# Framing (im)migrant resilience: A comparative policy discourse analysis of municipal governments in Canada

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## Introduction

The notion of "resilience" is increasingly adopted as a key policy framework to address numerous contemporary issues facing nation-states – from climate change to economic (in)stability and security concerns. Considering the current "migrant crisis," how useful can resilience be to help states confront the challenges of (im)migration and (re)settlement? In this poster, we present a comparative study on the use of "resilience" in relation to (im)migration and (re)settlement processes at the municipal level in five cities across the provinces of Quebec and Ontario: Montreal, Gatineau, Ottawa, Toronto, and Kitchener-Waterloo. We focus on how (im)migrant resilience is understood by government actors. The objective is to compare and contrast the multiple ways in which government actors use the notion resilience to frame (im)migration in order to advance particular agendas, interests, and/or approaches to address (re)settlement and integration processes. The aim is to improve understanding of how resilience may be mobilized within government policy discourse and its potential impacts on/for immigration-related issues (e.g., immigrant settlement and integration, service provision and programming, language training, employment counselling, civic education, etc.).

## Objectives

1) **Conceptual objective**:
Policy discourse analysis: How is resilience used by the state and framed in policy documents?
Multilevel and comparative
Provide a genealogy of the uses of resilience in policy discourses over time

2) **Methodological objective**:
Develop a common methodology for 8 city networks/two provinces/federal level of government

## Methodology

A multilevel, comparative and collaborative approach to policy discourse analysis

**Stage 1: Institutional scanning**
Step 1: Recording the occurrence of "resilience" across municipal governments (Montreal, Gatineau, Ottawa, Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo) and their various departments / sectors / services
Step 2: Documenting the uses of resilience in sample documents
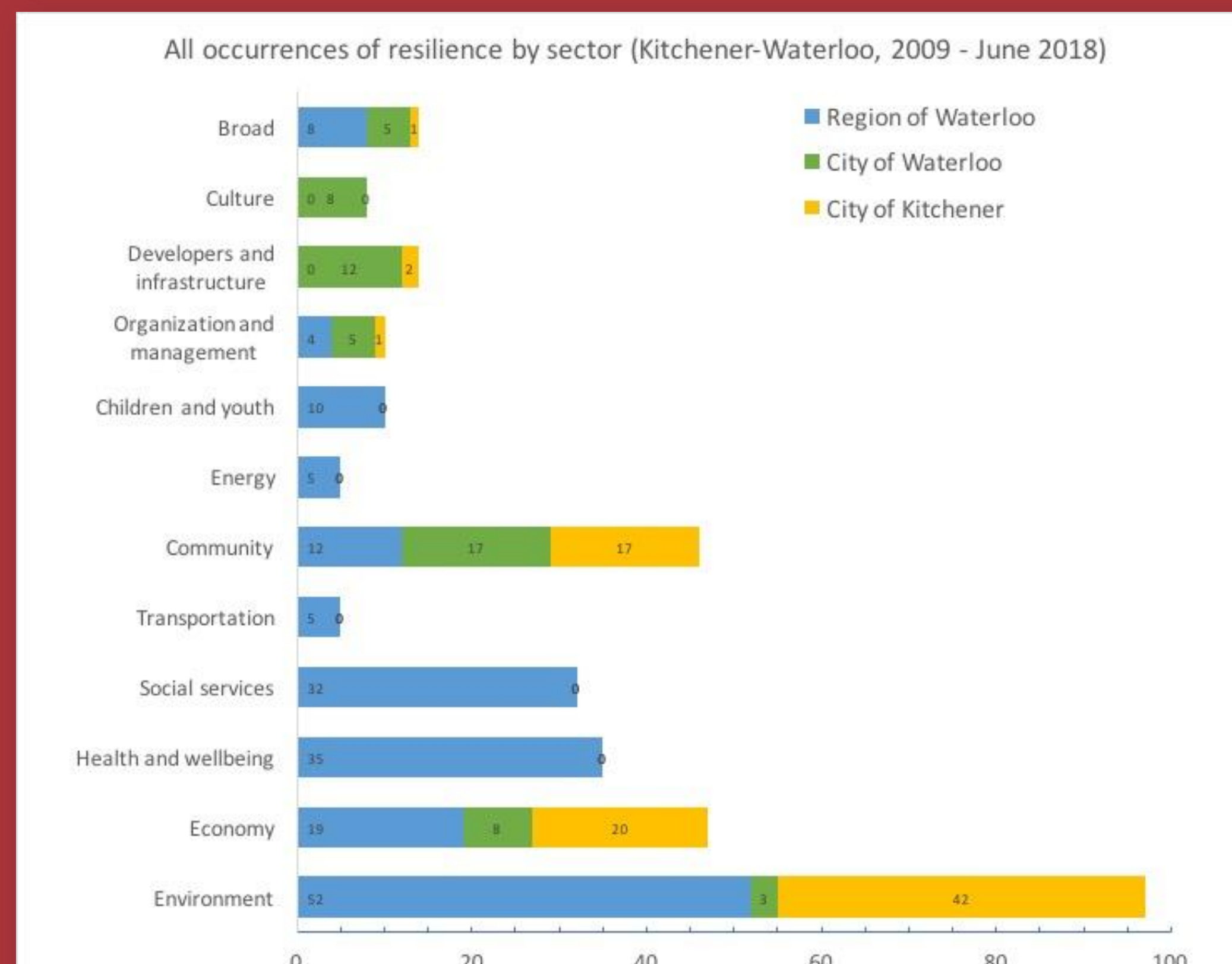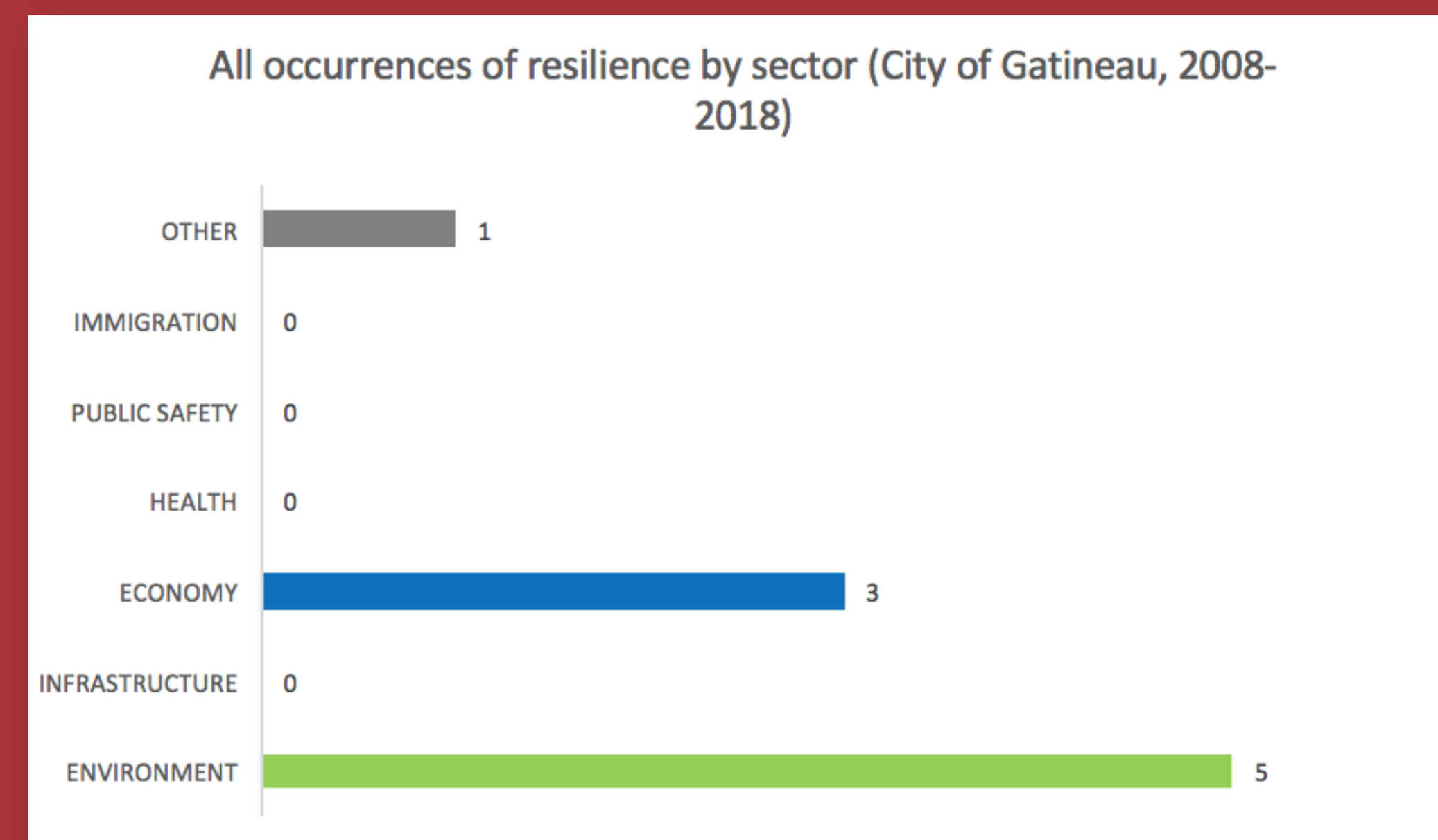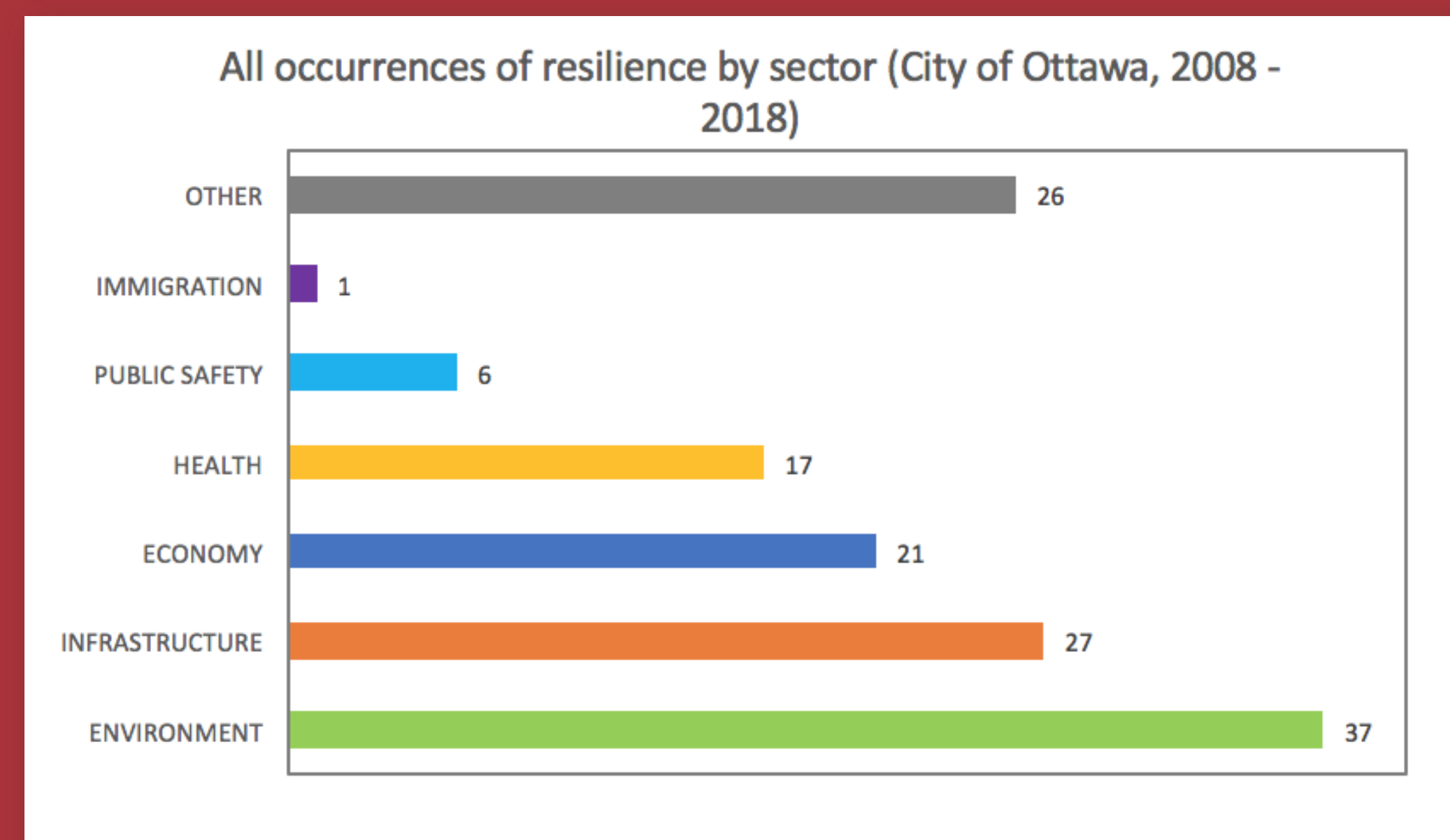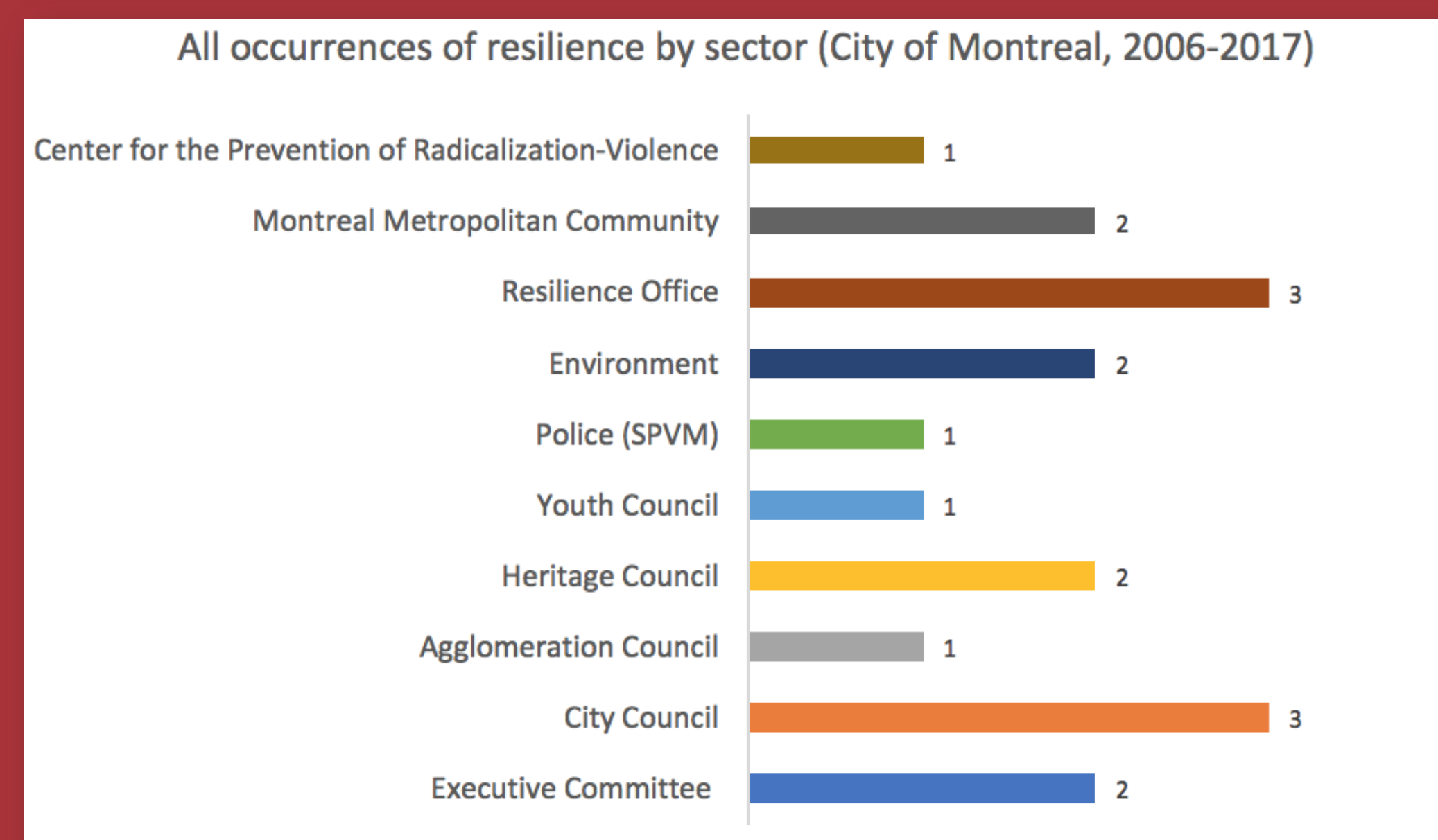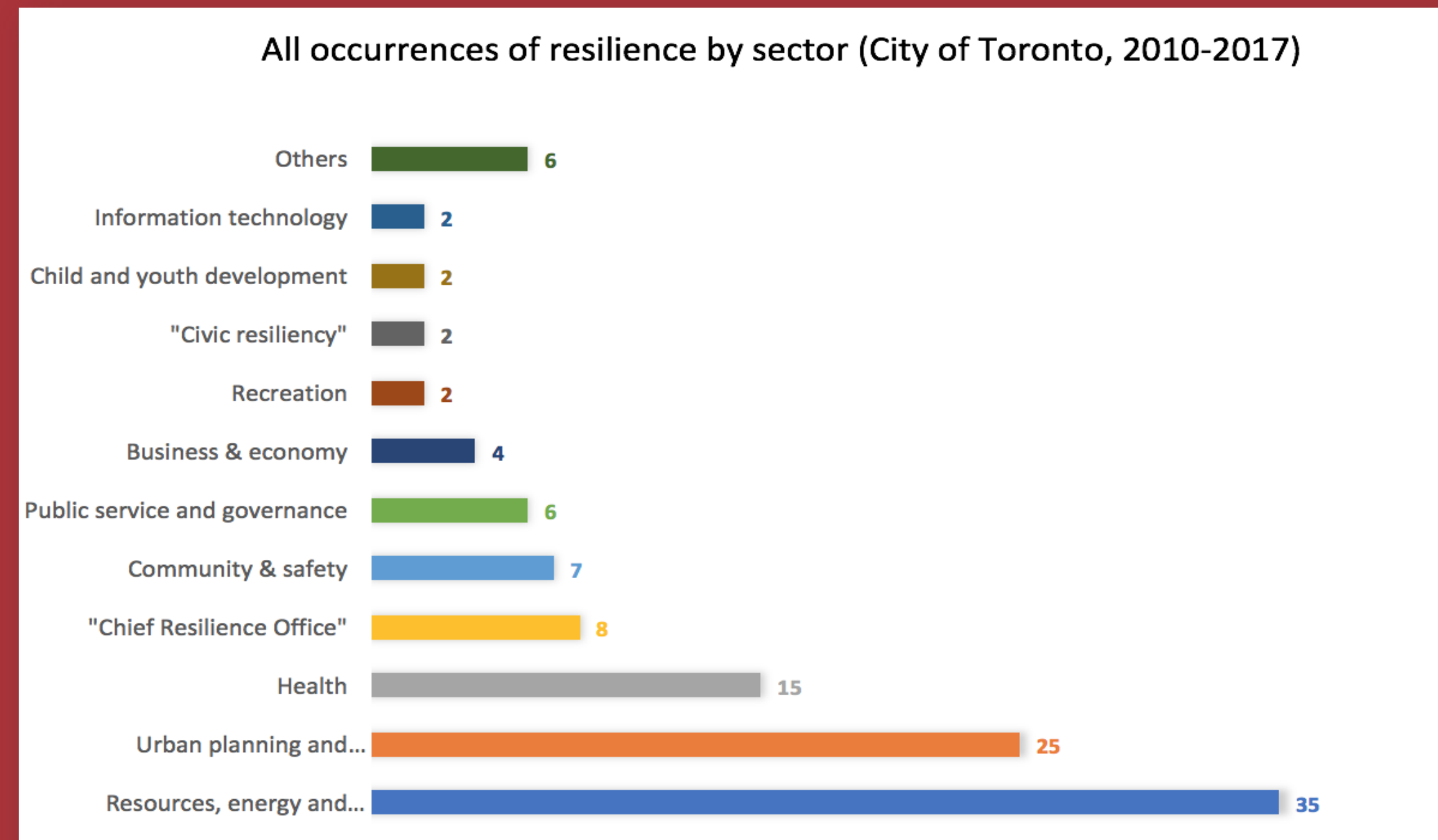Step 3: Developing a **Conceptual Map** (Codebook)

**Stage 2: Analyzing immigration-related policy documents**
Step 1: Keyword search using search engines: "resilience + immigration"
Step 2: Selecting key documents:
3 main types of documents (strategic plans, reports & policies/ 'politiques') and other pertinent documents

## Results Stage 1: Institutional Scan



All occurrences of resilience by sector (City of Toronto, 2010-2017)



All occurrences of resilience by sector (City of Montreal, 2006-2017)



All occurrences of resilience by sector (City of Ottawa, 2008 - 2018)



All occurrences of resilience by sector (City of Gatineau, 2008-2018)



All occurrences of resilience by sector (Kitchener-Waterloo, 2009 - June 2018)

## Results Stage 2: Immigration Policy

### Toronto: Civic resiliency

"**Civic resiliency** is the capacity of a group of residents or community to **adapt** to the **evolving complexity** and **diversity** of their social environment by **building good relationships** and viewing these **changes as a strength**."
*(Regularizing Toronto For All: A Public Education Initiative to Support Civic Resiliency*, 2017, p.1)

### Montreal: Urban resilience

« La **résilience urbaine** est la **capacité** des personnes, communautés, institutions, entreprises et systèmes au sein d'une ville **à résister, s'adapter et se développer**, quels que soient les types de **stress chroniques** et de **chocs aigus** qu'ils subissent. »
*(Stratégie montréalaise pour une ville résiliente, Montréal,* 2018, p.4)

### Ottawa

"The City of Ottawa will contribute to successful immigrant integration by improving access to **City jobs** and supporting **economic integration through entrepreneurship**."
"One of the four pillars in the City of Ottawa's Economic Development Strategy is **entrepreneurialism**. This represents an opportunity to support the **economic integration of immigrants** while aligning with provincial priorities and plans."
*(City of Ottawa Municipal Immigration Strategy 2016-2018)*

### Gatineau

« Le **français** comme **langue commune** est l'**instrument essentiel au rapprochement** ainsi qu'au **dialogue interculturel**. »
« Le respect de l'**égalité entre les sexes** comme **valeur reconnue de la société** québécoise. »
*(Vers une nouvelle politique québécoise en matière d'immigration, de diversité et d'inclusion, 2015)*

### Kitchener-Waterloo

"Immigrants bring a range of diverse skills, education, qualifications and creative insight to companies and organizations. These skills and experiences offer employers **global expertise**, **access to global markets**, **foreign investment opportunities** and an increased understanding of new business practices. [...] When immigrants arrive, they not only fill gaps in the work force but pay taxes and spend money on housing, transportation and consumer goods. These **ripple effects to the local economy** continue to increase as immigrants are working to their full potential."
(Immigration Partnership Waterloo Region. Community Action Plan 2014-2016: Full Report. P. 4.)

## Conclusions

Municipal discourse tends to align with provincial discourse. In Ontario, the focus is on attracting global talent and a labour-market centric approach to immigration. In Quebec, the concern is with cultural diversity, French language, an interculturalism approach, and gender equality. The two large metropolitan areas use the notion of resilience as branding – to promote preparedness and adaptation in Montreal vs. the strength of diversity in Toronto. City governments rely on specific definitions of resilience and target individuals (adversity immigrants face).