</p>	<p>libertarian paternalism</p> <p>nudges are little cues to help people make better decisions</p> <p>use rationality failures; human acts irrationally</p> <p>supplement to conventional forms of regulation and legislation</p>
Advantages	<p>multidimensional approach towards politics – integrates historical, rationalist and sociological streams</p> <p>actors adapt to institutional frameworks, favouring institutional continuity</p> <p>institutions are seen as governments; analytical clarity as per historical stream</p>	<p>rapidly evolving and popular approach in policymaking</p> <p>simple, efficient and cost-efficient</p> <p>flexibility in determining nudge forms</p>

So why did I choose these theories to analyze Manitoba's immigration policy?

The major argument of new institutionalism stating the key role of institutions in policy analysis seems relevant and applicable in case of immigration policy. The theory also gives a clear definition of institutions. Based on theory's historical dimension, I see the federal government (Canada) and provincial government (Manitoba) as key institutions that shape immigration policy. As per the agreement's preamble, the Government of Canada is represented by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Government of Manitoba is represented by the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 1). Noteworthy, given the fact that institution is the key term in this research, I consider the aforementioned ministries as departments within the federal and provincial governments seen as main institutions. Despite the change in ministries' titles, the share of responsibilities between governments remains the same. In addition, the theory's exploratory approach draws our

attention to the governments' interests which underpin governments' actions and policies. For instance, for the federal government the MPNP serves as a policy instrument to disperse immigrants across the country, while Manitoba sees newcomers as a key source of province's economic development.

The layering concept is another element of new institutionalism that is relevant for the research analysis; it explains well incremental policy changes in Canadian immigration policy between 2015 and 2019. The MPNP renewals and recent federal Francophone Immigration Strategy are tangible examples of small, endogenous policy shifts which do not completely transform the policy itself.

Institutions are involved in every dimension of politics, so they mould political processes every step of the way. The cleavage of responsibilities between federal and provincial governments, particularly in terms of immigration policy, makes new institutionalism the most relevant theory to apply. In this regard, the theory well describes the federal government structure of Canada and especially the federal-provincial relationships. Finally, the multidimensional nature of new institutionalism helps to explain the complexity of federal-provincial interactions and sharing immigration-related responsibilities.

In contrast to new institutionalism, nudge theory stems from the rationalist school of thought and refers to managing and directing human behaviour. It has a more individualistic approach and suggests that an individual and his/her needs are a starting point for policy analysis.

Nudge has many similarities with a policy objective. It is not restricting some action as a law or legal regulation; instead, it is saying what is better to do in order to achieve a goal. Governments (both federal and provincial authorities) serve as a bridge between labour market, local communities and immigrants. From nudge theory perspective, governments are key "choice architects" who nudge immigrants to choose and settle in a province through various activities, including but not limited to immigration information sessions for temporary residents in Manitoba.

It is hard to neglect the importance of behavioral insights for public policy. Despite their small impact, the light-touch interventions are significant and valuable; these effects can also

cumulative over time (John, 2018). Given the fact that every policy is meant to be towards people's benefit, looking first at individuals' behaviour can contribute to further successful application to a broader organizational perspective, which is particularly relevant in public administration. I consider that nudge theory may fit into the current study because of its popularity, simplicity and efficiency in solving public policy issues.

Based on the thorough review of nudge-related literature, I concluded that nudge was largely applied in several fields (e.g. sustainable development, food choices, organ donor schemes, etc.), except immigration. However, I argue that nudge theory is relevant in managing immigration issues as well. As immigration is a shared jurisdiction in Canada, both federal and provincial governments are seen as main "choice architects" who are responsible for meeting labour market needs as well as individual immigrants' needs; Canadian citizens' interests are taken by default by considering the demographic projections. Given the fact that there are several immigration pathways, I find it interesting to apply nudge theory in the current study to analyze how governments might alter behaviour of potential immigrants, who are in their turn potential citizens of Canada.

To sum up, public policies are aimed to solve some issues and serve for public benefit. They are created by people (government, policymakers) for people (population, citizens). Both theories agree on a crucial role of governments which design and implement policies that shape public behaviour.

In this chapter I have examined two theoretical approaches, new institutionalism and nudge theory, and explained why they are relevant to help analyze Manitoba's immigration policy. From theories we move to the empirical part of the research as the following chapter describes the research methodology.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology is commonly considered as an important part in any research. To write a quality paper, a researcher should find and apply the most relevant and suitable instrument to examine the study topic. After a thorough literature review, I conclude that there are many studies dedicated to Canadian immigration policy, particularly on the MPNP theme; however, these topics were mostly examined through either a scoping review or a comparative approach, and therefore were barely studied from a theoretical perspective.

In the scientific community there is a longstanding dilemma on comparing qualitative versus quantitative methods. Bryman as cited by Pierce notes that “quantitative research is hard and reliable, [while] qualitative research is deep and rich” (Pierce, 2011b, p. 40). As this study is more exploratory in nature (focus on unexplored theoretical aspects of immigration programs) and contains a large portion of theory-based analysis, I consider that qualitative methodology is the most effective way to address my research questions since it provides more in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon (Pierce, 2011a; Wesley, 2011). Consequently, I have designed my research by applying three qualitative methods:

- Case study, as the study is focused on two particular immigration programs (MPNP and FIS);
- Documentary analysis, as I refer to various government documents related to each of the policies;
- Thematic analysis, as I apply two theories to analyze collected government texts.

The remainder of the chapter explains each of the given methods, what advantages and disadvantages the methods have, what sources are going to be used and how they are further analyzed.

4.1 Case study (MPNP and FIS)

Case study method is also known as “a sample of one” or “a building block of empiric research” (Pierce, 2011a, p. 55). It narrows study to one particular case and provides the basic information to help to answer the research question (Pierce, 2011a). Pierce (2011a) points out two important requirements for case study research: self-containment and typicality. The first

factor requires that the variables should be easily distinguished and be independent from external factors. In other words, the researcher should make an initial examination of his/her case study and make sure to exclude any other exceptional factors that may affect it. In my case studies I follow this requirement. I distinguish the MPNP and its francophone element (aimed to attract French-speaking newcomers) which is part of the Francophone Immigration Strategy. In addition, in my analysis I exclude any other federally-governed immigration pathways, which can be considered as external factors. The typicality means that chosen case studies should be similar or typical to other potential case studies (Pierce, 2011a, p. 55). This requirement is also considered as there are 10 other provincial and territorial nominee programs that address similar immigration objectives and are managed in collaboration with federal authorities (IRCC, n.d.-c).

Given the fact that my research questions are focused on the immigration policy of one particular province and contain words leading to exploratory qualitative research, I claim that case study method is beneficial as it gives an opportunity to narrow down the study to particular policies. This focus helps me further analyze given policies more in depth, and this corresponds to exploratory nature of current study.

The research is concentrated on two particular immigration programs, so I consider them as two case studies. The first case study, the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (the MPNP) is an immigration program which stems from the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement and is addressed towards meeting provincial economic and labour needs through welcoming newcomers to Manitoba. The second case study, the Francophone Immigration Strategy, is a comprehensive immigration plan presented by the Government of Canada to attract and retain more French-speaking immigrants into mainly anglophone regions except Quebec (relevant in case of Manitoba). Both programs are described in detail in Chapter 2.

It is also fair to note limitations of the case study method. Following Pierce, the main weakness of single case study is ‘generalisability’ (Pierce, 2011a, p. 53). It means that the conclusions made upon analysis of the MPNP may not be applicable to other Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP). Thus, as a solution to the potential limitation a ‘thick/think approach’ may be implemented; in simple words, the findings can be further tested while studying similar province’s nominee programs (Pierce, 2011a, pp. 53–54). As I mentioned earlier, ten other Canadian provinces and territories implement the PNP program to attract and retain high-skilled

immigrants who meet their labour and economic needs (IRCC, n.d.-c). In this regard, there may be some common trends with other Manitoba-like provinces such as Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia.

4.2 Documentary analysis

When it comes to data collection, I implement the documentary analysis method. It is a form of qualitative research where documents are considered as a main data source. This method also highlights an important role of researcher who interprets gathered documents to give them voice and meaning around some research subject (Bowen, 2009). Concerning document types, O’Leary (2014) distinguishes 3 categories: public records (policy manuals, strategic plans, annual reports), personal documents (journals, emails, etc.) and physical evidence (diaries, handbooks, training materials).

The governments, Canada and Manitoba, are the main institutions and “choice architects” in the policymaking process. Since I apply a theoretical framework (new institutionalism and nudge) to analyze two immigration programs, it is crucial to refer to original data sources – government texts – to better understand and analyze the case studies. Let’s remind ourselves the research questions:

1. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the MPNP?
2. To what extent does nudge theory explains the MPNP?
3. To what extent does nudge theory explains the FIS?
4. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the FIS?
5. Which theory helps us better understand both policies?

Following these questions, one can conclude that main research objective of this study is to better understand how governments shape immigration policy by analyzing through a theoretical lens two Manitoba-specific immigration programs. In this regard, the rationale behind choosing documentary analysis is linked to the fact that government documents are key and original data sets which gives me an opportunity to explore governments’ language, particularly how they present and talk about these programs and what ideas lay behind those texts.

When it comes to choosing documents, I first referred to previous studies on or involving the MPNP and Francophone Immigration Program. Then, I looked through all resources available on federal and provincial websites – the IRCC and *Immigrate to Manitoba* websites respectively. Based on these resources I chose only documents that are relevant to my case studies. Consequently, my data set consists of the following documents:¹⁸

MPNP-related documents

1. IRCC. (June 2003) *Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement*.
2. IRCC. (June 2003) *Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement. Annex B – Provincial Nominees*
3. Government of Manitoba. (n.d.) *MPNP Policy and Procedures*¹⁹
4. Government of Manitoba. (November 25, 2016) *Premier Announces Improvements To Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program*. News Release
5. Government of Manitoba. (April 6, 2017) *Province Improves Standards, Renews Provincial Nominee Program*. News Release
6. Government of Manitoba. (November 15, 2017). *Province Continues To Make Provincial Nominee Program More User Friendly*. News Release

FIS-related documents

1. IRCC. (June 2003) *Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement*
2. Government of Manitoba. (n.d.) *MPNP Policy and Procedures*²⁰
3. IRCC. (June 6, 2017) *Express Entry improvements: Spring 2017*. Retrieved from https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2017/03/express_entry_improvementspring2017.html
4. Government of Manitoba. (November 15, 2017). *Province Continues To Make Provincial Nominee Program More User Friendly*. News Release

¹⁸ The document list is structured in chronological order as time is an important factor in new institutionalism.

¹⁹ Despite the fact that this document does not have a publication year, I assume it was introduced in 2015 based on the date that was mentioned in the last section of the document.

²⁰ see the previous note

5. IRCC. (2018) *Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future*.
6. IRCC. (March 2, 2018) *FPT Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec*
7. IRCC. (2019) *Francophone Immigration Strategy: Meeting Our Objectives*
8. IRCC. (July 3, 2019). *Canada supports Francophone minority communities*. News Release
9. Government of Manitoba. (July 26, 2019). *Société de la francophonie manitobaine Selected to Provide Pre-Arrival Services*. News Release
10. Government of Manitoba. (November 15, 2019). *Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program Accepting Francophone Exploratory Visit Applications*. News Release

While selecting documents for analysis, I aimed to gather diverse and programs-related texts in order to have a wide array of documents and also ensure the research quality. As per the research objectives, my data sets are made up by public records. The collected data can be divided into 2 main groups. The first group refers to policies, ministerial instructions and agreements on Canadian and Manitoban immigration policy. For instance, one of the major documents here would be the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement and its relevant annex on Provincial Nominees. The second group of documents involves press releases of federal department (IRCC) and of the Government of Manitoba. Here is the list of chosen government documents that are specific to each case study.

The document list embraces diverse public records like federal and provincial legislation, regulations, reports and press releases; however, this fits in my research objective which refers to better understanding of Canadian and Manitoban government perspectives towards shaping immigration policy in Manitoba. In addition, the diversity of documents varying from the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement of 2003 to comparatively recent provincial press releases, refers to various target audiences and the temporal scope of my research (from 2015 to 2019). The limitation can be eliminated through considering additional data sources collected through other qualitative research methods (e.g. via interviews with public servants who are directly involved into policymaking process). This is not under the scope of current research, but it can serve as an insight for a future study on similar immigration programs.

Concerning limitations of documentary analysis, O’Leary (2014) argues there are two main issues in the analysis of documents. First, the researcher should be cautious about bias that he/she as well as the author of the document possess in order to guarantee the research objectivity. Indeed, federal and provincial authorities who are key authors of the documents to be analyzed may exaggerate the outcomes of their immigration programs. However, as a researcher I will try to mitigate those biases based on the findings of previous studies on similar topics. The literature review will serve as a solid foundation of my objective analysis of government texts. Second, researcher should be able to determine the “unwitting” evidence or in other words latent content of the document. It means the style, tone, facts, agenda, and opinions that occur in the document (O’Leary, 2014). In this regard, I keep writing comments on the author’s perspective, and also note and review my own observations. In addition, these records are important details that are helpful to determine and analyze unwitting evidence hidden in those documents.

Document analysis is a useful and beneficial research method since documents are stable data sources that can be read and reviewed several times and remain independent from researcher’s influence or analysis itself (Bowen, 2009). Once all relevant documents are collected, it is time to analyze the data through thematic analysis.

4.3 Thematic analysis

Based on its popularity, thematic analysis constitutes “a cornerstone of qualitative data analysis” (Herzog, Handke & Hitters, 2019, p. 385). According to Hawkins (2018, p. 4), “[t]hematic analysis involves describing the themes present and interpreting how the themes and data present results that extend existing literature on the subject under investigation.” Herzog et al. (2019, p. 385) note that this method refers to “the identification and analysis of patterns of meaning (themes) and constitutes a widely applicable, cost-effective and flexible tool for exploratory research.” The outcomes of thematic analysis can extend existing knowledge, impact policy, and improve communication practices. As understanding and locating themes is foundational to additional qualitative methods, thematic analysis is often employed alongside other modes of inquiry (Hawkins, 2018, p. 6). In this regard, I apply this method with case study and documentary analysis.

Thematic analysis can be conducted inductively or deductively (Hawkins, 2018, p. 3). The inductive approach means “building themes directly from the data under investigation”

(Hawkins, 2018, p. 3). In other words, any reoccurring topics, ideas, or patterns (themes) are considered relevant as long as they align with the research goal (Hawkins, 2018, p. 3). In contrast, deductive approach narrows down researcher's analysis of data based on an existing theoretical framework, or typology (Hawkins, 2018, p. 3). Given the fact that I have 4 specific research questions and base my analysis on the elaborated theoretical framework, I conclude that inductive approach is the most proper way to conduct my analysis.

The following table presents the elaborated theoretical framework which is going to be applied in the empirical part of the research. It summarizes the key points of two chosen theories and refers to their advantages which explain why they are relevant in immigration policy context. The document analysis presented in Chapter 5 is based on this theoretical framework. To specify, relying on the content of each government document I define common themes that are further analyzed according to this theoretical framework.

Table 3

New institutionalism and Nudge theory

Characteristics	Theories	
	New institutionalism	Nudge theory
Key points	institutions are the key variable in policy analysis pervasive influence of institutions on human behaviour institutions shape actions path dependency explains continuity in policies layering – small, endogenous, incremental changes in institutions can alter or shape current paths	human behaviour is a starting point for analysis of public policy key role of context in decision making libertarian paternalism nudges are little cues to help people make better decisions use rationality failures; human acts irrationally supplement to conventional forms of regulation and legislation

Advantages	<p>multidimensional approach towards politics – integrates historical, rationalist and sociological streams</p> <p>actors adapt to institutional frameworks, favouring institutional continuity</p> <p>institutions are seen as governments; analytical clarity as per historical stream</p>	<p>rapidly evolving and popular approach in policymaking</p> <p>simple, efficient and cost-efficient</p> <p>flexibility in determining nudge forms</p>
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Flexibility is the main advantage of this method; it gives a researcher flexibility to decide how the method is used and for what purpose (Hawkins, 2018). However, it is crucial to maintain a consistent approach to analysis and documenting this approach in order to meet trustworthiness criteria (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Given the fact that analysis is not a linear process, a researcher should go back and forth among the data and initial themes in order to conduct a quality study (Hawkins, 2018). Following Hawkins (2018, p. 3), “[r]ecording the steps one takes to develop themes, including analytical choices not to include items for theme development, are important to providing information on the researcher’s interpretive process. Records kept of steps taken indicate consistency in analysis and provide an analytical trail.” To ensure this consistency, I keep my records to explain how I plan my analysis, how I use theoretical framework in my analysis, what themes I am going to focus on, and how I interpret my findings. These observations are integrated and presented in the following Chapter 5.

There are two other strengths of thematic analysis; it is widely applicable and cost-effective method for an exploratory research, which makes it “the essential starting point of virtually all qualitative data analysis” (Herzog et al., 2019, p. 385). Based on numerous studies on communications, media, cultural industries policy, one can conclude that the method is suitable to analyze a large variety of qualitative data as well as within various theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Herzog et al., 2019). It is considered as a foundational method as it provides cores skills to conduct many other forms of qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Herzog et al., 2019).

To conclude, in this chapter I have explained in detail my qualitative research design. Considering advantages and disadvantages of case study, documentary and thematic analysis methods help me to mitigate any biases and possible risks.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings collected through examining the case-related government documents varying from a bilateral agreement to government press releases.

It is clear that the nature of the documents is diverse, ranging from the regulations to news release. The main selection criterion was relevance to the immigration policies chosen for this research (MPNP and FIS). It is also important to note that the ‘success’ or outcomes of the immigration policies are beyond my research scope; the key focus of the study is analysis of the documents by analyzing their language and key points.

The documents are presented in chronological order since it is a crucial factor for the new institutional perspective. Most of the documents correspond to the research temporal scope (2015-2019) except for the Canada-Manitoba Agreement of 2003. I include this document into my analysis as it serves as a basis of the MPNP and explains how immigration-related responsibilities are shared between federal and provincial governments. It is also evident that some documents are presented in both case studies. Despite the fact that the FIS is a collaborative policy, I distinguish the francophone immigration components from the MPNP and analyze them separately in Chapter 5.2.²¹ The analysis is case-based (each case study is presented as a separate section of the chapter) and constructed in the following way: first, I present the objective and key points of a document, and then I examine them through the theoretical lens (new institutionalism and nudge theory).

To reiterate the theoretical frameworks, let’s recall the key terms and points of each theory.

New institutionalism:

- idea of path dependency, referring to continuity in policy
- similarity with formal-legal style of scholarship

²¹ That is why Canada-Manitoba Agreement and the MPNP Policy and Procedures appear in both case-related document lists.

- institutions are seen as formal material structures (the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba) who have an overwhelming power than individuals whose autonomy is strictly limited by the logic of institutional development (Lecours, 2005a)
- crucial role of political institutions in policy-making
- a concept of layering, explaining incremental institutional change, which occurs when “new rules are attached to existing ones, thereby changing the ways in which the original rules structure behaviour” (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010, p. 16).
- Canada seen as a jurisdictional federation where the responsibilities are shared between jurisdictions, where both central and federated governments are responsible for policy formulation and implementation in a limited number of policy fields. “Jurisdictional duplications and overlaps may justify the organization of frequent intergovernmental meetings.” (Montpetit, 2005, p. 226)

Nudge theory:

- importance of the context or environment in which people make decision
- government is people’s main “choice architect” which can affect their behaviour through various policy interventions
- a concept of “libertarian paternalism”: policies are aimed to influence individuals (who are free to decide whether follow these policies or not) to make better decisions as judged both by themselves and policy-makers (federal and Manitoba governments).
- nudge is a behavioural policy intervention that leads towards desired behaviours without meaningfully altering material incentives or limiting freedom of choice
- the purpose of nudging is not to replace conventional forms of regulation and legislation, but rather to act as a supplement to these mechanisms
- nudging interventions is optional and has no mandatory nature like regulation and legislation
- nudging is similar to policies, since “policies are population-based interventions that aim to guide behaviour to the optimum outcome in the most efficient way over the lifespan of the choice”, and policies seek to achieve consistency and effectiveness of choice and behaviour (Ruggeri et al., 2018, p. 4).

I define three main themes: (1) immigrant attraction, (2) immigrant selection, and (3) immigrant admission. Each of these themes is further examined through new institutionalist and nudge approaches. Some themes contain several sub-themes; for instance, when it comes to immigrant attraction, sharing responsibilities between federal governments and types of immigrants can be presented as key sub-themes.

This chapter has three main sections. The first two sections are dedicated to in-depth analysis of cases – the MPNP and FIS respectively. The last section concludes empirical part of the study and summarizes the key findings.

5.1 The MPNP documents

1. The first document is the *Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement* which serves as a foundation of the MPNP. It presents general provisions and explains how immigration responsibilities are shared between the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba. In the document it is noted that the Government of Canada (or simply Canada) is represented by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Government of Manitoba (or simply Manitoba) is represented by the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Government of Canada, 2003). The agreement embraces 8 sections – I will refer to 5 sections that are relevant to my research purpose: 0.0 Preamble, 1.0 Purpose, Objectives and Definitions, 2.0 Immigration Programs and Planning, 3.0 Promotion and Recruitment, 8.0 General. In addition, the document has 3 annexes; based on the research objectives I will examine the Annex B on Provincial Nominees as a separate document since it includes important legal content on the MPNP implementation.

The selected document sections contain much relevant content which is presented in detail in the analysis table. The key points of the Agreement are further discussed according to the theme groups and through research theoretical lens.

Following section 1.0 (d), one of the Agreement objectives is “to share roles and responsibilities between Canada and Manitoba for promotion and recruitment” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 6). This reflects the notion of “jurisdictional federations” developed by an institutionalist Montpetit (2005, pp. 226–227) which explains regular collaboration between federal and federated authorities due to overlapping roles in responsibilities in a particular policy

field. In this particular case it refers to policies on immigrant attraction and selection. Furthermore, section 1.0 (k) states that the Agreement is aimed “to develop cooperation in facilitating movements of temporary workers and students to Manitoba” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 7). “Facilitating movements” fits in with the nudging technique to attract foreign workers and international students who are the most attractive immigrant category due to their valuable work and education experience in Canada.

As per section 0.17 (d) determining respective areas of activity of both governments, “Manitoba will exercise its responsibilities in the development and implementation of programs; policies and legislation; facilitating promotion and recruitment of immigrants; determination of provincial nominees ... as set out in this Agreement” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 5). This quote clearly refers to all three themes and corresponds to institutional approach; it underlines a key role of institution (in this case Manitoba government) in shaping policies towards immigrant attraction, selection and admission.

Section 3 refers to joint promotion and recruitment activities of two governments in order to raise the profile of the province as a destination for immigration. As per section 3.9 (b), “Canada will provide information to Manitoba about optimum recruitment opportunities through Canadian missions abroad, in order to meet Manitoba’s needs” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 12). In addition, section 3.9 (e) declares that:

Canada will make all reasonable efforts to proactively manage the delivery of its program, bearing in mind federal priorities with respect to overall immigration targets, the mix of economic to non-economic landings, limitations related to the number of applications received and that can be processed by missions for immigrants destined to Manitoba and current processing times and priorities, to support the achievement of the Province’s annual objective to meet its annual immigration levels plan including its provincial nominee plan pursuant to section 2.4. (p. 13)

Section 3.10 states that “this Agreement does not preclude either party from undertaking promotion and recruitment activities independently” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 13). In other words, as both Canada and Manitoba are interested in the best and brightest immigrants into the province, their recruitment activities can be held in joint as well as individual way.

Section 0.6 states “Section 10(2) of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)* S.C. (Statutes of Canada) 2001 as amended, requires the Minister to consult with the provinces annually with respect to the number of foreign nationals in each class who will become permanent residents each year, their distribution in Canada taking into account regional economic and demographic requirements...” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 2). This in turn demonstrates that need for intergovernmental cooperation; federal government should take into account the province’s needs while developing a national immigration plan.

Section 0.16 notes that “Canada and Manitoba share mutual interest in (a) planning and coordinating their immigration activities, based on cooperation, consultation and information sharing, ... (c) working in partnership with stakeholders, including federal, provincial and municipal governments, educational institutions and nongovernmental organizations, ethnic organizations, communities, and employers to facilitate the attainment of immigration objectives...” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 4). This quote notes that both governments have mutual interest in high-skilled immigrants and highlights the important role of various stakeholders sharing same interests and collaborating in this policy field.

Section 1.4 (b) declares that “a reference to the *IRPA*²² or the *IRPR*²³ is a reference to that Act or those Regulations as amended from time to time” for the purpose of the Agreement (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 7). Amendments made to the Agreement and key immigration-related laws and regulations fit in incremental changes reflected in institutionalist layering concept (Thelen, 2003). These endogenous small modifications may have cumulative effect and lead to significant policy shift (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010; Van Der Heijden, 2011).

As per section 2, Canada plays a main role in establishing country’s immigration policy. Nevertheless, “Canada will recognize shared responsibilities for immigration and take into account Manitoba’s immigration planning including its demographic, social, and economic objectives and consider the particular needs of the Province” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 8). In addition, section 2.4 states that the province is responsible for developing a multi-year immigration levels plan, including for the MPNP plan, “based on the principle that immigration

²² *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*

²³ *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations*

to Manitoba should be at least proportional to its percentage of Canada's total population as determined by Statistics Canada on July 1st of the previous year" (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 9). Sections 2.8 and 2.11 confirms collaborative nature of interactions between the governments by stating that Canada consults with the provincial authorities in terms of national immigration policy and projections and that Manitoba participates in multilateral consultation processes related to developing or promoting national immigration initiatives (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 9-10).

Last eighth section of the Agreement embraces interesting content from the institutionalist perspective. Under section 8.3, "Canada will be open and transparent concerning its intention to enter into agreements with other provinces respecting immigration and Canada will provide, at Manitoba's request, other federal provincial agreements made under Section 8 (1) of the IRPA, and will negotiate amendments to this Agreement, taking into consideration the different needs and circumstances of the provinces" (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 18-19). Section 8.5 confirms that "[t]his Agreement may be amended by the mutual written consent of the parties" (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 19). Last but not least, following section 8.9, "[t]his agreement supersedes the prior Agreement dated October 22, 1996".²⁴

From the theoretical perspective, it is obvious that new institutionalism is more relevant in understanding this legal document than nudge theory. Firstly, the Agreement goes in line with previous legal documents – IRPA and IRPR; this reflects the idea of path dependency. Secondly, the collaborative nature of intergovernmental relations fits in the notion of "jurisdictional federations" developed by an institutionalist Montpetit (2005, pp. 226–227). Following his thesis, "jurisdictional duplications and overlaps may justify the organization of frequent intergovernmental meetings, but in the end governments of jurisdictional federations normally possess the capacity to decide policy change alone in the sectors where they have jurisdiction" (Montpetit, 2005, p. 227). This directly relates to the organization of bi- and multi-lateral consultations while designing, planning and implementing immigration policy. The last part of

²⁴ The bilateral agreement of 1996 was the initial document framing federal and provincial responsibilities. However, I preferred considering the updated version of the Agreement in my analysis since it is more relevant in terms of the research temporal scope.

Montpetit's quote refers to the aforementioned section 3.10 which states that both governments are able to undertake promotion and recruitment activities unilaterally.

It is important to note that despite the partnership between the governments, the share of responsibilities is not equal. Thus, Canada plays a major role in designing and implementing the immigration policy towards attracting newcomers (reviewing provincial plan, managing recruitment activities overseas), while Manitoba's role is more supplemental limited to planning the annual MPNP targets. Moreover, making final decision on admitting qualified immigrants remains the federal (and not provincial) responsibility.

2. The following document for analysis is *Annex B – Provincial Nominees* of the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement. It is aimed to define roles and responsibilities of Canada and Manitoba in terms of implementing the MPNP “as provided for by the Provincial Nominee Class in the IRPR” (IRCC, 2003, p. 2). The document contains 8 sections (Preamble, Definitions, Purpose and Objectives, Promotion and Recruitment, Assessment and Nomination, Temporary Admission to Facilitate Promotion, Program Evaluation and Information Exchange, General) and I am going to particularly focus on the sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 as they embrace information on attracting, selecting and admitting immigrants. Here are the key points of the document:

- Both governments recognize that “Manitoba is best positioned to determine the specific economic needs of the Province vis-à-vis immigration” (IRCC, 2003, p. 1).
- The MPNP is “a jointly administered immigration class, where Manitoba has an active role in the processing, which may include promotion and nomination, and to acknowledge that both parties have an interest in the process” (IRCC, 2003, p. 2).
- The MPNP management is based on “(a) Manitoba’s annual immigration levels plan..., (b) Canada’s immigration projections, and (c) statutory requirements” (IRCC, 2003, p. 3).
- As per section 4.2, Manitoba is responsible for undertaking “targeted active recruitment initiatives” like participating at trade fairs, “provision of information on a Manitoba-maintained website to prospective immigrants who intend to reside and work in Manitoba”, “preparation of information for staff working in Canadian missions abroad”, “targeted promotion to temporary residents present in Manitoba” (IRCC, 2003, p. 3).
- Following sections 4.3 and 4.4, Canada also contributes into the MPNP success by “directing potential applicants in permanent and temporary streams through Canada’s

immigration-related websites to visit the Manitoba website”, distributing Manitoba’s promotional materials at selected missions abroad, inviting Manitoba to various national initiatives, recognizing that “Manitoba may undertake its own promotion and recruitment activities consistent with the intent of the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement and this Annex” (IRCC, 2003, p. 4).

- Section 5.1 states that “Manitoba has the sole and non-transferable responsibility to assess and nominate candidates who, in Manitoba’s determination (a) will be of benefit to the economic development of Manitoba, and (b) have a strong likelihood of becoming economically established in Manitoba” (IRCC, 2003, p. 4).
- Canada, as per section 5.7, “agrees to process applicants nominated for Permanent Resident status by Manitoba as expeditiously as possible with a view to achieving targets that have been integrated into Canada’s annual delivery plan” (IRCC, 2003, p. 6).
- Following section 5.8, after receiving the Certificate of Nomination of Manitoba, Canada “will exercise the final decision” by determining the admissibility of the nominee through health, criminality and security check, and by issuing immigrant visa (IRCC, 2003, p. 6);
- According to section 6.1, “Canada and Manitoba may develop partnerships or projects that may include information sharing, facilitating exploratory visits, promotion and recruitment and support for regionalization” (IRCC, 2003, p. 7).

Like the Agreement itself, I argue that its Annex reflects to a greater extent new institutionalist perspective through the coherent share of responsibilities between federal and provincial governments. Thus, only Manitoba has a right to select and nominate MPNP candidates, while only Canada makes final decision on their admissibility. Regarding attracting potential immigrants, there are joint actions of both governments like facilitating exploratory visits to the province, promoting Manitoba destination in Canadian missions located abroad as well via the website content. These activities have similarities with nudging concept referring to the key role of the context in decision making process. Potential immigrants may have some doubts prior to a landing process, so an exploratory visit offers them a great possibility to learn more about Manitoba and the opportunities offered for them there.

3. The *MPNP Policy and Procedures* presented by the Government of Manitoba explains in detail how the Program is administered, particularly what the nomination process looks like. It contains some interesting information relevant to immigrant selection and admission:

- The MPNP offers to “qualified skilled workers, with characteristics indicating a strong potential of becoming economically established in Manitoba, an opportunity to be assessed as candidates who can make a positive long-term contribution to the provincial economy and are therefore nominated for Permanent Resident Status in Canada” (Government of Manitoba, n.d., p. 1).
- “The MPNP is committed to treating all applicants fairly and equitably and reviewing or assessing the applications in accordance with program criteria in a context guided by principle of the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement Annex on Provincial Nominees.” (Government of Manitoba, n.d., p. 12).
- Refusal under the MPNP “does not prevent applicants from applying to CIC [IRCC nowadays] for admission to Canada under a federal immigration class” (Government of Manitoba, n.d.-c, p. 11).
- “All eligible candidates interested in applying to the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) must first submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the program. The EOIs are entered into a pool and on a regular basis, the highest-ranking candidates in each category are issued Letters of Advice to Apply (LAA), enabling them to submit a full application, provided they are not excluded for reasons that are described on the Immigratemanitoba.com website.” (Government of Manitoba, n.d., p. 2).
- The MPNP distinguishes 2 eligibility groups: core economic criteria eligibility (the applicant meets the minimum criteria of one of the MPNP streams) and Manitoba connection eligibility (the applicant has established a connection to the province due to ongoing employment, previous education or work, family or social ties, exploratory visit) (Government of Manitoba, n.d., p. 2).
- The assessment of MPNP applicants is based on “language proficiency, age, education, work experience and adaptability” (Government of Manitoba, n.d., p. 5).

It is clear that this document also reflects the new institutionalist approach as it strictly follows the principles of the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement. Manitoba, with its sole right to determine the nominees, prioritizes those immigrants who can bring long-term economical contribution thanks to established connections there like education, employment, and social ties. The program's selection criteria echo the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) of the federal Express Entry by giving preference to candidates with high education, language and work experience points.

However, unlike the CSR, the MPNP selection grid offers additional points under the Adaptability factor which gives more chances to stay and land in Manitoba for international students and temporary workers. If we look from the immigrant perspective, this factor serves as a nudging technique as it encourages them to apply for the program and increase their chances to become Canada's permanent resident by remaining in the province, they are familiar with. Lastly, the MPNP and Express Entry are not mutually exclusive programs; if an immigrant has not been nominated by the province, he/she still has a possibility to apply and be nominated by any federal immigration program.

4. The provincial news release of November 25, 2016 entitled *Premier Announces Improvements To Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program* was the first government communication related to the MPNP renewals. Unlike previously discussed legal documents, it reflects government vision of the MPNP and the goals it aims to achieve. Let's refer to the key points of the document:

- According to then premier Pallister, "[t]he renewals of MPNP will ensure our province continues to attract skilled workers and entrepreneurs with the potential to make the strongest contribution to our economy soon after their arrival in Canada" (p.1).
- The premier also noted that "the MPNP has made significant contributions to Manitoba's economy since its introduction in 1998." (p.1).
- The premier pointed out that these 'changes' are "part of a new Labour Market Strategy for Immigration' that focuses on: (1) innovative partnership with industry and post-secondary institutions that build pathways to employment for international students and skilled newcomers, including those in regulated occupations, to better prepare and match them to in-demand jobs in Manitoba; (2) the selection of skilled workers with high

[employment] potential ... and who meet education, training and language requirements; ... (4) the elimination of the current MPNP backlog by April 2017 to ensure all future applicants are processed in less than six months” (p.1).

- The premier stated that “Manitoba will work with the government of Canada to improve the speed with which visa applications are processed.” (p.1).

Speaking in general, by stating primarily the program renewals, the head of provincial government highlights the continuity of the MPNP, which was launched in 1998. In addition, Manitoba's new Labour Market Strategy for Immigration continues province's commitment to welcoming immigrants to meet local labour needs and can be seen as an incremental change in the existing policy (example of layering) with no significant transformation in program's objectives and administration. The MPNP renewals and cooperation between federal and provincial governments in terms of facilitating visa applications fits in new institutionalism theory which favours institutional continuity and explains the small endogenous changes in institutions. However, nudge theory also has its role here; it best explains government's cooperation with post-secondary institutions and local industries in order to retain international students and temporary foreign workers who have gained valuable work experience in Manitoba. The government's commitment to decrease time to process applications is another example of nudge which demonstrates Manitoba's interest in immigrants with high employment potential as well as required education, training and language skills.

5. The following provincial news release is of April 6, 2017 entitled *Province Improves Standards, Renews Provincial Nominee Program*. The document refers to the announcements made by the province's Education and Training Minister Ian Wishart regarding the renewed directions for the MPNP.

The Minister conceded that “[t]his program has been a valuable part of the immigration system since 1998, but in April 2016 a backlog of more than 5,100 applications had compiled, some dating as far back as 2013” (Government of Manitoba, 2017b, p. 1). By highlighting Manitoba's efforts to solve the issue, he also added that “[a]s of this month [April 2017], all candidates who submit complete applications to the program will be processed in six months or less” (Government of Manitoba, 2017b, p. 1).

Concerning the program renewals, Wishart noted that:

- “[t]he MPNP will include new pathways, supported by partnerships with post-secondary institutions that will encourage international students to choose training programs leading to in-demand jobs.” (Government of Manitoba, 2017b, p. 1)
- “a new online resource that will include an in-demand jobs list will be updated regularly according to provincial labour market analysis and real-time labour market information from industry groups and training partners. ...[It] will be published once approval is received from Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), in accordance with the Canada Manitoba Immigration Agreement.” (Government of Manitoba, 2017b, p. 1)
- “the program will continue providing additional points to applicants with close family ties in Manitoba who are able to demonstrate employable skills. The minister also confirmed, in response to community feedback, the MPNP will no longer consider having a close relative in a different province or territory as a risk factor and subtract points from applicants on this basis.” (Government of Manitoba, 2017b, p. 1)

As the previous news release, this document content refers to the MPNP renewals which can be explained best through the new institutionalist layering concept. By these incremental changes in the MPNP, the Government of Manitoba tries to retain those potential immigrants who have already been residing in the province. In addition, unlike the Premier’s communication, the Education and Training Minister points out the possibility to get additional points (as a result, more chances to be selected through the ranking system) for applicants with close family ties in Manitoba. This can be seen as a nudging technique to retain whole families in the province; it plays a crucial role in people’s decision-making process, particularly in communities with strong family values.

6. The last Manitoba’s press release for the MPNP case study is of November 15, 2017 with the title *Province Continues To Make Provincial Nominee Program More User Friendly*. The document refers to the communication presented by Education and Training Minister Ian Wishart on restructuring Manitoba’s economic immigration program to provide new pathways to permanent residence for international students and entrepreneurs. As entrepreneurs present business immigrants class, which is out of my research objective, I focus on the content related

to the MPNP updates related to international students who are the prominent representatives of high-skilled economic immigrant class. Here are the key points:

- The Minister noted “an agreement has been reached with the federal government to expand the MPNP to four application streams: international education, skilled worker in Manitoba, skilled worker overseas and business investor [the latest stream is out of the research scope].” (Government of Manitoba, 2017a, p. 1)
- “Effective April 2018, a new international education stream will include faster nomination pathways for graduates of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programs who are completing internships that support industry innovation”. Moreover, post-secondary international graduates from Manitoba colleges and universities “who find longer-term employment in an in-demand occupation consistent with their training will no longer have to work for six months before applying to the MPNP”. This new stream for international graduates “will make easier ... to build careers and settle in the province”. (Government of Manitoba, 2017a, p. 1)
- Regarding the renewed Skilled Worker in Manitoba stream, “[c]andidates with strong labour market attachments to Manitoba employers will remain a priority”. (Government of Manitoba, 2017a, p. 1)
- A new Skilled Worker Overseas offers a “a new pathway to nominate qualified applicants for the federal express entry program” with a priority given to “candidates with close family connections in Manitoba and spouses who have the language proficiency, training and experience to quickly find in-demand jobs”. (Government of Manitoba, 2017a, p. 1)
- Lastly, Wishart pointed out suggested potential newcomers to visit provincial immigration website with “a regularly updated in-demand occupations list and annual nomination plan”, which make the program “more user friendly and labour market information more accessible” (Government of Manitoba, 2017a, p. 2).

Unlike the previous government communications presenting the MPNP renewals in general terms, this document presents concrete program renewals, including 2 new streams as well as the date when they become effective. The point that these renewals have been agreed with the federal government demonstrates the clear hierarchy in policy-making, which fits in

new institutionalism. In a similar vein, the priority given to high-skilled candidates with education, work and family ties in Manitoba corresponds to the continuity of Canada's long-standing points-based immigration system. Facilitating immigration process for international students, particularly those in STEM programs can be seen as a nudging strategy to retain global talent to develop and enhance Manitoba innovation industry.

After examining the MPNP-related documents, let's study the government documents on the Francophone Immigration Strategy.

5.2 The FIS documents

1. The first document in the list is again the *Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement of 2003*. Despite the fact that it is mainly dedicated to the MPNP program, it contains key points on the FIS as well.

In Preamble the section 0.5 refers to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which “guarantees the equality of status to English and French as the official languages of Canada” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 2). In addition, the section 0.8 makes references to the IRPA which “is designed to ... [e]nrich and strengthen the cultural and social fabric of Canadian society, while respecting the federal, bilingual and multicultural character of Canada” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 3). The section 0.16 (f) states that “Canada and Manitoba share a mutual interest in ... contributing to the development of minority official language communities in Manitoba and enhancing their vitality” (Government of Canada, 2003, p. 4).

The section 2.5 notes that “Manitoba will conduct planning based on factors contributing to ... the development of minority official language communities with the objective of achieving a proportional share of national immigration levels”.

From the theoretical point of view, the content of the document seems more reflective of new institutionalism. The references to the existing legislation (The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the IRPA) can be explained by the path dependency concept, which refers to the continuity of established long-standing immigration policy. Both governments share the same interest related to the enhancing vitality of French language via immigration, and their collaboration is based on the proportional share of responsibilities.

2. The *MPNP Policy and Procedures* also reflects the importance of francophone immigration for Manitoba. In the section Potential for Approval, it is mentioned that all applicants for Skilled Workers Overseas stream “need to provide documented proof that they meet the human capital criteria for the MPNP, including ... English/French proficiency” (Government of Manitoba, n.d., p. 4). While explaining the points calculation, the first factor is language proficiency. “Applicants who provide official test results demonstrating language proficiency in both official languages can be awarded points for both.” (Government of Manitoba, n.d., p. 5)

The existing points-based selection system contributes to the competitive environment for potential immigrants. Thus, attributing additional points for strong proficiency in both languages nudges potential French-speaking newcomers to work on their English skills, as well as alters anglophone immigrants to learn and enhance their French. This in turn repeats the nudging concept which may make impact in individual’s decision-making process. From the new institutionalist perspective, it also corresponds to the concept of layering that explains small changes that may lead to significant outcomes in the future.

3. The *Express Entry improvements: Spring 2017 news release* presents three major changes that came into effect on June 6, 2017. I will refer to one of these changes relevant to the Francophone Immigration Strategy.

The document states that Express Entry candidates with strong French language skills can be awarded up to 15 additional points by the Canadian Ranking System, while those francophone candidates with intermediate or advanced English language skills can get up to 30 additional points (IRCC, 2017b, p. 2).

Going in line with the previous provincial policy, the “improvements” made in the major federal immigrant selection system are similar to nudging technique. Given the fact that the federal Express Entry is much more competitive compared to the provincial MPNP, getting additional points for language proficiency in both official languages increase the likelihood that bilingual candidates could be selected and invited to apply for permanent residency in Canada. At the same time, these small improvements can also reflect layering as they contribute to the existing points-based selection system and may lead to crucial results in long-term perspective.

4. In the Government of Manitoba's news release from November 15, 2017, the Education and Training Minister Ian Wishart noted "the MPNP will continue to support Manitoba's francophone immigration strategy by providing priority for francophone applicants who meet the required criteria in one or more of the four streams". The language of the minister ("will continue to support" existing provincial strategy) correlates with new institutionalism; path dependency explains best the continuity of the existing provincial policy within the long-standing MPNP selection streams.

5. The IRCC's *Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023* highlights the importance of supporting the status of French language. It contains a section relevant to the research objectives - Enhancing the vitality of Francophone Minority Communities through immigration: a national strategy. It mentions Government of Canada's commitment to increase the proportion of francophone immigrants outside Quebec with a target of 4.4% of all immigrants by 2023. It also summarizes the changes made to temporary and permanent programs aimed to attract French-speaking newcomers: FPT Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration of March 2018, Express Entry improvements of 2017, including awarding additional points for strong proficiency in French to facilitate getting PR status for French-speaking temporary foreign workers and international students, introducing the Mobilité Francophone stream through which Canadian employers can hire francophone workers from abroad for skilled work outside Quebec, and finally "increased promotional and recruitment efforts significantly to market Canada as a destination of choice for French-speaking immigrants", which includes but is not limited to Destination Canada fairs organized in Europe (IRCC, 2018a, p. 28). The document also states that in cooperation with provinces and other Canadian and international partners, the Action Plan is aimed to increase investments by \$40.8 million over five years "to support a consolidated Francophone integration pathway and coordinated Francophone immigration policies and programs" (IRCC, 2018, p. 29).

The federal Action Plan mostly reflects the new institutionalist theory, particularly the concept of layering which explains these incremental but significant "changes" and "improvements" to existing immigration policies and selection systems. Despite the fact that I considered attributing additional points in the previous two documents as nudging technique, in

the larger national scale it represents more new institutionalism, small changes that can have noticeable cumulative effect.

6. *The Federal/Provincial/Territorial Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec* represents “a plan that governments can implement, in collaboration with stakeholders, to improve the promotion, selection, settlement, integration and retention of French-speaking immigrants to Francophone Minority Communities (FMCs), using tools and approaches that are suitable to each community” (IRCC, 2018a, p. 2).

Referring to the continuing decline of the proportion of the Canadian population (outside of Quebec) using French as their first official language, right from the introduction section it notes that “French-speaking immigrants contribute to the strength and prosperity of our country, while adding to Canada’s rich cultural and linguistic diversity” (IRCC, 2018a, p. 2). The first pan-Canadian Forum on Francophone Immigration took place in Moncton in March 2017; there ministers responsible for immigration and the Canadian Francophonie “agreed to work together to improve efforts to increase francophone immigration” (IRCC, 2018a, p. 2).

The document also mentions that “Manitoba continues to include a francophone immigration strategy within the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program to support the ongoing growth and vitality of Manitoba’s francophone communities”, who in turn “continue to support a target of 7% of all Manitoba’s immigrant landings to be francophone” (IRCC, 2018a, p. 2).

The document presents the following collaborative actions to increase francophone immigration (pp. 3-4):

1. Enhancing international marketing activities to promote awareness of opportunities for prospective French-speaking applicants to immigrate to Canada outside of Quebec.
2. Promoting and increasing of awareness of immigration pathways to prospective French-speaking immigrants and French-speaking temporary residents looking for opportunities to live or study in Canada.
3. Enhancing e-tools to promote the benefits and opportunities of FMCs to prospective French-speaking immigrants, and including information on available immigration pathways and settlement services.

The FTP Action Plan also refers to relevant statistics since the launch of Express Entry in 2015 which demonstrates its significant impact on national statistics (pp. 3-4):

- The percentage of Express Entry invites sent to French-speaking immigrants has increased by 40% from 2015-2016;
- From 2015 to 2017, the number of French-speaking immigrants admitted through provincial/territorial immigration programs has more than doubled and represents 38% of all French-speaking immigrants of the economic category.

From the theoretical perspective, the document content includes language of both new institutionalist and nudge approaches. The first theory explains best the continuity of collaboration between federal and provincial governments and their shared interest in enhancing the status of French language through immigration: “French-speaking immigrants contribute to the strength and prosperity of our country” and “Manitoba continues to include a francophone immigration strategy within the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program to support the ongoing growth and vitality of Manitoba’s francophone communities”. Meanwhile, the nudge theory helps us understand that “marketing activities” and “e-tools” developed by Canadian government (“choice architect”) that are aimed to increase awareness of existing immigration programs contribute to the individual decision-making environment.

7. The *Francophone Immigration Strategy* outlines the vision of the federal government for Francophone immigration in Francophone minority communities across the country, and addresses three major objectives to support the vitality of Francophone communities (IRCC, 2019d, p. 3):

- Increase Francophone immigration to reach a target of 4.4% of French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec by 2023.
- Support the successful integration and retention of French-speaking newcomers.
- Strengthen the capacity of Francophone communities.

The document presents five key measure to achieve the given goals. I will refer to four of them which are relevant to the research objectives.

The first measure refers to strengthening selection tools. Thus, in June 2017 the IRCC made a “fundamental change in selection policies yielding encouraging results”, by awarding

additional points in the Express Entry “for strong French language skills, with even more points for candidates who also have good English-language skills” (IRCC, 2019d, p. 3). Another action was the designation of a second French-language tester²⁵ in the fall of 2018 for applicants to economic immigration programs “to make the tests more accessible and affordable for future economic immigration applicants”. In addition, in June 2016 the IRCC launched the *Mobilité Francophone* stream of the International Mobility Program to enable French-speaking international students and temporary workers to gain Canadian work experience, which can help them qualify for permanent residence. “The IRCC is committed to use targeted communications to raise awareness of the *Mobilité Francophone* stream and other immigration pathways for French-speaking temporary residents” (IRCC, 2019, p. 4).

The second measure is addressed towards targeted expansion of promotion and recruitment support in Canada and abroad. One of the ways to attract more Francophone newcomers is the annual *Destination Canada* mobility forum organized by the Embassy of Canada in France in collaboration with provincial and territorial government representatives. Another approach is to elaborate “new Web content and digital advertising campaigns aimed at potential French-speaking candidates” (IRCC, 2019, p. 4).

The third approach includes joint action with key partners, including provincial governments. There the IRCC refers to the *Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023* and the *Federal/Provincial/Territorial Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec*. “To build on this progress, IRCC will strengthen coordination and collaboration with federal, provincial and territorial partners ... [through] increased bilateral and multilateral engagement with interested provincial and territorial partners ... [and by] promot[ing] dialogue with provinces and territories wishing to select more French-speaking immigrants, on associated challenges and opportunities” (IRCC, 2019, p. 5).

The fifth section of the document states the coherent policies on promoting francophone immigration supported by evidence and outcomes. In January 2017 the IRCC introduced the more inclusive definition of “French-speaking immigrant”:

²⁵ Canada announced the recognition of TCF (French language proficiency test) as of a proof of language skills in addition to TEF (French language proficiency test).

an immigrant for whom French is the first Canadian official language of usage. This includes permanent residents who declare knowledge of “French only” as their official language or those who declare knowledge of “French and English” as their official languages, as well as those who declare French as the language that they are the most at ease to use (IRCC, 2019, p. 8).

This document summarizes all the measures and actions put in place to support francophone immigration since 2017. The government intention in strengthening the status of French language thanks to immigration is not new; it is a part of long-standing points-based immigration system. However, by presenting the current policy paper the government introduces small changes that may have a cumulative effect and lead to significant results in the future. Like the previous government documents, it reflects mostly the new institutionalist approach, particularly the concept of layering through joint action between governments, awarding additional points for language proficiency, the *Destination Canada* mobility forum organized abroad (another continuous tradition to attract more francophone immigrants from Europe). Moreover, “the more inclusive definition of French-speaking immigrant” is another small but valuable change towards reaching the given goal. It may encourage potential immigrants residing temporarily in Canada and Manitoba to learn and enhance their language skills to increase the possibility of being selected to apply for permanent residency. The promotional digital and marketing campaigns can be seen as various nudging techniques triggering certain individual behaviour.

8. The IRCC news release *Canada supports Francophone minority communities* notes that the federal government provides help to seven organizations across the country to provide official language training services for francophone newcomers who decided to settle in a Francophone minority community. This measure confirms Canada’s commitment to “promoting official languages across the country to attract the skilled newcomers needed to fill labour shortages, while supporting and creating middle-class jobs” (IRCC, 2019b).

Newcomers will receive training that improves their skills in one language while taking more intensive training in the other, depending on their needs. Being able to communicate in both official languages is important in Francophone minority

communities, where English is often the primary language used at work and French is more frequently used in the community, at home and in other social settings. (p. 1)

This communication reaffirms government's commitment to the FIS and its readiness to collaborate directly with individual provincial organizations in order to support French-speaking immigrants; it recalls the path dependency concept due to the fact that improving French status outside Quebec and support for Francophone minority communities are one of the most common themes in Canada's policies.

It is an example of collaborative effort between the government and provincial organizations in order to attract more francophone immigrants and facilitate their integration into new environment. This in turn recalls new institutionalist approach, particularly jurisdictional federation where certain responsibilities (in this case specific to immigration policy) are shared between federal government and provincial entities.

9. The Government of Canada's news release from June 26, 2019 states that IRCC will be providing funding of \$1.5 million to the Société de la francophonie manitobaine (SFM) to help deliver pre-arrival settlement services. These service "are a key element of Canada's immigration program" since "they provide newcomers ... with the information and settlement support they need to make informed decisions about their new life in Canada before they arrive, such as how to prepare for finding a job" (IRCC, 2019f, p. 1).

The SFM is 1 of 4 regional partners providing province-specific information to French-speaking newcomers. This unique collaborative partnership model will provide dedicated pre-arrival services to French-speaking newcomers as part of IRCC efforts to strengthen the Francophone Settlement Pathway. (p. 1)

Even though settlement policies are outside my research objectives, nevertheless I included this document as it has an impact on the way Canada and Manitoba attract francophone immigrants because it is focused on pre-settlement activities. It is another example on the continued commitment of federal government to collaborate not only with provincial government, but also with local stakeholders to promote francophone immigration. The path dependency concept seems applicable in this case as it also refers to the continuous nature of new policy updates which go in line with existing policies. The document also mentions the pre-

arrival services; this in turn can be seen as a significant nudge move in order to make potential immigrants choose Manitoba for landing. Through visiting the province before making a decision on landing, the immigrants are given a valuable change to get familiar with local communities, employment opportunities and life in general.

10. The provincial news release of November 15, 2019 focuses on the collaboration between the Manitoba government and the Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (CDEM). According to the Economic Development and Training Minister Ralph Eichler, this renewed partnership is aimed “to support the economic and cultural vitality of [Manitoba’s] francophone communities and Manitoba as a whole” by attracting and integrating francophone newcomers (Government of Manitoba, 2019a, p. 1).

The MPNP is accepting requests from bilingual francophone candidates for exploratory visits to the province, which will be supported by CDEM to help prospective immigrants establish stronger ties to francophone communities and local economic opportunities. These pre-arranged visits allow potential skilled-worker applicants to research employment opportunities and communities to help them make an informed decision whether to relocate to Manitoba.

MPNP has updated its candidate screening guidelines to streamline the exploratory visit application process and selection criteria for applicants ... to process applications in a faster, clearer and more efficient way. (p. 1)

Finally, the document refers to the participation of the Manitoba and CDEM in the Destination Canada event organized in November 2019 by the Government of Canada in France and Belgium in order to “connect Canadian employers and organizations with skilled French-speaking candidates” (Government of Manitoba, 2019a, p. 1).

This provincial communication is a good example of the new institutional approach. It confirms the Government of Manitoba’s commitment to the FIS and its renewed collaboration with a local organization in order to support French-speaking immigrants. In addition to this, there is a joint collaboration with the Government of Canada through *Destination Canada* events. To sum up, this all recalls path dependency concept (continuity of existing immigration policy and of bi- and multi-lateral collaboration between different stakeholders sharing the same

interest in francophone immigrants). The nudge theory also shows its relevance when it comes to arranging exploratory visits for potential immigrants as it directly impacts their decision-making and leads them to choose Manitoba-specific immigration pathway. The nudge theory emphasizes the importance of context or environment in which people make decision; thus, by visiting the province prior to making a decision on settlement, potential immigrants can get comprehensive information on life in Manitoba based on their personal experience rather than various digital marketing sources presented on government websites. However, the layering concept also demonstrates its relevance for understanding the purpose of exploratory visits – small update to the existing policy that may lead to a steady growth of a number of French-speaking newcomers.

5.3 Summary of the research findings

This chapter reflects the comprehensive analysis of MPNP- and FIS-related government documents. Varying from regulations and policy papers to news releases, these documents assures that immigration policy in Canada has experienced several renewals and updates between 2015 and 2019.

Despite the difference in selected documents' nature and language, both theoretical schools of thought – new institutionalism and nudge theory – help us understand these communications and the two policies. Here is a comprehensive table to summarize key findings of the research.

Table 4

Research findings

	MPNP-related document	New institutionalism	Nudge theory
1	IRCC. (June 2003) <i>Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement</i> .	Document nature corresponds to formal-legal style of scholarship; Governments seen as formal material structures; Collaboration between governments	Some words used in the document reflects nudging – “facilitating movements of temporary workers and students to Manitoba” Governments are main “choice architects”

		(jurisdictional federation); Reference to previous legislation (path dependency) Possibility of amendments (layering)	
2	IRCC. (June 2003) <i>Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement. Annex B – Provincial Nominees</i>	Document nature corresponds to formal-legal style of scholarship Clear share of responsibilities, with overlap in recruiting and selecting immigrants	Some words used in the document reflects nudging – “targeted active recruitment”, “targeted promotion”, “information sharing”, “facilitating exploratory visits” Governments are main “choice architect”
3	Government of Manitoba. (n.d.) <i>MPNP Policy and Procedures</i>	Document nature corresponds to formal-legal style of scholarship The MPNP selection criteria reminds the federal Express Entry; both go in line with national longstanding points-based system (path dependency)	Some words used in the document reflects nudging – “established connection” (study/work experience), “adaptability”, “information sharing”, “facilitating exploratory visits”
4	Government of Manitoba. (November 25, 2016) <i>Premier Announces Improvements To Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program. News Release</i>	“[t]he renewals of MPNP will ensure our province continues to attract skilled workers...” (layering and path dependency)	Some words used in the document reflects nudging – “innovative partnership ... that build pathways to employment ...”

		Collaboration between governments (jurisdictional federation);	
5	Government of Manitoba. (April 6, 2017) <i>Province Improves Standards, Renews Provincial Nominee Program</i> . News Release	Summary of the MPNP renewals which go in line Canada Manitoba Immigration Agreement (layering)	Some words used in the document reflects nudging – “new pathways ... will encourage international students to choose [in-demand] training programs”, awarding “additional points” for close family ties in Manitoba
6	Government of Manitoba. (November 15, 2017). <i>Province Continues To Make Provincial Nominee Program More User Friendly</i> . News Release	The MPNP renewals were elaborated in cooperation with federal government (jurisdictional federation)	“New international education stream will include faster nomination pathways for graduates of STEM” and “will make easier” to build professional career in Manitoba
	FIS-related document	New institutionalism	Nudge theory
1	IRCC. (June 2003) <i>Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement</i>	Reference to previous legislation (path dependency)	
2	Government of Manitoba. (n.d.) <i>MPNP Policy and Procedures</i>	Document nature corresponds to formal-legal style of scholarship	Awarding additional points for proficiency in French and/or both official languages
3	IRCC. (June 6, 2017) <i>Express Entry improvements: Spring 2017</i>	Awarding additional points as an incremental but important change into existing and long-standing points-based selection system (layering)	Awarding additional points for proficiency in French and/or both official languages

4	Government of Manitoba. (November 15, 2017). <i>Province Continues To Make Provincial Nominee Program More User Friendly</i> . News Release	“the MPNP will continue to support Manitoba’s francophone immigration strategy” (path dependency)	
5	IRCC. (2018) <i>Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future</i> .	Document nature corresponds to formal-legal style of scholarship “Express Entry improvements”, introducing additional points for language skills, new Mobilité Francophone stream, Destination Canada fairs abroad (layering)	Awarding additional points for proficiency in French and/or both official languages “Increased promotional and recruitment efforts”
6	IRCC. (March 2, 2018) <i>FPT Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec</i>	Policy paper presenting updates to the existing immigration programs (layering) “Manitoba continues to include a francophone immigration strategy within the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program ...” (path dependency)	“Enhancing international marketing activities”, “promoting and increasing awareness of immigration pathways”, “enhancing e-tools” can be considered as nudges towards attracting more francophone immigrants
7	IRCC. (2019) <i>Francophone Immigration Strategy: Meeting Our Objectives</i>	Policy paper presenting updates to the existing immigration programs (layering) Awarding additional points for proficiency in French and/or both official languages, designation of a second French-language tester, start of Mobilité	“Targeted communication”, “targeted expansion of promotion and recruitment” are the key words referring to nudge More inclusive definition of “French-speaking immigrant” can also

		<p>Francophone stream correspond to a concept of layering</p> <p>Reference to previously introduced policies (path dependency)</p> <p>More inclusive definition of “French-speaking immigrant” (layering)</p>	be considered as a way how federal government expand the targeted audience
8	IRCC. (July 3, 2019). <i>Canada supports Francophone minority communities.</i> News Release	Canada’s commitment to “promoting official languages across the country to attract the skilled newcomers needed to fill labour shortages, while supporting and creating middle-class jobs” (path dependency)	
9	Government of Manitoba. (July 26, 2019). <i>Société de la francophonie manitobaine Selected to Provide Pre-Arrival Services.</i> News Release	Pre-arrival services are long-standing practice (path dependency)	Pre-arrival settlement services can be considered as a nudge for getting information and settlement support in order to “make informed decision about life in Canada”
10	Government of Manitoba. (November 15, 2019). <i>Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program Accepting Francophone Exploratory Visit Applications.</i> News Release	Renewed partnership between Manitoba and a local organization as well as with federal government via Destination Canada events organized abroad (path dependency)	“Exploratory visits to the province ... to help prospective immigrants establish stronger ties [in the province] ... and make an informed decision” on immigrating to Manitoba

Now let's first refer and answer to the initial research questions:

1. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the MPNP?
2. To what extent does nudge theory explain the MPNP?
3. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the FIS?
4. To what extent does nudge theory explain the FIS?
5. Which theory helps us better understand both policies?

Let's answer questions 1 and 2. Based on the detailed analysis of six major MPNP-relevant government documents, I see the predominant relevance of new institutionalism rather than nudge theory. Key roles of federal and provincial governments, share of responsibilities, document amendments, joint as well as independent actions to attract and select high-skilled newcomers, and finally federal responsibility on immigrant approval to entry the country demonstrates the clear hierarchy in intergovernmental cooperation and policymaking in immigration policy. In addition, the continuity of immigrant selection policies with existing legislation also reflects path dependency concept.

There is the same conclusion when it comes to questions 3 and 4. Despite the fact that some of the government measures, including attributing additional points for language proficiency, organizing pre-arrival exploratory visits, can be seen as nudges to lead a French-speaking immigrant to choose Manitoba over other Canadian provinces and territories. However, in a broader scope, it still represents the new institutional approach, more specifically the concept of layering, which refers to small but crucial changes caused by these new policies and initiatives.

Finally, following the analysis of both cases, I conclude that new institutional theory helps us better understand the MPNP and the Francophone Immigration Strategy.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Immigration plays a crucial and nation-building role in Canada. For this reason, immigration policy remains an important interdisciplinary research field in academia. The present research has offered a unique theoretical perspective towards analyzing two different immigration policies – the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program and the Francophone Immigration Strategy – by applying two distinct theoretical schools of thought – new institutionalism and nudge theory. Thus, the thesis had a particular focus on the province of Manitoba from 2015 to 2019. The reason behind referring to this particular period of time can be best explained by introducing federal Express Entry in 2015 and eliminating COVID-19 related immigration policies in early 2020.

It is important to note that the purpose of current research does not address towards the success of the given policies. Instead, the main research objective of this study was to better understand how governments shape immigration policy by analyzing through a theoretical lens two Manitoba-specific immigration programs. Through qualitative methodology, particularly case study, documentary and thematic analysis methods, I analyzed over 15 government documents ranging from laws and regulations to news releases. These documents were key and original data sets which gave me an opportunity to explore governments'²⁶ language, particularly how they present and talk about these programs.

To summarize key findings of the research, let's first refer to the initial research questions:

1. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the MPNP?
2. To what extent does nudge theory explain the MPNP?
3. To what extent does new institutionalism explain the FIS?
4. To what extent does nudge theory explain the FIS?
5. Which theory helps us better understand both policies?

The analysis of the MPNP and FIS-related documents shows that both immigration policies can be best explained by new institutionalism. The rationale behind this conclusion

²⁶ By stating governments, I refer to federal (Canada) and provincial (Manitoba) authorities since immigration policy is a shared jurisdiction.

relates to the important role of federal and provincial governments in attracting, selecting and admitting high-skilled immigrants. Governments seen as institutions that shape actions and have pervasive influence on human behaviour were the key variable in the policy analysis. Moreover, selective tools established in federal Express Entry and the MPNP contributes into long-standing points-based immigration system; this addresses towards the idea of path dependency. Lastly, the renewals made in the MPNP and Francophone Immigration Strategy correspond to layering concept which explains incremental endogenous changes that does not shift existing policy but may lead to significant cumulative effects in the future.

Nudge theory also has demonstrated some relevance in the research. Despite its general nature, the theory considered governments as main “choice architects” who “nudge” potential high-skilled immigrants to choose particular immigration pathways in the variety of federal and provincial immigration programs available for economic immigrant class. The best examples of nudging technique can be attributing additional “adaptability” points²⁷ in the MPNP selection grid as well as giving extra points for being nominated by the province while applied through Express Entry. In addition, given the fact that the vast majority of immigrants are anglophones, knowledge of French language ensures earning extra points in both federal and provincial ranking systems. New Skilled Workers and International Education streams in the MPNP alter temporary foreign workers and international students in Manitoba to apply for permanent residence through this program and remain in the province. Nevertheless, nudge theory had mostly supplementary role in explaining MPNP and FIS policies.

Theoretical analysis particularly implementing (for the first time) nudge theory on immigration policy ensures the originality of current research. While nudge was implemented in diverse policy spheres, it was mainly focused on managing citizens’ behaviour. Given the fact that immigrants are future/prosperous Canadian citizens, this study can serve as a useful insight for applying nudge concept to solve various immigration challenges. For instance, many

²⁷ These additional points are attributed to applicants with demonstrated connections to Manitoba such as family, friends, previous education or work experience (Government of Manitoba, n.d.-d).

immigrants concentrate in the province's capital Winnipeg, which leads to a labour shortage in rural areas.

Another insight attained while reading diverse academic and government literature on the MPNP and FIS is that immigration policy makes an important contribution not only into economic growth of the country by meeting demographic needs and filling up labour market gaps, but it also ensures social and cultural development of the nation. Thus, immigration policy is economic and social policy.

The study also has potential for future research. For instance, theories as a tool for policy analysis can be applied to understand recent temporary policies addressed towards facilitating immigration process for temporary foreign workers and international students in Canada in the context of a global pandemic. Another research direction could be considering another province or region as a case study; current immigration pilot programs such as Rural and Northern Immigration Program or Atlantic Immigration Pilot can be good examples. The similarity with this research case is that these programs also serve to attract more immigrants to less popular Canadian regions. Even though it is too early to discuss its policy outcomes, it would be also interesting to conduct a theoretical analysis of newly established Municipal Nominee Program.²⁸ Last but not least, the focus on the individual immigrant decision-making process offered by nudge theory can be a useful and creative insight for further immigration policy research.

It is important to note that I faced some challenges while conducting this study. First of all, it is a two-tiered immigration system in Canada which explains several overlaps in federal and provincial application management systems that rank potential immigrants. For instance, Manitoba's Express of Interest (EOI) has many similarities with a Comprehensive Ranking System that serves as a foundation for Express Entry. Another similar challenge was the overlap in case of Francophone Immigration Strategy, which is present in federal immigration programs as well as the MPNP. Given the fact that it is joint but still distinctive policy, I tried to

²⁸ This program is a new initiative of the federal government in Canada involving municipal level of governance into immigration policymaking. More information is available on shorturl.at/cGKTY and shorturl.at/rxIK.

differentiate francophone elements of the MPNP and analyze them apart from other program components.

In light of Canada's commitment to continue attracting newcomers, predominantly economic immigrants, this research also offers a number of policy recommendations. The first one is related to Francophone immigration strategy – in order to attract more francophone immigrants, it is necessary to extend the immigrant recruitment campaign geographically. To get an idea of states with French-speaking population besides Europe, it may be enough to refer to the list of the member-states of Organization de la Francophonie. Besides strengthening French language status, this initiative will also contribute to country's cultural diversity. During the research, I also noted that most of the MPNP information sessions regularly organized for the general public were mostly conducted in the English language. This may be one of the reasons of a small number of French-speaking newcomers in the province. As a result, it can be beneficial to elaborate the MPNP information sessions in French in order to attract and retain francophone applicants. Another recommendation would be keep facilitating the immigration process which is time and resource consuming. The current immigrant application backlog in both federal and provincial levels, which is mostly caused by global pandemic, equally leads to challenges in micro- and macro levels.

To sum up, I consider that the originality of this study²⁹ can encourage other researchers to conduct similar case study for other provinces or even end up with wider research by using comparative approach not only among Canadian regions, but also in the international scope.

²⁹ For instance, there is no previous research applying nudge theory in the Canadian immigration policy context.

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