

# Neighbourhood spaces and migrant resilience: A comparative study of three neighbourhoods in Ottawa-Gatineau

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LUISA VERONIS, LILY XIA, BRIAN RAY (UOTTAWA),  
AND ANYCK DAUPHIN (UQO)

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# Context

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## LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

### Immigrants and neighbourhoods

- Spatial assimilation/segregation
- Housing experiences
- Everyday experiences

### Resilience and neighbourhoods

- Psychology
- Spatial resilience, socio-ecological resilience
- Community resilience

### Immigrants, neighbourhoods and resilience

- Individual and community resilience
- Measures of resilience
- Social resilience

## LITERATURE IN FRENCH

### Neighbourhood diversity

- From integration to cohabitation
- Access to housing
- Perceptions of diversity

### Resilience and social capital

- Psychology
- Social resilience
- Socio-ecological resilience

# Research Objectives

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1. Examine neighbourhood factors that shape migrant resilience
  - How the spatial and social environment at the neighbourhood scale influences settlement and integration experiences
2. Understand the characteristics that make neighbourhoods “resilient”
3. Identify structures and actors of resilience at multiple scales



# Conceptual Framework

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## The three principal dimensions of “resilience”:

1. The practices of resilience
  - Discourses, policies, programs
2. The structures and actors of resilience
  - “Top-down” (state strategies)
  - “Bottom up” (community strategies)
3. The scales and spaces of resilience
  - Individual resilience
  - Family/household resilience
  - **Neighbourhood resilience – built environment and resilience**
  - **Community resilience – social environment and resilience**

# Methodology

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## Collaborative approach

- Community and government partners
- **Gatineau:** The City of Gatineau, APO, SITO
- **Ottawa:** The City of Ottawa, OLIP, CESOC

## Comparative study

- Ottawa-Gatineau
- 3 neighbourhoods (2 in Ottawa, 1 in Gatineau)
- Immigrants with English/French as their first official language spoken; the uneven geography of bilingualism in the Ottawa-Gatineau region

# Qualitative Methods

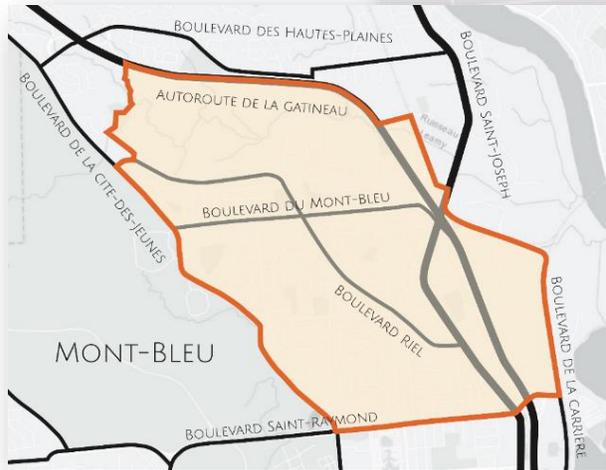
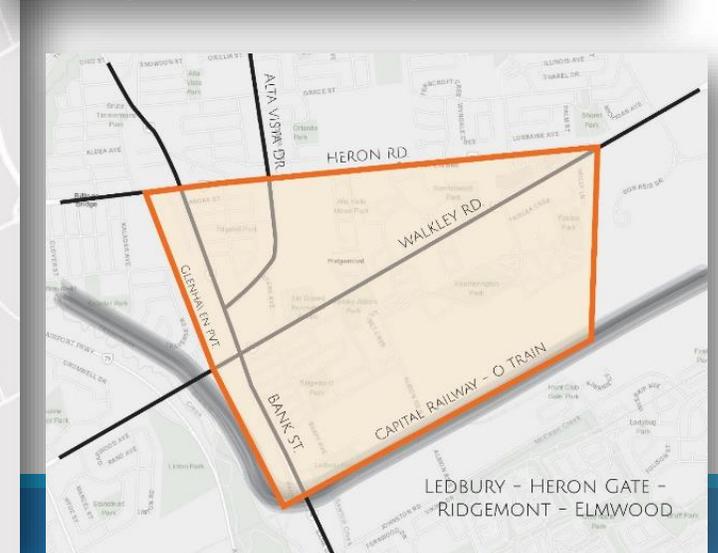
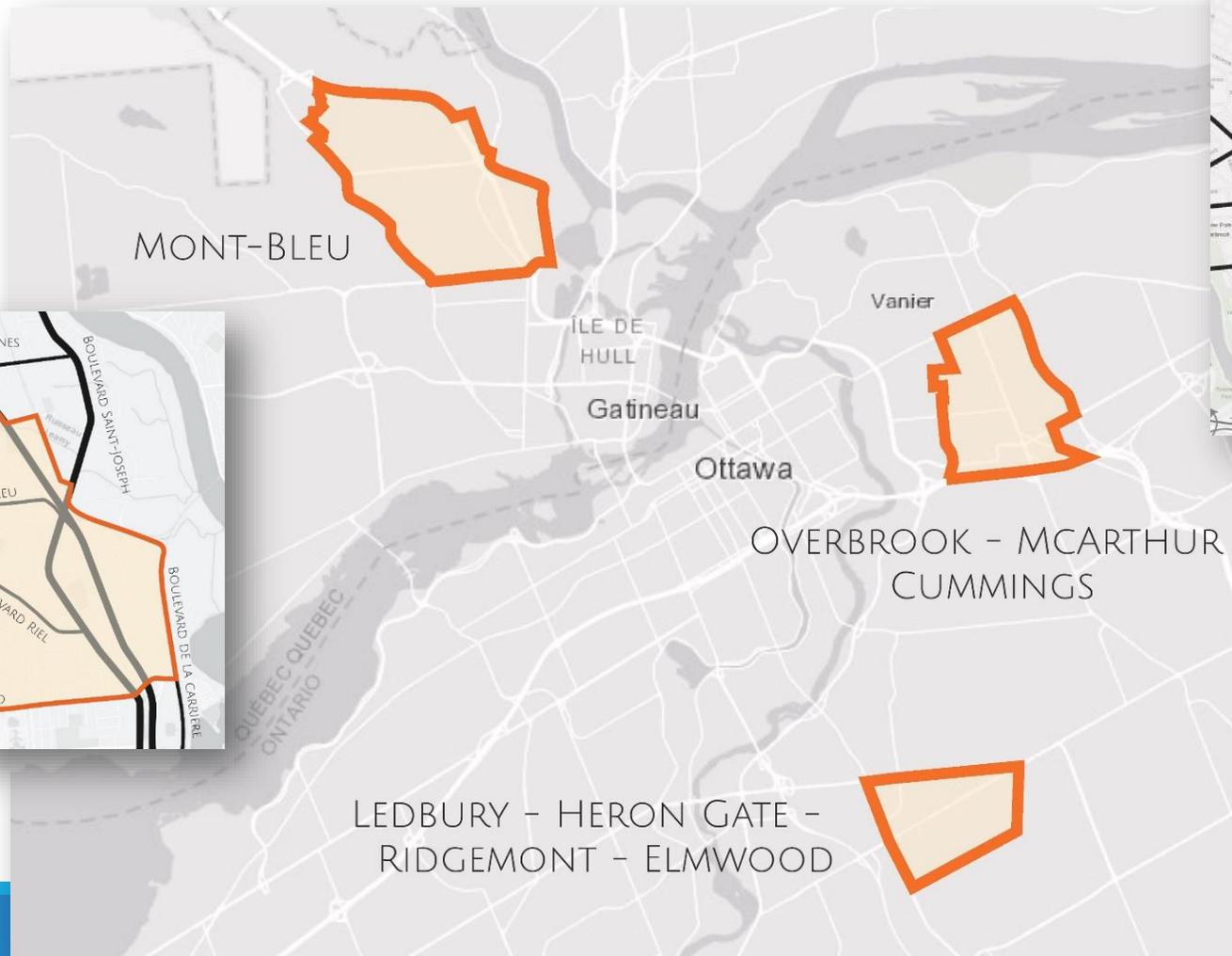
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## 4 main research stages:

1. Literature review and neighbourhood selection in collaboration with community partners (May-August 2018)
2. Ethnographic study, census data, media analysis (June 2018-May 2019)
3. Photovoice interviews (October 2018-July 2019)
4. Analysis and community meetings (spring-summer 2019)

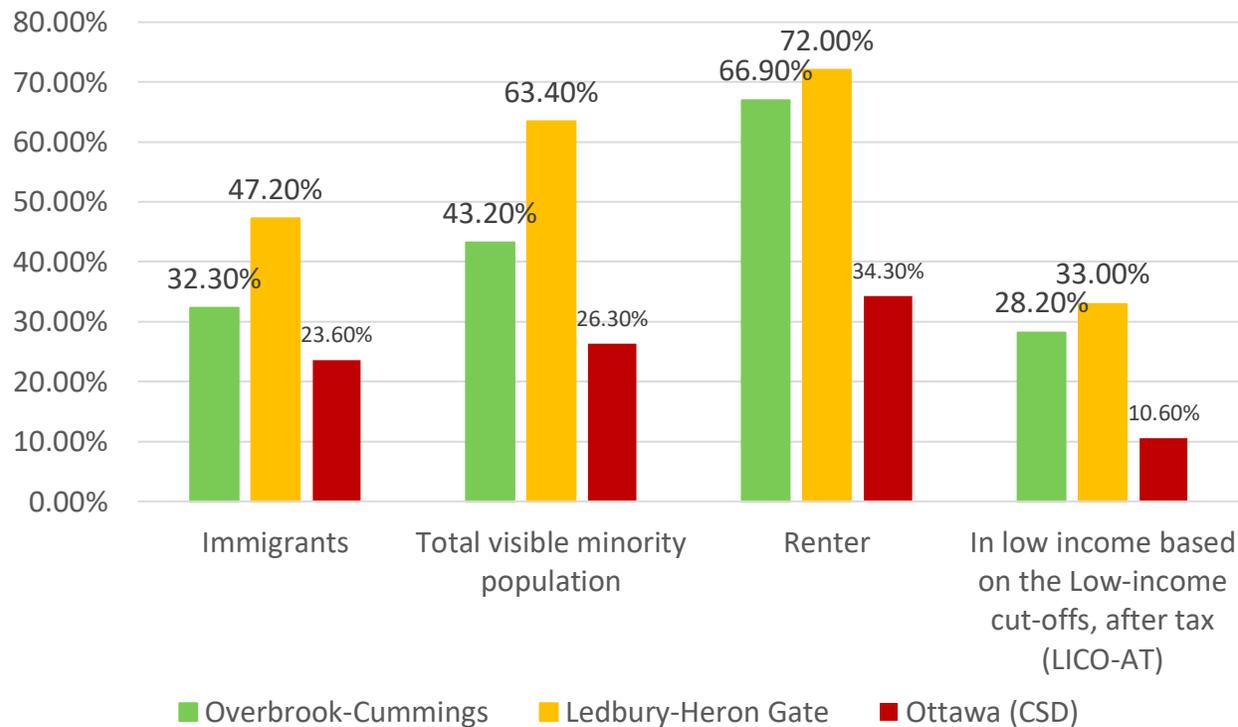
# Case Study

## 3 neighbourhoods in Ottawa-Gatineau

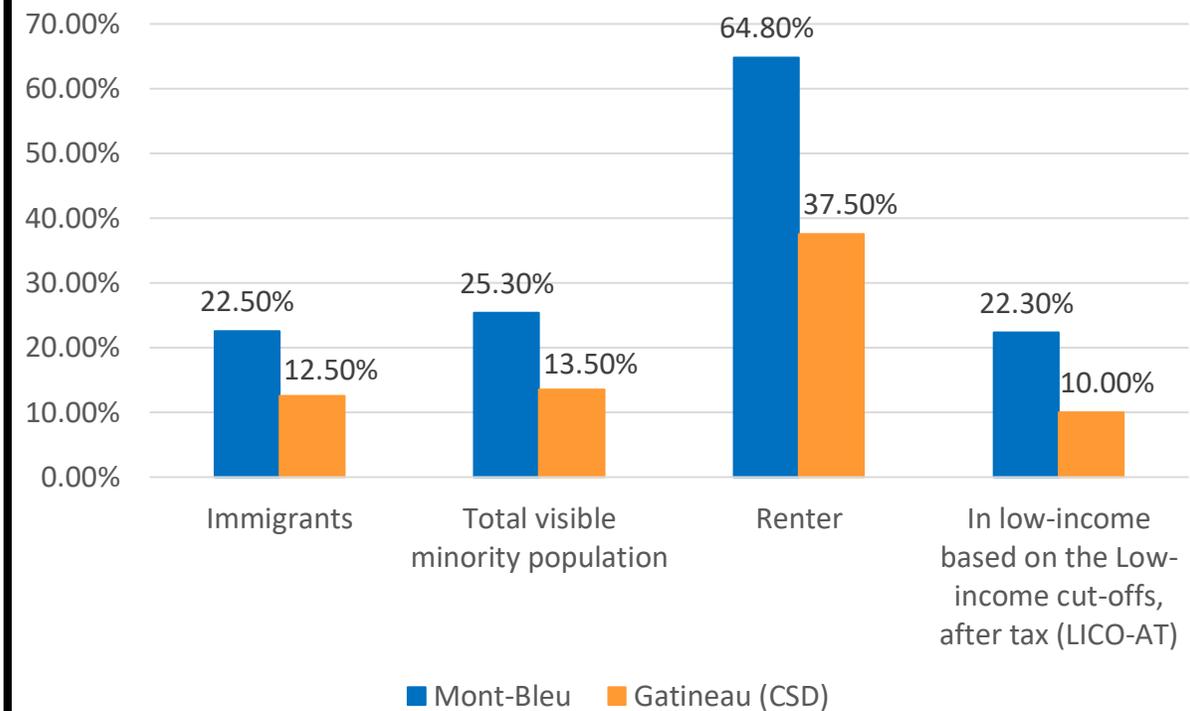


# Neighbourhood Profiles

Neighbourhood Profile - 2016



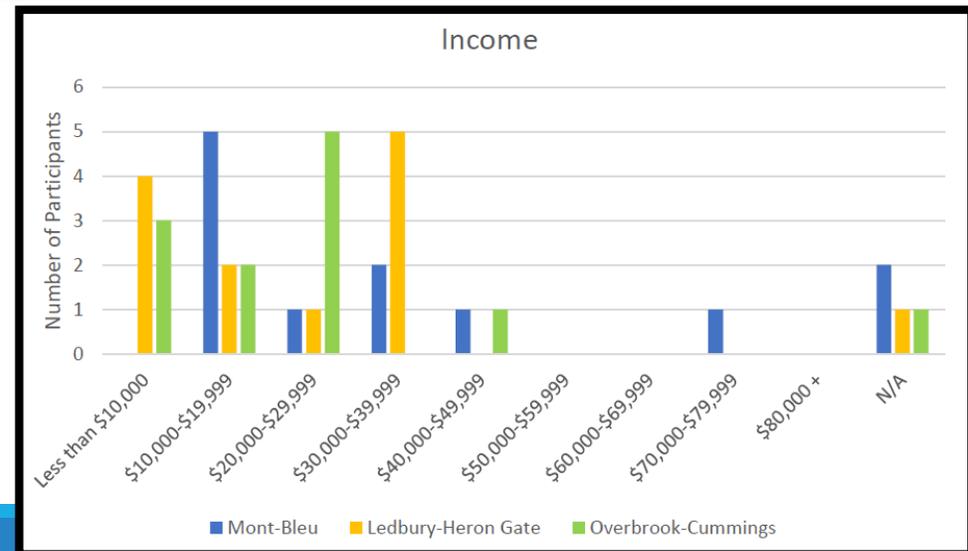
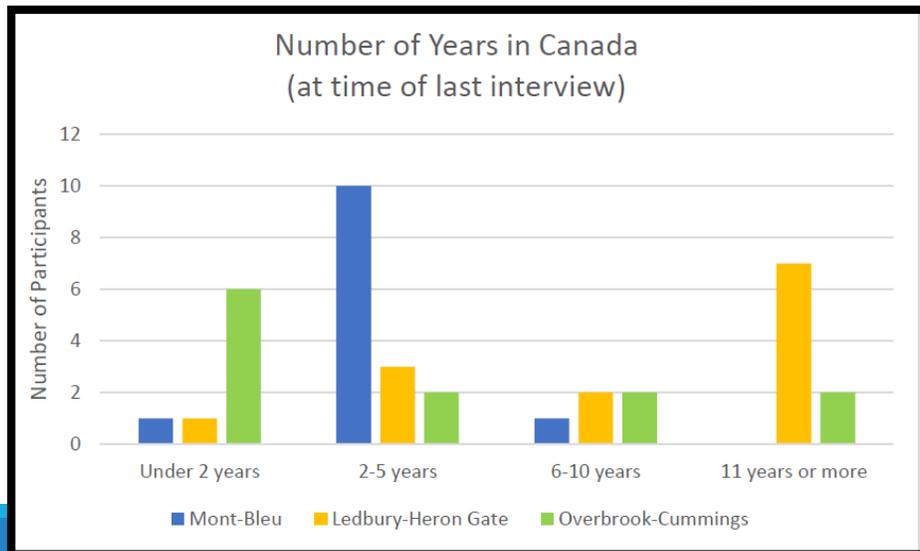
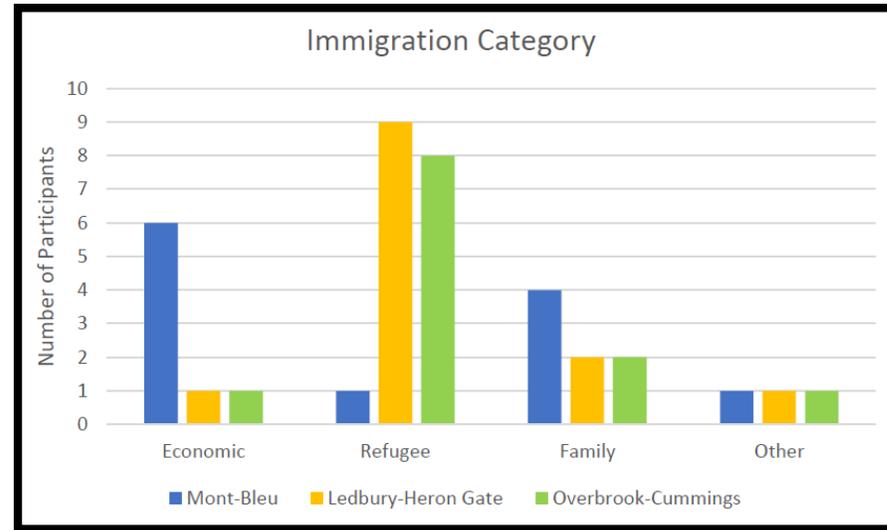
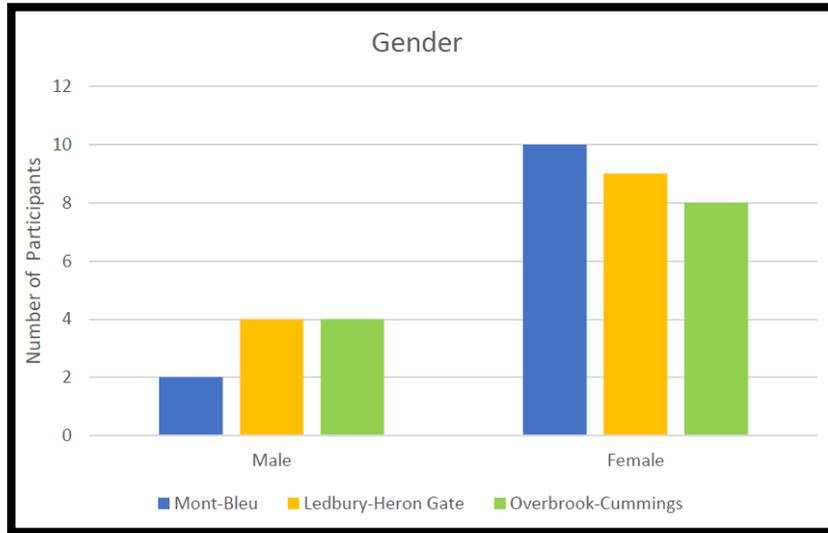
Neighbourhood Profile- 2016



# Photovoice Interviews



# Profiles of Research Participants



# Results

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## **1. Neighbourhood/Built environment**

1. Fostering resilience
2. Hindering resilience

## **2. Community/Social Environment**

1. Fostering resilience
2. Hindering resilience

# Built environment: fostering resilience

## Proximity

- Central location, accessibility
- Shops, ethnic stores, amenities

## Transportation

- Public transit
- Walkability

## Amenities

- Parks, community spaces/centres, daycares, schools, libraries, places of worship
- ESL courses, services

## Housing

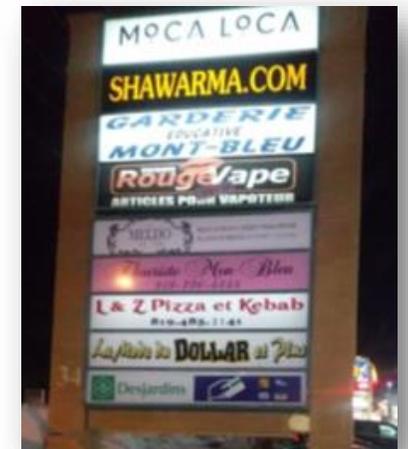
- Affordable housing, especially 3 or more bedroom dwellings for larger families
- No request for prior rental history

It's very easy because in this area, everything is very close. Like even 5 minute walk, we go Shoppers, halal food is too, halal meat store. My doctor in South Keys, it's very good. It's very good, that's why I like this house now. (LHG, Sakina, female)



Oh, the library, I love the library. It's amazing. They have an indoor pool, they have hockey courts, they have a basketball court. It's really nice. (OC 9)

*...pour l'emplacement, pour la densité des écoles et des garderies ici c'est parfait aussi, au niveau des parcs, il y en a beaucoup, (...) si on parle de la proximité des commerces et des infrastructures très bien aménagés.*  
(MB, Anastasia, femme, Moldova)



# Built environment: hindering resilience

## Proximity

- Lack of ethnic stores
- Settlement services

## Transportation

- Safety, lack of bus shelters, sidewalks, snow, potholes

## Amenities

- Problems with maintenance, disrepair
- Inaccessible community spaces (indoor/outdoor)
- Lack of programming
- Cost barriers

## Housing

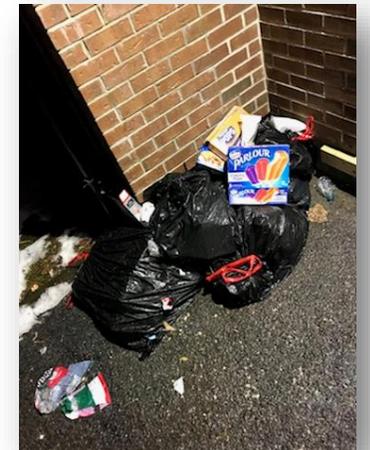
- Evictions (LHG)
- Problems with maintenance

*Je vois qu'il y a un service de la ville pour couper l'herbe, pour nettoyer, mais... pas entretenu au niveau des équipements, des bancs, des glissades, le sable... le sable est tellement sale... Parfois, je permets pas mes enfants de jouer là. (MB, Anastasia, femme, Moldova)*



More than 10 [phone calls]. Sometimes they tell you they are coming, they don't come. Things like that. Until you walk yourself to the office and go claim again. (OC 8)

The street is so dark, no lights (...) we call, yeah, they have to fix it. Call 211, you call 311, you don't even know? The city take the sweet time, because which neighbourhood? (LHG, Nour, female, Sudan)



# Social environment: fostering resilience

## Services/programs

- Open, accessible, comfortable programs building familiarity and mutual support

## Participation

- Volunteering

## Networks

- Family, neighbours
- Social connectedness

## Support/solidarity

- Childcare, housing, political activism, places of worship

## Sense of belonging

- Cultural diversity
- Shared identity

Yeah, so you know, "Can you pick up the kids for me? Can you do this for me?" That's what I'm saying, sense of community. There's nothing important like having a sense of community, you know? (...) You know, what they say, it takes a village to raise a kid, right? (LHG, Samira, female, Somalia)

*Le fait que Mont-Bleu est quand même habité par beaucoup de nouveaux arrivants, bien quand je sors, j'ai ce sentiment de ... de... compréhension ou d'acceptation par l'autre. (MB, Mackenzy, homme, Haïti).*

She said they [the immigrant community]'re very good and they're very helpful. (OC.4, through translator)





# Conclusions

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## Structures facilitating resilience

- Proximity and convenience to everyday amenities (parks, shops, ethnic stores, etc.)
- Accessible community spaces, especially indoor
- Presence of immigrants, cultural diversity
- Community support and solidarity

## Structural actors:

- Municipal/city government, community organizations/centres, settlement services, places of worship
- Open and compassionate authority figures, community leaders, grass-roots organizations
- Mainstream media, landlords

## Structures hindering resilience

- Inaccessible/missing programs, services, amenities (youth programming, mental health services, legal counsel, etc.)
- Poor maintenance of buildings and neighbourhood spaces by the City and by private corporations
- Discrimination and stigmatization

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Our community partners

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- *Preston, V. PI, Belkhodja, C., Gabriel, C., Lochhead, C., Douglas, D., Dyson, D., Zikic, J., Hennebry, J., Shields, J., Veronis, L., Hynie, M., Mandell, N., Bhuyan, R., Ghosh, S. and collaborators. Migration and Resilience in Urban Canada - Immigration et résilience en milieu urbain (BMRC-IRMU): Discovering Strengths and Building Capacity, Partnership Grant. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, SSHRC#896-2016-1004, 2,499,525, 2016-2021 \$.*
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# Thank you

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Contact information:

Luisa Veronis, University of Ottawa: [lveronis@uottawa.ca](mailto:lveronis@uottawa.ca)

Lily Xia, University of Ottawa: [lxia093@uottawa.ca](mailto:lxia093@uottawa.ca)

Brian Ray, University of Ottawa: [bray@uottawa.ca](mailto:bray@uottawa.ca)

Anyck Dauphin, Université du Québec en Outaouais: [Anyck.Dauphin@uqo.ca](mailto:Anyck.Dauphin@uqo.ca)