

The Inclusion of Education Credential Assessment in The Canadian Immigration Policy

Framework: An Advocacy Coalition Framework Approach

Major Research Paper

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## Chapter 1

### **Introduction**

Canadian immigration policy has been a constant work in progress since the 1960s. Drastic global political and social changes then began to shift expectations of what immigration policy should entail. Immigration trends in Canada in the 1990s began to show that highly educated and skilled immigrants were unable to access employment in their professional fields and were employed in jobs for which they were vastly over-qualified for (Reitz et al., 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). This further became an issue as Canadian immigration policy expanded the countries from where it received immigrants, and governmental and non-governmental actors acknowledged that the existing immigration framework was incompatible in evaluating foreign credentials (Reitz et al., 2014). The policy response was the introduction of education credential assessment (ECA) services, provided by private companies into the Canadian immigration framework. ECA companies provide potential highly educated and skilled immigrants with confirmation to the Canadian government and employers that their foreign education received outside of Canada are credible and comparable to domestic credentials (Reitz 2005, Owen 2007, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). Why were Education Credential Assessment services adopted in the Canadian immigration policy framework in the 2000s? This is my research question. I argue that ECA services were included in the Canadian immigration policy framework due to the existence of an advocacy coalition of economic, political, and societal stakeholders who shared similar policy goals. Additionally, the consequences of immigration skill underutilization and credential non-recognition were identified as a significant socio-economic problem by the advocacy coalition, and thus the coalition was motivated to solve this problem.

This chapter proceeds in three parts. The first presents as a literature review, which discusses and identifies the key concepts and debates in the Canadian immigration policy literature relevant to my question. The literature review covers Canadian immigration policy strategies and defining policy moments starting from the 1940s into the 2000s. It will identify the contributing social and economic factors as well as the stakeholders that were influential in bringing about the inclusion of ECA services into the Canadian immigration policy framework. The second lays out the theoretical framework for explaining this policy innovation, which revolves around the idea of advocacy coalitions (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier, 1994). Lastly, this chapter presents the methodology used to show how education credential assessment services were eventually included into the Canadian immigration policy framework.

The second chapter uses the ACF to study the inclusion of ECA services into the immigration policy framework through the ECA advocacy coalition. This chapter deconstructs the ECA advocacy coalition,<sup>1</sup> identifying each of the stakeholders and analyzing their actions. The second chapter then follows to demonstrate how the ACF explains the inclusion of ECA services into the Canadian immigration policy framework through the existence of an ECA advocacy coalition composed of the social justice stakeholder's coalition which is comprised of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants and the Canadian Council of Refugees. The economic productivity stakeholder's coalition; education credential assessment services, and provincial

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<sup>1</sup> The ECA advocacy coalition can be understood as having two separate, sub-coalitions of which I categorize as the social justice sub-coalition and the economic productivity sub-coalition. The policy motivations of the two sub-coalitions are what separate them (social justice vs economic productivity), but their overall policy goal of the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework is the same and thus unites them under the broader ECA advocacy coalition.

governments. And the role of the federal government as a *dynamic stakeholder*, a new contribution to the ACF by this paper, with significant stake in both sub-coalitions.

## **Definitions**

Defining the terms skill underutilization and skill or credential non-recognition is key for understanding its significance within the advocacy coalition. Skill underutilization can be understood as the idea that a highly educated or skilled immigrant is employed at a job for which they are overqualified for – their skills are not being used effectively within the labour market (Reitz 2005, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). Credential non-recognition on the other hand, occurs when a highly educated or skilled immigrants' foreign credentials are not recognized as comparable to credentials received domestically, thus preventing immigrants from working in their respective professional fields (Reitz 2005, Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). In the context of this research, skill underutilization and credential non-recognition involve highly educated and skilled immigrants who experience difficulties having their foreign credentials recognized by professions regulated by governmental standards and the Canadian labour market. An additional key term relevant to this paper is foreign qualification recognition, which can be understood as “the process of verifying that the knowledge, skills, work experience and education obtained in another country is comparable to the standards established for Canadian professionals and tradespersons” (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2009, 1). Lastly, defining what education credential assessment (ECA) is vital to this paper. An ECA is “a report by an independent company that evaluates [an applicant’s] foreign education” (Canada, 2020a).

## **Literature Review**

Immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition are issues that help explain why education credential assessment services were adopted into the Canadian immigration policy framework. Previous immigration policy strategies alone, such as in the introduction of the points system, were inadequate in satisfying the changing socio-economic needs of the Canadian labour market in the 1990s and early 2000s (Owen 2007, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). By 2005, 19.2% of the Canadian population was foreign-born (Hawthorne 2007, 3), thus issues of immigrant skill underutilization and immigrant credential non-recognition plagued the Canadian labour market (Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). This literature review section provides an examination of debates among scholars on the consequences of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition in Canadian immigration policy. Furthermore, this section provides context for the aforementioned issues that the ECA advocacy coalition sought to solve through policy change. As this paper shows, the adoption and inclusion of education credential assessment services into the Canadian immigration policy framework is the result of a specific advocacy coalition who considered skill underutilization and credential non-recognition a problem to be addressed through policy change.

Throughout the eras of policy stretching, shifting, and unravelling (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 17-18), the objectives of immigration policy in Canada began to be less clear-cut. In the literature on Canadian immigration policy, there is a strong consensus that much of the decisions have fixated on the needs of the labour market (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Reitz 2013), which is reflected in the specific needs of different economic stages (Reitz 2013, 152). When Canada began to transition into an industrial economy, immigration was utilized to supply factories and construction work. However, as Canada's economy moved away from an

industrial economy to a post-industrial knowledge economy, immigration policy stressed the demand for highly educated and skilled workers (Reitz 2005, Reitz 2013). In the post-war period, as Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos outlines, immigration policy in Canada in the 1940s and 1950s was largely focused on the social *and* economic gains for Canada (20). The introduction of the social gains of immigration was a stark difference from pre-war immigration strategies, which primarily focused on nation-building and economic growth during the industrial period (Reitz 2013, Seidle 2013, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Reitz et al. 2014). In the post-war period, from 1947-52, liberal socio-political forces were beginning to become outspoken about the discriminatory behaviour and tendencies of Canadian immigration practices (Triadafilopoulos 2013, Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014); “the central anomaly driving paradigm change in the postwar period was normative; prewar policies that relied on discrimination no longer fit with the prevailing normative context” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 18). Triadafilopoulos identifies three eras of immigration policy change: 1. Policy stretching, 2. Paradigm unravelling, and 3. Policy shifting. First, the period from 1947-52 showed what he identifies as policy *stretching*, policy changes within the policy paradigm (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 20). Moreover, policy stretching can present itself through the strategy of institutional layering, “whereby institutions are adapted to include hitherto excluded actors and interests” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 19). But, as Triadafilopoulos points out, attempting to adapt cosmetic solutions to the increasingly unpopular, outdated, and incompatible policy with changing public opinion, instead caused *paradigm unravelling*, the second key era of immigration policy according to Triadafilopoulos. Cosmetic fixes to existing immigration policy made stakeholders “unimpressed and demanding more radical policy changes outside of the paradigm” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 19). Paradigm unravelling begun to reveal important stakeholders, established and new, in the immigration policy subsystem. Vital stakeholders who played a role in

paradigm stretching and influenced in the unravelling of immigration policy were “labour unions, churches and ethnic associations” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 17). These non-governmental actors established themselves as prominent stakeholders within the immigration policy subsystem, and some eventually became part of the ECA advocacy coalition. However, the introduction of the points-based immigration admission system in 1962 (which was officially adopted in 1967) (Government of Canada 1967, Triadafilopoulos 2013) reinforced the importance of Canada’s changing and dynamic economic and social values (Triadafilopoulos 2013, Reitz 2013). As Triadafilopoulos states “the shift to universal skills-based selection criteria in 1962 was primarily aimed at mollifying domestic and international critics of racial discrimination” (2013, 24). Lastly, the final phase Phil discusses is *shifting* which he argues lasted from 1964-67. The “big shift” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 31) occurred when the points system was officially adopted in 1967. Immigration policy during this era was now moving further away from policy 20 years earlier and the new points system was both a social and economic policy strategy (Reitz 2013, 152). But, as Triadafilopoulos insightfully points out, “little thought was paid to developing a corresponding set of measures for integrating immigrants selected via human capital criteria into Canadian labor markets. This flaw is engrained in the very DNA of the Canadian admissions regime” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 33). With the points system, “prospective immigrants would be assigned a score of one to ten assessment points in nine categories. The first five categories included age, education, training, occupational skill in demand, and personal qualities, which were related to the immigrant’s prospects of successful establishment in Canada” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 31). The other four categories included knowledge of English or French, the presence of relatives in Canada, previously arranged employment, and employment opportunities in area of destination (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 31). These categories were designed to determine “the speed and ease with

which he is likely to get settled initially” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 31). Individuals scoring 50 assessment points or higher would be admitted as “independent immigrants and would have the right to sponsor dependents as well as nominate relatives” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 31). The conclusion that can be drawn from the *big shift* is that this era of Canadian immigration policy was beginning to shape what immigration policy would look like in the 1990s and 2000s; an immigration policy strategy focused on growing a knowledge economy that would eventually become embedded within Canada’s immigration policy framework.

The shapeshifting of immigration policy leading up to the 1990s and 2000s is important for tackling my research question as it demonstrates the conditions that allowed for immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition to be identified as a serious problem within the immigration framework by the ECA advocacy coalition. Furthermore, understanding the change process of immigration policy helps explain why education credential assessment services were ultimately adopted into the immigration framework. What defined the ECA advocacy coalition was that the economic stakeholders, who had previously enjoyed superior influence and authority over immigration policy strategy, were now being challenged by the social justice stakeholders (Reitz 2013, Seidle 20013, Paquet 2014, Reitz et al. 2014). For example, the creation of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants and the Canadian Council of Refugees in 1978 (OCASI, CCR 2021) and their advocacy work with provincial and federal governments are evidence of pressure for policy change, was motivated by social justice. Combined with mounting pressure from social and economic stakeholders within and outside legal and political institutions, to adopt immigration policy beyond the points system.

Immigration policy strategy in the 1990s brought even more changes to the points system, the figurehead of Canadian immigration policy. The points system had been previously modified

in 1976, solidifying the policy's significance and essentially becoming the cornerstone of Canada's immigration policy framework (Immigration Act 1976-77). The discussion of immigration skill underutilization and credential non-recognition was not a prominent issue when the points system was first introduced (Reitz 2005, Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014). Before the inclusion of ECA services into the framework in the 1990s and early 2000s, the points system heavily favoured the economic function of immigration policy (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014). Yasmeeen Abu-Laban and Christina Gabriel in their book *Selling Diversity: Immigration, Multiculturalism, Employment Equity, and Globalization* trace Canadian immigration policy from 1993-2001, which are some of the key defining years for the ECA coalition. The year 1993 saw the federal election of Jean Chrétien's Liberal government, in which the party's campaign stance on immigration was a strategy to "balance Canada's demographic and economic needs with humanitarian considerations" (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 62). The years 1994 to 1997 saw aggressive consultation and policy change by the Liberal government, partly as a response to the Reform Party's which argued that "immigration levels should not only be reduced but should be guided by economic needs, not by social or humanitarian imperatives" (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 63). The proposed changes were for Canadian immigration policy to again raise selection standards by selecting candidates who could contribute to society and "place less demand on state-financed integration services" and lowering immigration levels (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 65). There was an explicit economic focus embedded in the proposed Liberal changes. This is important to mention as Chapter 2 will further demonstrate how the federal government was a stakeholder in both the social justice *and* economic coalitions. A large portion of the discussions during the consultation process in the 1995 federal budget was the topic of sponsorship and the idea that immigration policy reflected a selection process that was "structured by neo-liberal ideals

of self-sufficiency, individualization, commodification, and, to some extent a smaller role for the state in the area of social spending” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 69). Following the 1994 policy changes we saw the emergence of NGOs such as the Canadian Council of Refugees and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women speaking out against the social and financial discriminatory practices of the government’s new policy strategy (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 52). Here, we can see the beginning of some of the social justice stakeholders becoming more publicly involved in immigration policy decisions. The raising of the standards of the selection process was a way for the Canadian government to select highly skilled and educated immigrants who would be able to easily integrate into Canadian society and especially in the labour market, and indirectly counter the effects of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition.

A key immigration policy milestone during the 1990s was the creation of several bilateral agreements between the federal and provincial governments (Seidle 2013, Kostov 2008, Paquet 2014, Couture Gagnon 2020). These agreements were defining in bringing provinces into the ECA advocacy coalition. The creation of the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) would allow provinces to directly select a limited number of immigrants for permanent immigration in their province; those selected were often intended to respond to the province’s specific labour market needs (Paquet 2014, 523). As Mireille Paquet put it, “since the 1990s, every province has gradually emerged as an actor in the governance of immigration and integration in Canada” (2014, 519). Paquet’s book traces the “federalization” of Canadian immigration and takes an institutionalist approach (2014). However, Paquet’s approach to explaining the federalization of immigration policy in Canada using an institutionalist approach does not account for the various governmental and non-governmental actors. This book solely contributes to the process tracing narrative of

immigration policy change and creates an opportunity to develop an alternative explanation based on ACF because the societal actors were important in the development of ECA. The PNP established provincial governments as significant stakeholder within the economic productivity sub-coalition. As Seidle points out, “since the inception of the PNP, provincial governments have had considerable flexibility to tailor their programs to labour market needs and other priorities, such as attracting entrepreneurs and...facilitating family reunification” (2013, 9). Additionally, the PNP in the 2000s continued to increase the number of highly educated and skilled immigrants settled through the program (Seidle 2013, Paquet 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022).

In 2003, Statistics Canada released a publication of data that tracked integration of immigrants into Canada – The Longitudinal Survey of Immigrations to Canada (LSIC) (Statistics Canada 2003). The Survey, “conducted by Statistics Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada under the Policy Research Initiative, is a comprehensive survey designed to study how newly arrived immigrants adjust over time to living in Canada. It uses a longitudinal design to study a sample of immigrants and refugees aged 15 years and older who arrived in Canada between October 2000 and September 2001” (Statistics Canada 2003, 5). The survey found that, overall, “71 % of immigrants reported encountering at least one barrier to gaining access to a job at their level of skill. Lack of Canadian experience was identified by 26 % as their primary barrier 6 months after arrival, and the same figure of 26 % was found 7 to 24 months after arrival. Other perceived barriers included a lack of acceptance or recognition of foreign work experience or qualifications” (Reitz et al. 2014, 5). The release of the LSIC revealed the failure of integration programs for highly educated and skilled immigrants coming to Canada, and further demonstrates that immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as a key immigration issue as identified by stakeholders in the ECA coalition that required a policymaking solution.

Contrary to the mainstream debate on the benefits of adopting the points system into Canada's immigration system, Jeffery Reitz (2013) and Banjeree et al. (2022) identify that immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition are alive and well despite the introduction of the point system and ECA policy. Reitz says, "skilled immigrants often do not succeed in getting those professional and other highly skilled jobs for which they are presumed to be qualified...As a result, pervasive underutilization of the skilled of highly educated immigrants" (2013, 147). In addition, Banjeree et al. say that "the points system has been adjusted to emphasize general human capital, including formal educational credentials. Although these changes increased the education levels of new immigrants in Canada, it did not necessarily lead to successful integration into the labour market" (2022, 360). It is this issue of immigrant credential non-recognition and skill underutilization in 1990s that revealed the gap in Canada's immigration policy framework that ECA was introduced to correct (Reitz 2013, Reitz et al 2014, Banerjee et al. 2022). This policy goal was further taken up through the creation of the ECA coalition who worked to implement ECA services formally within the official immigration policy framework. Furthermore, Reitz discusses how when we observe the various policy strategies that Canada has used to address the systemic issue of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition "they involve not only employers, regulatory agencies, and government, but also educational institutions" (2013, 158). While Rupa Banjeree, Feng Hou, Jeffery Reitz and Tingting Zhang, agree that there is "substantial empirical evidence that the value of foreign educational credentials is heavily discounted in the Canadian labour market" (360), results from their analysis of Statistics Canada's IDMB most recent data from 2017, "indicate that the mandatory ECA requirement has a positive relationship with immigrants' early labour market outcomes. A comparison of immigrant cohorts in the FSW category before and after the introduction of the

ECA requirement shows that the ECA is associated with improved employment rates and earnings for both men and women after two years in Canada” (2022, 370). Overall, Reitz and Banjeree et al.’s articles critique and evaluate the effectiveness, and ultimately the usefulness, of Canada’s immigration strategy. Evaluating the success of this policy strategy is outside the scope of this paper, but Reitz (2014) and Banjeree et al. (2022) reinforce the importance of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as a problem facing Canadian immigration policy.

Identifying immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as prominent issues embedded within the Canadian immigration policy framework contributes to explaining why education credential assessment services were formally adopted into the Canadian immigration framework. Tracing the different phases of immigration policy in Canada beginning in the 1940s until the 2000s demonstrates that immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition were issues that consistently grew in importance (Reitz 2005, Seidle 2013, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Paquet 2014, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). Previous Canadian immigration policy was unable to address these problems and to efficiently integrate immigrants with foreign credentials into the Canadian labour market, thus the social justice sub-coalition and economic productivity sub-coalition, together with the federal government, created an advocacy coalition with the shared policy goal of integrating ECA services formally into the policy framework in the 2000s.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The goal of this paper is to explain why and how education credential assessment services were implemented in the Canadian immigration policy framework in the early 2000s. Thus, the study of policy processes and policy change is central to answering my research question. The

literature review discussed important concepts such as immigrant skill underutilization and immigrant credential non-recognition that are linked to the inclusion of ECA into the immigration policy framework. To explain why and how ECA services were included into the Canadian immigration policy framework, Hank Jenkins-Smith and Paul Sabatier's coalition advocacy model will be used as a theoretical framework. This framework was first developed by Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier to explain policy change over time in the United States in opposition to existing, mainstream policy process models that failed to account for policy actors outside of governmental institutions (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1994). The issue with established models in trying to explain policymaking by regulatory agencies, is that they focus on one singular institutional actor, may it be an interest group, legislative committee etc. (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 237). This acknowledgement by Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier is key for the case of the ECA advocacy coalition as "immigration legislation [in Canada] ...provides for the consultation with non-governmental organizations" (Immigration Canada 1990, 1). The ACF model was a critique of established models that synthesized the best features of both top-down and bottom-up approaches (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, 178). The ACF created a model that demonstrated that "an advocacy coalition does consist of actors from a variety of governmental and private organizations at different levels of government who share a set of policy beliefs and seek to realize them by influencing the behavior of multiple governmental institutions over time" (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, 186). Therefore, this section will review the ACF and its central

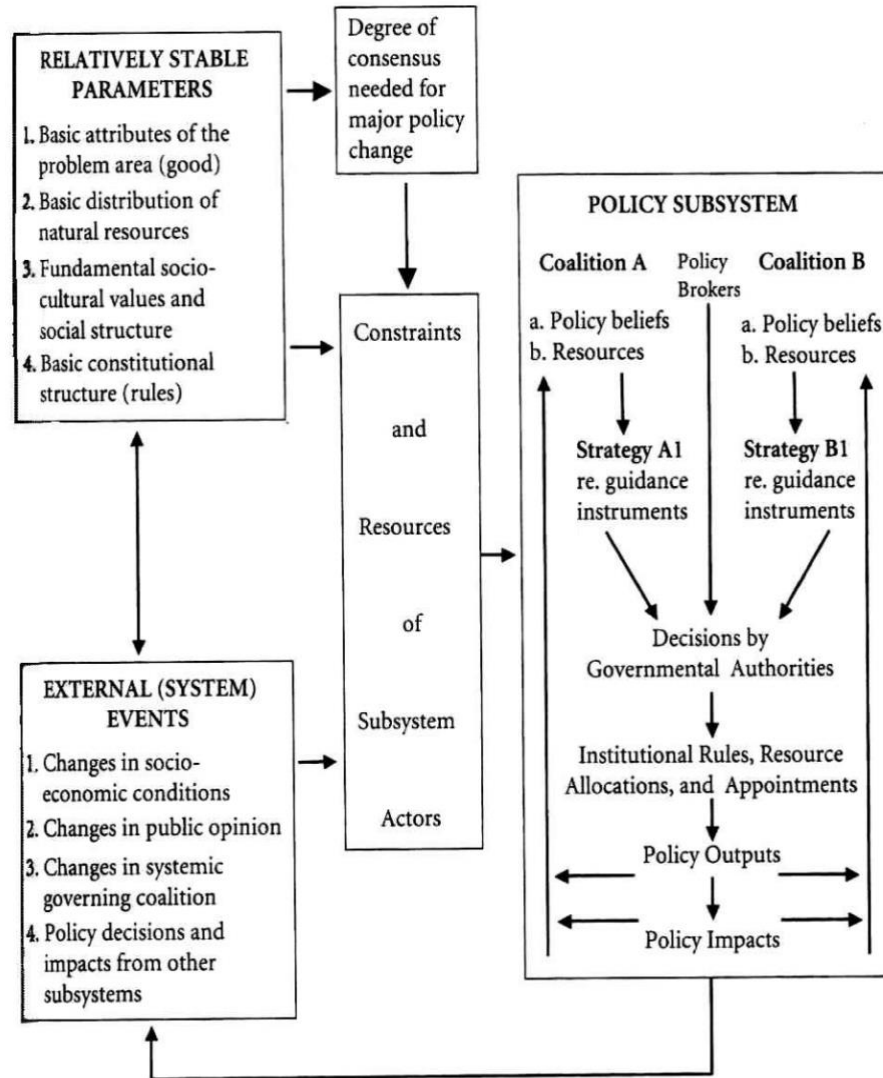


Figure 1: Diagram of the Advocacy Coalition Framework (1998) (Sabatier and Weible 2007, 191)

attributes as an appropriate model for explaining the inclusion of ECA into the Canadian immigration framework.

In a 1994 review of their initial ACF model, Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier found that the framework had four “basic premises: 1. Understanding the process of policy change – and the role of learning therein – requires a time perspective of a decade or more 2. The most useful way to think about policy change over such a time span is through a focus on policy subsystems (i.e., the interaction of actors from different institutions who follow, and seek to influence, governmental

decisions in a policy area) 3. Subsystems must include an intergovernmental dimension, at least for domestic policy and 4. Public policies or programs can be conceptualized in the same manner as belief systems i.e., sets of value priorities and causal assumptions about how to realize them” (178). My ECA case study meets the four basic premises as the time perspective traces several decades, it focuses on the policy subsystem of immigration, there is an intergovernmental dimension (provincial and federal), and immigration policy can be conceptualized as having priorities (economic vs social). As the ACF states, for an advocacy coalition to exist, it must have a stable belief system that consists of both core and secondary policy aspects (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, 181). While some members’ beliefs may vary slightly, and not all will have precisely the same beliefs – the core policy beliefs revolve around policy implementation in a specific policy subsystem (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, 181). The belief systems of coalitions are central to determining what resources are available to it and the guidance instruments chosen to influence policy change (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, Sabatier and Weible 2007). In the case of the ECA advocacy coalition, the members core policy beliefs revolve around the social justice and economic productivity of Canadian immigration policy. Furthermore, the ACF requires a policy sub-system to have a “degree of consensus needed for policy change” (Sabatier and Weible 2007, 200). The members of the ECA advocacy coalition concur that the issues of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition to be important issues that require major policy change. The members of the ECA coalition are the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, the Canadian Council for Refugee’s, education credential assessment organizations, provincial governments, and the federal government.

The notion of a policy subsystem is fundamental. A policy subsystem is best described as a specific area of policy that is made up by specific actors and stakeholders whose vested interests

and core policy goals focus on said area of policy (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, Sabatier and Weible 2007). Sabatier and Weible characterize a policy subsystem as “composed of participants who regularly seek to influence policy within a policy subsystem” (2007, 192). In my case, the ECA advocacy coalition seeks to influence policy within the immigration policy subsystem. Within the policy subsystem, the ACF suggests there can be two coalitions. These coalitions (Coalition A and B), have separate core policy beliefs and may use opposing guidance mechanisms for similar, or opposing, policy change (Sabatier 1988, Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, Sabatier and Weible 2007). In the case of the ECA advocacy coalition, Coalition A consists of members whose core policy beliefs are rooted in the social justice aspects of immigration policy; as such I call this coalition the social justice sub-coalition. The stakeholders I have identified as part of the social justice coalition are Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants and the Canadian Council for Refugees, (Owen 2007, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Paquet 2014, Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014). Coalition B’s core policy beliefs are concerned with the economic productivity and benefits of immigration policy; as such coalition B is referred to as the economic productivity sub-coalition. The stakeholders I have identified as part of the economic productivity sub-coalition are private education credential assessment companies and provincial governments (Owen 2007, Seidle 2013, Reitz 2013, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Paquet 2014, Reitz et al. 2014). One of the contributions of this paper is to understand different coalitions need not necessarily work against each other, but that they can work in parallel. In addition to the existence of two coalitions within the policy sub-system, there exists policy brokers. Policy brokers are “policy actors whose dominant concern is with keeping the level of political conflict within acceptable limits and with reaching some ‘reasonable’ solution to the problem” (Sabatier 1988, 133). The ECA coalition does not have distinct policy brokers, but what I would contribute to

Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier's ACF policy model would be the role of a *dynamic stakeholder*. In the context of the ECA advocacy coalition, the federal government works as a dynamic stakeholder as its policy position can be attributed to both that of the social justice and the economic productivity sub-coalitions.

### ***External Guidance Instruments***

To achieve their policy goals, the coalitions may utilize and experiment with a variety of *guidance instruments* (Sabatier 1988, Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, Sabatier and Weible 2007). Guidance instruments are basically mechanisms or processes which exist within the policy sub-system to influence and enact policy change. There are six guidance instruments identified within the ACF. The first is *statutory authority*, which involves mandating policy objectives, making decisions contingent upon specific findings, affecting the policy preferences and powers of participants, and regulating the range of sanctions and judicial review (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 242). The second is *court decisions*, which refers to the “effects of litigation on both agency outputs and policy outcomes.” (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 243). This instrument refers to the “capacity of courts to affect agencies’ legal authority is beyond dispute” and the debate on court decisions “ability to affect agency *behaviour*” (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 243). The third is *budgetary review*, which involves the review of the allocation of a program or agency’s resources with the idea that budgetary sanctions are “followed by substantial changes in agency policy” (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 243). The fourth is *appointments (political appointees)* which attributes changes in policy to “reflect the policy preferences of the appointing officials” (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 243). The fifth external guidance instrument is *participation by outsiders* in agency decisions (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 244). This instrument is identified in the

ACF as the “principal means by which interest groups and agencies can directly influence the policies of a regulatory agency” (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 244). Participation by outsiders considers the influence of interest groups outside of a given agency which can sway policy outcomes. The last guidance instrument is the *publication of evaluation studies*. This instrument highlights how many “leaders of regulatory agencies are not popularly elected,” and thus must rely on “(a) their compliance with legal norms, and (b) their superior technical expertise” for their legitimacy (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 245). Published studies are then used by outsiders to demonstrate that “an agency is either acting illegally or is technically incompetent” (Sabatier and Pelkey 1998, 245) for the purpose of initiating policy change. A mixture of external guidance instruments was used by the ECA advocacy coalition. Chapter 2 will further discuss and analyze guidance instruments and how they were used by the different members in the ECA advocacy coalition.

The purpose of Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier’s framework is to explain policy change over a longer period. This model can be applied to understand and explain the evolution of Canadian immigration policy since the 1960s that led to the creation of the ECA advocacy coalition. It took several decades for ECA services to be adopted into the immigration policy framework, even after the recognition of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as significant policy issues. As an example, in Sabatier’s (1988) clean energy case, Coalition A was advocating policy and legislative change, while Coalition B was advocating against change. The key difference in my case is that both Coalition A and B were advocating for policy and legislative change that would involve the implementation of ECA services within the Canadian immigration policy framework. In the case of the ECA advocacy coalition, the two coalitions worked in parallel and utilized different guidance instruments to achieve the larger coalitions policy goals. In

conclusion, the ACF is a framework that acknowledges the existence of various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders involved in public policy change *and* that these actors exist outside of legal and political institutions (i.e., executive, and judicial branches of government). As such, it is useful for explaining why and how ECA was included in the Canadian immigration policy framework.

## **Methodology**

My research is conducted using a process tracing methodology. Process tracing is concerned with identifying and “tracing causal mechanisms using detailed, within-case empirical analysis of how a causal mechanism operated in real-world cases” (Beach and Pedersen 2019, 1). The three main components of process tracing as suggested by Beach and Pedersen are “(1) theorization about causal mechanisms linking causes and outcomes, (2) the analysis of the observable empirical manifestations of theorized mechanisms, and (3) the complementary use of comparative methods to select cases and to enable generalizations of findings from single-case studies to other causally similar cases” (2019, 1). Using a process tracing methodology presents many advantages for explaining the inclusion of ECA as a policy outcome. First, combined with the Advocacy Coalition Framework, it allows me to analyze policy change better and more effectively over a longer period of time to explain the existence of an advocacy coalition in the immigration policy sub-system. Secondly, it allows to better understand the stakeholders involved and active in the policy subsystem. Lastly, process tracing offers me the analytical ability to account for inferences to be made about the process of Canadian immigration policy change in general.

Process tracing allows me to identify the main stakeholders involved in immigration policy in Canada over time, and ultimately to target the stakeholders of the ECA advocacy coalition. Furthermore, process tracing is an appropriate methodology as Sabatier (1988) uses process tracing to demonstrate how the ACF model could be used to explain the introduction of federal clean air policy in the United States in the 1970s. Sabatier identified stakeholders within the U.S. air pollution control subsystem within a 20-year period that contributed to both the implementation and the blocking of key environmental policy through advocacy coalitions (1988). Additionally, Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier in their 1994 article discusses six cases where researchers have utilized the ACF model and a process tracing methodology. Among the six ACF cases Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier evaluate, one case was a study done by Hanne Mawhinney in 1993 where she “applied the ACF to efforts by the French- speaking minority in Ontario to gain their own secondary schools in that province” (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier, 1994, 185). Mawhinney’s case which explored the “analysis of educational conflict in Ontario revealed a rather cohesive Francophone Rights Coalition composed of national francophone interest groups, their local affiliates, local school officials from francophone schools, and elected officials and political parties from Quebec” (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, 186). Like the case I present in this paper regarding the ECA advocacy coalition, Mawhinney demonstrated the applicability of the ACF in a Canadian case, as well as the similar prevalent role of the government and stakeholders outside legal and political institutions in policy subsystems. Selecting Canada as a case study when discussing ECA programs within an immigration policy framework contributes to the overall study of policy change as it reveals the complexity and interconnectedness of state and non-state actors to create significant policy change within a policy subsystem, but also acknowledging that these advocacy coalitions operate in a larger macro-structural environment.

Process tracing will allow me to answer my research question and explain why the ECA was included in the Canadian immigration framework by considering a temporal dimension whereby policy changes that occur are equally as important as what the policy changes are. Canadian immigration policy has undertaken multiple strategies since the 1960s (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Seidle 2013, Triadafilopoulos 2013), thus a process tracing approach best captures key events and policy changes that contribute to the eventual creation of the ECA advocacy coalition and the inclusion of ECA into the immigration policy framework. My data is collected from primary documents and secondary literature. The primary sources that contribute to the process tracing method of this paper are key immigration policy documents produced by various governments: *Immigration Act* 1967, 1976, Canada-Quebec bilateral agreements 1971, 1975, 1978 and 1991, Federal Budget 1995, Provincial Nominee Program agreements, *The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* 2001, and The Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP). Primary evidence from consultations held by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration between 1994 and 1997, is used as evidence to first show the federal government's role as the *dynamic stakeholder* in the ECA advocacy coalition, and second, demonstrate the growing support for integration strategies for immigrants by members of the ECA advocacy coalition. The secondary literature used builds the analytical narrative of the two key points in this paper: 1. The timeline of the notions of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition increasing as structural problems within immigration policy (Reitz 2005, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al.) and 2. The inclusion of education credential assessment within the immigration policy framework resulting from the creation of the ECA advocacy coalition that developed over time.

The timeline that is traced spans from 1962 until 2003. The year 1962 is the start of my timeline as it is the year that the points system was first introduced as an immigration policy strategy (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 24); a policy that created the necessary environment for immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition to become an issue by actors who would eventually become stakeholders in the ECA advocacy coalition. Key stakeholder actions are identified within the chosen period which influenced the creation of the advocacy coalition. The traced period demonstrates the introduction of the points system, and the détente of economic productivity as the superior policy strategy, as well as the creation of immigration advocacy organizations, such as the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants and the Canadian Council of Refugees which were both founded in 1978. Tracing the 30 years leading up to the formal creation of the ECA advocacy coalition in the year 2000, establishes stakeholders' roles and policy motivations that reflect either the social justice or economic productivity sub-coalition, as well as their common policy goal as the larger ECA advocacy coalition advocating for ECA to be included in the Canadian immigration policy framework. The years 1995-2003 is the defining policy era of the ECA advocacy coalition. The 1990s saw the creation of the PNP program, individual provinces began to designate ECA companies with credential assessment, federal consultations with advocacy coalition members, and lastly, the federal government introduced new immigration legislation and initiatives. Finally, 2003 is the year I argue that the ECA advocacy coalition successfully achieved their policy goal of the inclusion of education credential assessment within the Canadian immigration policy framework. 2003 is the year that the Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP) (Government of Canada, 2020c) was created. Thus, a process tracing methodology establishes immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as a problem identified by various members of the ECA advocacy coalition; however,

process tracing also allows me to establish the stakeholders of the ECA advocacy coalition and when the advocacy coalition was formed.

## Chapter 2

This chapter comprises two sections. The first section features the analysis. It traces the evolution of the economic productivity sub-coalition and its stakeholders from 1962 until 2003, establishing the role of the stakeholders within the broader ECA advocacy coalition in bringing about policy change that resulted in the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework. It then traces the developments of the social justice sub-coalition in the same time frame, working parallel with the economic productivity coalition. Next, it highlights the role of the dynamic stakeholder into the ACF model. This establishes the federal government as the dynamic stakeholder within the ECA advocacy coalition and its policy position is influenced by motivations associated with both the social justice and economic productivity sub-coalitions. The second section of this chapter discusses the findings of my analysis.

### **Analysis**

The previous chapter presented the Advocacy Coalition Framework as designed by Sabatier and Smith-Jenkins and argued that immigration skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as significant problems that required policy solutions. This chapter analyzes the major stakeholders in Canadian immigration policy that participated in the construction of the ECA advocacy coalition and contributed to its success in the inclusion of education credential assessment services within the Canadian immigration policy framework. There is evidence of two sub-coalitions coalitions, working parallel towards the same policy objective, within the broad ECA advocacy coalition. The ECA advocacy coalition's core beliefs are rooted in both social justice and the economic productivity of immigration within the Canadian economy. There are two

categories where stakeholders can be placed within the broad ECA advocacy coalition: 1. Non-governmental organizations and 2. Governmental and regulatory bodies. The first category of stakeholders, NGOs, include stakeholders that are members of both the social justice and the economic productivity sub-coalitions. Unlike other policy sub-systems, “immigration legislation is unusual in that it provides for consultation with non-governmental organizations and individuals, and requires consultation with the provinces” (Immigration Canada 1990, 1), such is the case of the ECA advocacy coalition. The stakeholders that are included in this category are: the Canadian Council of Refugees, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, and World Education Services. The members of the second category stakeholders are: provincial governments and the federal government. Provincial governments are part of the economic productivity sub-coalition, while the federal government is the dynamic stakeholder. These two sub-coalitions make up the broader ECA advocacy coalition, which delivered the inclusion of education credential assessment services in the Canadian immigration policy framework.

I identify the ECA coalition as being established in 2000. The actors that comprise the economic productivity and the social justice sub-coalition, and the dynamic stakeholder as the broader ECA advocacy coalition, are all actively consulted by the federal government and involved in the 1995 immigration reform consultations (Immigration Canada 1990, Parliament of Canada 1995, Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2014), except for World Education Services. The provincial government of Ontario formally designated WES as their credential assessment service in 2000. Thus, in 2000, all stakeholders in the ECA advocacy coalition were simultaneously involved in the policy goal of education credential assessment as being included in the Canadian immigration policy framework. Prior to 2000, the actors identified both sub-coalitions had independently recognized the issue of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition, but it was

the immigration reform consultations in 1994 and 1995 held by the federal government that brought all, but one, stakeholders together to address this issue. Through the consultations, the federal government also recognized the issue of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition. Then, with WES's formal designation in Ontario, the ECA advocacy coalition was created.

In their article, *Incorporating Multiple Actors and Guidance Instruments into Models of Regulatory Policymaking: An Advocacy Coalition Framework* (1987), Paul Sabatier and Neil Pelkey, endorse Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier's argument that the prominent policymaking theories (i.e. the dominance model, competing interest group model, surrogate representation model, the organization process model [Gormley 1982], legislative overseer model, and the executive overseer model [Moe 1982, Weingast and Moran 1983]) cannot explain all phenomenon of policymaking for social/public policy (236-237). This, I argue, is the same predicament involved in explaining the inclusion of ECA services into Canadian immigration policy framework. There is no single actor or a single category of actors that is solely responsible for this policy outcome, but as Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith suggest, a coalition of actors and stakeholders produced the policy outcome.

### **The Economic Productivity Coalition**

The economic productivity coalition is concerned with one main policy motivation: the inclusion of education credential assessment within the Canadian immigration framework as it pertains to the economic productivity benefits of immigration. The members of the economic productivity coalition are provincial governments and organizations that offer education credential assessments, such as World Education Services (WES). Tracing the economic productivity

coalition from the 1960s, there is evidence that provincial governments, especially Quebec (Kostov 2008, Seidle 2013, Couture Gagnon 2020), played a significant role in the formulation of credential evaluation immigration policy before the creation of the ECA advocacy coalition in the 1995. ECA service providers, like WES, did not appear until the 1970s and then did not gain prominence until the 1990s (Owen 2007, 40). This section traces the development of the economic productivity sub-coalition. It shows each stakeholder's role and highlights the economic productivity sub-coalition's overall contribution to the larger ECA advocacy coalition's achievement of including ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework.

The motivation behind the economic productivity sub-coalition to have ECA included in the Canadian immigration policy framework was the perceived unproductiveness of highly educated and skilled immigrants under the economic class admitted based on their credentials, but not recognized in the Canadian labour market (Reitz 2005, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). The issue of unproductiveness of highly educated and skilled immigrants is the main contributor to the underutilization and nonrecognition of immigrant skills for the economic productivity sub-coalition (Reitz 2005, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree e). Thus, the members of the economic productivity sub-coalition, within the larger ECA advocacy coalition, identified and recognized skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as an issue that needed to be addressed through policy change, specifically immigration policy (Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014).

### ***Provincial governments.***

The first signs of provinces becoming significantly involved in immigration policy was the signing of multiple bilateral agreements between the federal government and Quebec in 1971, 1975, 1978 and 1991 (Kostov 2008, Couture Gagnon 2020). Prior to the first bilateral agreement

in 1971, in 1965, “Québec had a Service of Immigration within the ministère des Affaires culturelles, but this was no longer sufficient for the province. Federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Marchand had published, the year before, the ‘Canadian Immigration Policy,’ in which he claimed that Canada ought to increase the French-speaking immigrants (Couture Gagnon 2020, 266). Quebec’s ambition for more immigration powers resurfaced in 1968-1969, when the province “noted that its neighbouring province, Ontario, had since 1947 received immigrants that fitted its workforce needs, and that the contrary was true for Québec” (Couture Gagnon 2020, 254). During the period between 1971 and 1991, Quebec was consistently putting pressure on the federal government to negotiate for more “provincial rights in the field of immigration” (Kostov 2008, 91). The Lang-Cloutier 1971 agreement “allowed Quebec immigration counselors to be placed in certain federal offices abroad” (Kostov 2008, 93) in France and Italy (Couture Gagnon 2020, 254). The role of the Quebec counselors was very limited, under the title of “orientation officers,” the counselors “could only inform potential immigrations about various aspects of life in Quebec” (Kostov 2008, 93-94). The Lang-Cloutier agreement allowed for the preservation of the federal government’s overall powers in all the stages of the immigration process but awarded the Quebec government a new presence in countries where there were “prospective Francophone immigrants” (Kostov 2008, 93). The Lang-Cloutier agreement was the steppingstone in establishing precedence for provinces to be prominent actors within Canadian immigration policy. However, just four years after the signing of the Lang-Cloutier agreement, the government of Quebec initiated an additional round of negotiations with the federal government and “managed to sign a more much favorable agreement for the interests of Quebec” (Kostov 2008, 94). Under section 2(b) of the new Andras-Bienvenue Agreement of 1975 stated that “Quebec could have immigration rather than information officers in any city of a particular country in which Canada had federal immigration offices,” and

allowed for Quebec officials abroad to represent the province almost exclusively (Kostov 2008, 94). Additionally, section 6 authorized Quebec counselors to “review and comment on all immigration applications from candidates destined to Quebec or who, in the opinion of the Canadian official, are [able] to settle there” (Kostov 2008, 95). The motivations behind both the Lang-Cloutier 1971 and the Andras-Bienvenue 1975 immigration agreements between Quebec and the federal government were centred on the economic value of highly skilled and educated immigrants, and that applicants shared a language to preserve a predominantly French economy (Kostov 2008, Couture Gagnon 2020). Final decisions on each applicant are still left to the federal government, nevertheless the 1975 agreement further cemented the precedent for the role of provinces having decision-making abilities regarding immigration policy (Kostov 2008, Couture Gagnon 2020).

Only a year after the 1975 Andras-Bienvenue Agreement, the Quebec provincial minister of immigration, Jacques Couture, “announced to the media his government’s goal of negotiating a new immigration agreement with the federal government” (Kostov 2008, 95). The goal of this round of negotiations was to seek to again increase the role of Quebec in the immigration process to ensure that applicants were aware that Quebec “was a predominantly French society” (Kostov 2008, 95). Quebec’s emphasis on language requirements for immigration were economically strategic in that it would “prevent many new immigrants from learning English and therefore constrain their labor mobility within Quebec” (Kostov 2008, 96). The next Canada-Quebec Immigration Agreement, called the Cullen-Couture Agreement, was signed in 1978 and took effect on March 30, 1979 (Kostov 2008, Couture Gagnon 2020). The Cullen-Couture Agreement “widen[ed]” (Couture Gagnon 2020, 257) Quebec’s power over immigration policy in the province, and significant new powers in the selection of individual immigrants in the form of a

“positive and negative veto” (Kostov 2008, 96). The positive veto allowed Quebec to accept “applicants who met Quebec’s standards under its selection criteria would be admitted even if they did not meet the standards under the Canadian federal selection system” (Kostov 2008, 96). The negative veto allowed Quebec to block “immigrants who did not meet Quebec’s selection criteria would be denied entry to Quebec, even if they were approved under the federal selection system (Kostov 2008, 96-97). The year 1987 saw an additional round of negotiations between Quebec and the federal government at Meech Lake. During the Meech Lake Accords, Quebec sought new autonomous powers in which increased immigration powers was a key demand. Despite the failure of the Meech Lake Accords, Quebec and the federal government signed a new immigration agreement in 1991 (Kostov 2008, Seidle 2013, Couture Gagnon 2020, Paquet 2022), the Canada-Quebec Accord relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens (Government of Canada), also known as the Gagnon-Tremblay-McDougall Agreement (Kostov 2008, Seidle 2013, Couture Gagnon 2020). The 1991 agreement “authorized Quebec to perform a key role in determining the proportion of immigrants that it would receive annually” (Kostov 2008, 98). The 1991 Accord also gave Quebec “the right to select from applicants applying from within Canada on compassionate or humanitarian reasons, a group that included both those who had been refused refugee status by the federal government” (Kostov 2008, 98). This provision, while under the guise of “compassionate or humanitarian reasons” (Kostov 2008, 98), contributes to the goal of maintaining the Quebec economy to be competitive *and* structured by the French language (Couture Gagnon 2020, 256). Therefore, the inclusion of this provision is solely motivated by economic productivity of immigrants within Quebec (Kostov 2008, Couture Gagnon 2020). Lastly, the 1991 Accord, unlike previous immigration agreements between Quebec and the federal government, awarded Quebec powers to override the federal government “in planning and

managing all reception and settlement services within the province” (Kostov 2008, 98). The Canada-Quebec Accord set precedence for other provinces to become significantly more involved in their own matters of immigration. As Seidle points out, “in the early 1990s, the governments of some of the Prairie and Atlantic provinces began to express concern about the low levels of immigration to their regions” (2013, 4). Thus, the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) was created.<sup>2</sup> Provincial Nominee programs across Canada were negotiated and created between 1998 and 2003, apart from Ontario and Yukon where PNP was formally established in 2009 and 2015, respectively (Government of Canada, 2021). However, Nunavut currently does not have a PNP agreement with the federal government (Government of Canada, 2021).

The PNP allowed for provinces to have a greater influence in its choice of immigrants, however, the PNP also concerns itself with a very specific set of criteria in which the province could utilize the program. The program is specifically for workers who: have the skills, education, and work experience to contribute to the economy of a specific province or territory, who want to live in that province, and who want to become permanent residents of Canada (Government of Canada, 2021). According to the federal government, the PNP has four main objectives: “1. To increase the economic benefits of immigration to provinces/territories based on their economic priorities and labour market conditions, 2. To distribute the benefits of immigration across all provinces/territories, 3. To enhance federal-provincial-territorial collaboration, and 4. To

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<sup>2</sup> All Provincial Nominee Programs: Quebec: Arrima, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program, Ontario: Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program, Manitoba: Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program, Alberta: Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program, British Columbia: British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program, Prince Edward Island: Prince Edward Island Provincial Nominee Program, New Brunswick: New Brunswick Provincial Nominee Program, Nova Scotia: Nova Scotia Provincial Nominee Program, Newfoundland and Labrador: Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Nominee Program, Northwest Territories: Northwest Territories Provincial Nominee Program, Yukon: Yukon Provincial Nominee Program, *Government of Canada, 2021*.

encourage development of official language minority communities” (Seidle 2013, 6). The introduction of Provincial Nominee Programs was a key policy event that established all provinces as stakeholders within both the economic productivity coalition and the overall ECA advocacy coalition. Indeed, in addition to the power that the PNP offered provinces in harnessing domestic immigration policies that were economic productivity oriented, provinces were now partnered with ECA organizations and could directly assess highly educated and skilled immigrants credentials for more effective and productive economic integration within domestic labour markets (Owen 2007, Seidle 2013). The following analysis, which traces the role of WES, a prominent organization that offers education credential assessments (Government of Canada, 2020b), will show how ECA services and provinces worked together to influence immigration policy under the economic productivity coalition to include ECA in the Canadian immigration policy framework.

The culmination of the 1971, 1975, 1978 and 1991 bilateral agreements are worth mentioning in associating the inclusion of ECA services into the Canadian immigration framework with the ECA advocacy coalition for two reasons. First, the Canada-Quebec bilateral agreements set a precedent for the creation of PNP programs, which established provinces as part of the economic productivity sub-coalition and the broader ECA coalition. The second reason is that the bilateral agreements demonstrate the use of *statutory authority* and as a key guidance instrument of the economic productivity sub-coalition. Statutory authority was the chosen guidance instrument by other provincial governments to negotiate provincial immigration programs, which as stakeholders they used to advocate for the inclusion of ECA into the Canadian immigration policy framework.

### *Education Credential Assessment Services.*

Companies that provide education credential assessment services are a key stakeholder category in this coalition. The expansion of countries that Canada accepted immigrations from after the implementation of the points system led to a more diverse makeup of applicants with foreign credentials that the Canadian government and labour market was inexperienced in evaluating (Reitz 2005, Reitz 2013, Reitz et. al 2014). These companies were created with the intention to make it easier for highly educated and skilled immigrants to integrate into the Canadian economy and labour market in a productive way. The ECA service provider involved with the ECA advocacy coalition is World Education Services (WES). World Education Services introduced the emergence of another actor who would become a key stakeholder in the ECA advocacy coalition. WES's official entrance as a stakeholder in the economic productivity coalition occurred in 2000 when the company opened a Toronto office, and the Ontario government authorized WES as the provinces designated ECA service provider (Owen 2007, WES 2022). However, WES had been operating in North America since its creation in the 1970s (Owen 2007, 40). WES is a non-profit organization that was "established in 1974 by a group of individuals at New York University" (Owen 2007, 40). Academics in the United States recognized that immigration skill underutilization and credential non-recognition was an emerging issue in the context of the expansion of immigration policy. In the same year that WES was founded, the organization completed just 20 evaluations (WES, 2022). The establishment of WES in 1974 is significant because it was the first service provider in North America to use credential evaluations as an additional component of the immigration application process. When WES first started evaluating foreign credentials, they used an educational equivalency model (Owen 2007, 40). The equivalency model sought to find identical equivalences between international and domestic

curricula. However, the equivalency model proved to be difficult and did not lead to much success, so WES shifted from credential equivalence to recognition (Owen 2007, 40). Educational credential recognition focused on the idea that if the level, function, and rights granted by the international credential were comparable to that of the domestic credential, allowing for small differences providing the general purpose of the qualification were comparable (Owen 2007, 40), then integration into the Canadian labour market would be easier. The idea of switching evaluation strategies to that of recognition was to allow foreign education to be accepted by governmental agencies and recognized in the Canadian labour market more easily. Educational credential recognition demonstrates WES as a part of the economic productivity sub-coalition and the ECA advocacy coalition had the policy goal of including ECA services firmly within the Canadian immigration policy framework. Therefore, WES also considered immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition were underlying issues needing to be addressed through the implementation of ECA services within the Canadian immigration policy framework (Owen 2007, 41). In 1998 WES launched its own Automatic International Credential Evaluation System (AICES) (WES, 2022); this is further evidence that WES was a key actor in the ECA advocacy coalition. Furthermore, WES shared the same policy belief that the inclusion of ECA was the appropriate policy solution to the problem of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition.

World Education Services' role in the economic productivity sub-coalition and the larger ECA advocacy coalition was significant as it was further evidence of consensus on the part of provincial governments, the social justice sub-coalition, and the federal government, that immigration skill underutilization and credential non-recognition was a problem which needed to be solved with policy change. WES is a crucial stakeholder in the coalition as it provides the

assessment of the level of transferability of an immigrant's skills into the Canadian labour market (Owen 2007, Reitz 2014). Additionally, the federal and provincial governments rely on the accuracy of the ECA providers in assessing foreign education credentials through the PNP and, eventually, the Foreign Credential Recognition Program (discussed in detail later in the chapter). The way in which ECA providers operate differs across provinces and the federal government: "World Education Services in Ontario...is a private not-for-profit organization [with] government endorsement. In Quebec, Manitoba, and Alberta, credential-assessment services are integrated into provincial government ministries" (Reitz 2014, 121). ECA service providers are a lynchpin in the ECA advocacy coalition. As a stakeholder, WES demonstrated the necessity of ECA service providers in the Canadian labour market, immigration policy framework, and the broader ECA advocacy coalition. By this I mean that WES revealed a concrete way to create a sustainable assessment infrastructure within the Canadian immigration policy framework through partnerships with ECA service providers that would be able to address immigration skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as a policy issue.

The case of the economic productivity sub-coalition demonstrates how explanations for policy change must account for policy actors outside of governmental institutions. WES, as a non-governmental actor, was able to "influence the policies of a regulatory agency," this reflects that the guidance instrument *participation by outsiders* was used to help achieve the economic productivity sub-coalition's policy goal (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 243). Identifying guidance instruments used by the economic productivity sub-coalition is important as it further demonstrates the applicability of the ACF to explain the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework. Finally, under the economic productivity sub-coalition, it can be seen that

World Education Services and provincial governments advocated for the inclusion of ECA in the Canadian immigration policy framework because of the economic benefits of the policy change.

### **The Social Justice Coalition: Immigration Advocacy Organizations**

As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, immigration policy over the last several decades has been heavily influenced by the policy objective of reducing the frequency of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition. For the social justice sub-coalition, and larger ECA advocacy coalition, addressing this policy issue is a core policy objective. As mentioned previously, the introduction of education credential assessment non-profit organizations recognized the “systemic inefficiencies in the field of old credential assessment recognition” and that the consequences of these inefficiencies (immigrant skill underutilization and credential -) were ultimately “detrimental...for all Canadians” (Johnson 2009, 7). The social pressure, which was expressed by the stakeholders in the social justice sub-coalition, was prominent after the post war period, with changing attitudes about race, ethnicity, identity, and citizenship. Thus, the stakeholders identified in the social justice sub-coalition are the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) and the Canadian Council for Refugee’s (CCR). While the economic productivity sub-coalition was concerned with the economic benefits of including ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework, the social justice sub-coalition’s core policy goal was about guaranteeing that those who were identified as highly educated or skilled that were granted admittance through the points system selection process and not discriminated against in the Canadian labour market based upon their country of origin, but instead evaluated solely based on their credentials.

The policy motivations behind the social justice sub-coalition working to have ECA included into the Canadian immigration policy framework are rooted in the social justice aspect of immigration policy. The social justice sub-coalition's policy change motivations were concerned with the indiscriminatory selection practices within the Canadian immigration policy framework, which impacted its ability to recognize highly educated and skilled applicants with credentials from foreign countries, predominantly non-European countries (CCR 2001, Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008). For the social justice sub-coalition, pre-ECA immigration policy lacked the ability to insure fair and equal access to the Canadian labour market for immigrants who were admitted under the economic class based on their credentials but were unable to find employment in their field once they arrived (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Reitz 2013). Therefore, the social justice sub-coalition recognized the issue of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition, and it worked parallel to the economic productivity sub-coalition and the dynamic stakeholder to achieve the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework.

The roles that OCASI and CCR played in the larger ECA advocacy coalition consisted of advocating for policy change that would include ECA in the Canadian immigration policy framework. OCASI and the CCR were both founded in 1978 (Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants 2021, Canadian Council of Refugees 2021). OCASI served to act as a collective voice for immigrant serving agencies and to coordinate responses to shared needs and concerns of immigrants (OCASI, 2021). OCASI's primary concern was focused on the successful settlement and integration of immigrants into Canada (OCASI, 2021). The CCR as an NGO concerned itself with a multitude of issues pertaining to the social prosperity and the settlement of immigrants and refugees coming to Canada (CCR, 2021). When being consulted by the Standing Committee on Immigration and Citizenship in 1995, the CCR characterized itself as "a coalition of 140 groups

from across Canada that work with refugees and immigrants. Our membership consists of a large portion of settlement agencies but also church groups, lawyer groups, solidarity associations, and ethnocultural associations. We function as an information network and advocacy group for our membership” (Parliament of Canada, September 28, 1995). The CCR was consulted on the topic of immigrant settlement programs, of which education credential assessment is a key strategy in the integration and settlement process of highly educated and skill immigrants (Reitz 2005, Owen 2007, Reitz 2013, Seidle 2013, Reitz et al. 2014). The CCR recognized that the “mandate of SPOs is to facilitate the full participation of newcomers into the social, economic, and political life of Canada. Without the financial resources necessary for SPOs to do this, it’s quite likely newcomers will be falling through the cracks” (Parliament of Canada, 1995). The Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants was consulted by the Standing Committee as well and “strongly encourage[d] the federal government to commit to providing, on an ongoing basis, at least at the same level of federal support to immigrant settlement programs as is currently committed. The federal settlement renewal initiative is aimed at decentralization and devolution. OCASI urges the development of strong federal framework for immigrant settlement, including principles, goals, and minimum program objectives” (Parliament of Canada, 1995). The CCR and OCASI’s government’s active role in the consultations on immigration with the federal government indicates the growing support and recognition by coalition members that further investment in integration programs for highly educated and skilled immigrants was necessary. The CCR and OCASI were also heavily consulted for the 1994-1998 *Not Just Numbers* report and the formulation of the 2001 *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2014, 74). *Not just Numbers* “was a discussion document produced by independent consultants and com-missioned by the Liberal government” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2014, 74) on immigration that was published in 1998. This report offered

several policy suggestions, one placing the burden on immigrants to demonstrate “active participation” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2014, 74) as a requirement for citizenship. Additionally, applicants for citizenship would have to demonstrate “a measure of integration as demonstrated by two of the following conditions: employment, study, volunteer/community service, and family care” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2014, 74). On the one hand, OCASI pointed out that these new requirements ignored primary difficulties faced by applicants during the selection process and newcomers in the settlement process in finding domestic labour that accepts their skills or credentials (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 74). And on the other hand, in 1995, when the Liberal government legislated their federal budget, the Canadian Council of Refugees (CCR) pointed out that the right of landing fee (ROLF) “amounts to a regressive flat tax which affects disproportionately immigrants from the South,” and that one of the “possible effects of ROLF...was that it might act as a barrier for notably, ‘economically disadvantaged classes of people and those from parts of the world with income levels markedly inferior to Canadian levels’” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 68). The CCR addressed the indirect discriminatory practices of immigration policy, which indirectly favoured migrants from richer countries who could afford the ROLF, which were primarily European countries (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 68).

The members of the social justice sub-coalition utilized two strategies of guidance instruments to attain their desired policy outcome: 1. participation by outsiders and 2. the publication of evaluation studies. First, as defined in Chapter 1, participation by outsiders refers to the notion that interest groups outside of an agency can influence agencies and sway policy (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 244). The actors of the social justice sub-coalition were all stakeholders outside of governmental agencies, and they were therefore involved in the policy change process as *outside participants*. Second, the CCR published a report on immigration policy as a strategy to

advocate for immigration policy change (Canadian Council of Refugees, 2022). The publication of evaluation studies in the case of the social justice sub-coalition was used by the CCR to demonstrate the technical flaws in the Canadian immigration policy framework and to highlight the pitfalls of integration strategies for immigrants (CCR 2001, 8). The social justice sub-coalition's role within the broader ECA advocacy coalition demonstrated how the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration framework can be explained by the existence of an advocacy coalition that consisted of two sub-coalitions, and a dynamic stakeholder, working parallel to one another.

### **The Federal Government as a Dynamic Stakeholder**

The ECA advocacy coalition consists of two sub-coalitions who worked parallel to one another with the common policy goal of including ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework: the social justice and the economic productivity coalitions. While the core policy goals of both sub-coalitions are the same (the inclusion of ECA in the immigration policy framework), their policy motivations are different. However, in this case study, there was an additional actor that bridged the gap between the two sub-coalitions. When analyzing changes in immigration policy in Canada, the federal government must be included in the discussion. Historically immigration policy has been rather centralized in Canada (Paquet 2014, 522). Because the policy motivations of the two sub-coalitions are different (social justice versus economic), looking historically at immigration policy implemented by the federal government, its policy motivations cannot be attributed solely to either the social justice or economic productivity coalition. I introduce a new category of actor to Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier's ACF: a *dynamic stakeholder*. The federal government's immigration policy motivations, which can be observed in past

legislation and consultations, demonstrate the federal government's role as a stakeholder in the ECA advocacy coalition as being *dynamic*. The 1962 and 1967 *Immigration Act's* and the consultations held in 1995 preceding the 2001 *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, legislated by the federal government introduced new standards and regulations for immigration. This section will show how legislation and consultations reveal the federal government's policy motivations reflect the economic benefits of immigration in Canada, as well as addressing discriminatory issues of past selection processes. Hence, the federal government's policy motivations lined up simultaneously with the social justice sub-coalition and the economic productivity sub-coalition. Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier's ACF offer the role of a *policy broker*, which they define as "policy actors whose dominant concern is with keeping the level of political conflict within acceptable limits and with reaching some 'reasonable' solution to the problem" (Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier 1994, 182). The role of policy broker does not appropriately render the federal government's influence and authority as a stakeholder in the ECA advocacy coalition. Thus, the introduction of the role of the dynamic stakeholder is a needed concept for my case study and allows for the development of a theoretical framework that can explain more complex advocacy coalitions.

To establish *how* the federal government's policy motivations reflect both that of the social justice and economic productivity sub-coalitions, and thus permitting the title of a dynamic stakeholder, the first part of the section will trace key policy events beginning in 1962. The year 1962 was chosen as the starting year for this analysis for two reasons. The first is that the year 1962 saw the introduction of major policy change in federal immigration policy strategy, a transition from primarily economic goal-oriented to a policy strategy that sought to balance economic productivity and social justice. Second, because of this shift in policy strategy, stakeholders who are later identified as part of the ECA advocacy coalition begin to emerge. The

second part of this section will then trace key policy events in the 1990s and early 2000s. These are the years in which I identify as when the federal government established itself as a dynamic stakeholder while the other ECA advocacy coalition actors began operating.

The years 1962-1977 were considerably formative for Canadian immigration policy. 1962 was the year that the federal government introduced the point system. This new system introduced a new immigration policy strategy that would select candidates based upon “new and inclusive criteria” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Triadafilopoulos 2013). The 1962 *Immigration Act* was a policy response by the federal government, to international and domestic pressures claiming that Canadian immigration policy was overtly racist and restrictive of migrants from non-European countries (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Triadafilopoulos 2013). The 1962 *Act* point system was an amended version of the 1952 *Act*, which shifted “to universal skills-based selection criteria in 1962 was primarily aimed at mollifying domestic and international critics of racial discrimination, rather than opening up new sources of skilled migrants” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 24). The most significant element of the 1962 *Act* was Regulation 20 (a) (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 24). This regulation stressed the new approach to the selection process and criteria based on the skills and qualifications of applicants as the main condition for entrance with the purpose of disregarding other factors (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 24). The idea behind Regulation 20 (a) was that if an applicant was able to qualify on the listed grounds and “had sufficient means to establish himself in Canada until he can find employment, or alternatively, has a firm employment opportunity or plan for self-establishment in Canada,” (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 24) then the applicant qualified within the admissible classes. The external pressures claiming overt racial discriminatory tendencies within Canadian immigration that triggered policy reform in 1962 persisted, which was the cause for amendments made to the *Act* and points criteria in 1967 and 1976 (Triadafilopoulos

2013, 24). The amendment introduced in 1976 a new points system and new objectives of Canadian immigration policy (Triadafilopoulos 2013, 31). As stated in section 3, these objective included “3(b) to enrich and strengthen the cultural and social fabric of Canada, taking into account the federal and bilingual character of Canada; (c) to facilitate the reunion in Canada of Canadian citizens and permanent residents with their close relatives from abroad;...(f) to ensure that any person who seeks admission to Canada on either a permanent or temporary basis is subject to standards of admission that do not discriminate in a manner inconsistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.” (Canada: Immigration Act, 1976-77, Refworld). The inclusion of these objectives in the 1976 version of the *Act* demonstrates how the federal government’s policy goals were compatible with social justice aspects of immigration. Additionally, section 3(h), which aims “to foster the development of a strong and viable economy and the prosperity of all regions in Canada” (Canada: Immigration Act, 1976-77, Refworld) demonstrates the importance of the economic productivity and contributions of immigration policy for the federal government. Moreover, “The 1976 federal Immigration Act provided that the minister could enter into an agreement with any province...for the purpose of facilitating the formulation, coordination and implementation of immigration policies and programs” (Seidle 2013, 4). The 1962 *Immigration Act* followed by the 1967 and 1976 reforms are significant as they suggest the federal government is a *dynamic stakeholder* in the ECA advocacy coalition.

The federal government’s role within the advocacy coalition was unique, as its policy goals balanced between ensuring immigration policy effectively contributed to the Canadian economy, while also guaranteeing that those who were identified as highly educated or skilled that were granted admittance were not discriminated against based upon their country of origin and selected solely based on their qualifications. Thus, the federal government cannot be categorized in either

the social justice sub-coalition or the economic productivity sub-coalition, but instead should be understood as having vested interests in the policy motivations of both sub-coalitions.

New immigration policy in the 1980s was non-existent (Kelley and Tribalcock 2010, Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Triadafilopoulos 2013). Between 1989 and 1990, the federal government conducted consultations across Canada to determine immigration strategies in the coming years (Immigration Canada 1990, 1). The 1990 consultations included representatives from business, labour, education, and the social services and health care fields, to name a few (Immigration Canada 1990, 1). One of the areas that these consultations focused on “independent (skilled) immigrants...[who] are assessed according to their ability to contribute to the economy” (Immigration Canada 1990, 2). This category of immigrant would likewise be the focus of the ECA advocacy coalition in the 1995 consultations and the years leading up to the creation of the FCRP in 2003 (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Government of Canada, 2020c). A key conclusion that was drawn from the 1990 consultations was that “Despite the interest in economic aspects of immigration, participants were not comfortable with a policy driven solely by economic considerations” (Immigration Canada 1990, 5). Many of the concerns raised in the 1990 immigration consultations reflected policy approaches that the federal government would eventually embed in the immigration policy framework. The concerns raised about the focus on the economic benefits of immigration, also raised questions about not streamlining the immigration process for highly educated and skilled immigrants (economic immigrants) (Immigration Canada 1990, 5). Immigration Canada’s 1990 consultations concluded that a more robust and diverse stakeholder membership involved in the immigration policy framework (Immigration Canada, 1990). Subsequently, in 1994-1997, the Liberal government at the time entertained new immigration reform (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2014, 63). The minister of Immigration, Sergio

Marchi, announced that the federal government would conduct additional consultations, which would include “traditional interest groups” but also engage “Canadians in a discussion of shared goals and shared responsibilities” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 63). Then in November 1994, the federal government announced that its proposed changes to immigration policy would emphasize “lowering immigration levels and selecting immigrants who could ‘contribute’ to Canadian society and place less demand on state-financed integration services” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008 63). Citizenship and Immigration Canada elaborated and noted that the new reforms would mean “raising selection standards; ensuring that Canadians honour the responsibilities toward sponsored family members; and achieving the appropriate balance between the economic and family components of immigration” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 65). The immigration reforms that the federal government was advocating in its 1994 reforms reflected similar policy motivations as the economic productivity sub-coalition. On June 1, 1995, in front of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, Minister Marchi stated that “[the federal government] are also working with the provinces to redesign our business investor and entrepreneur programs. We hope to implement these changes in 1996, to improve the capacity of these programs to nourish the economy and create jobs for all Canadians” (Parliament of Canada, 1995). For example, the Immigrant Settlement Services department from the Alberta government spoke on the importance of an inter-governmental relationship between provinces, like Alberta, and the federal government in terms of funding for settlement services (Parliament of Canada, 1995). At the heart of the ECA advocacy coalition is the concept of partnership and working as a coalition to achieve their policymaking goals. This point was echoed by Marchi, “Partnership will be a key. Through innovative partnership activities our objective is to make the most of the dollars available. The successful development of new strategies will depend on close cooperation among federal,

provincial...governments, as well as NGOs, both traditional and non-traditional...stakeholders” (Parliament of Canada, 1995). The federal government also spoke on the importance of labour market integration for skilled immigrants coming to Canada: “Canada’s foreign worker policy permits the admission of worker from other countries whose contributions will produce positive economic benefits...Our intention is to facilitate the entry of foreign workers the admission of whom will have the following effects: to create or maintain employment and career opportunities for Canadians...;to strengthen the competitive position of Canadian-based companies operating in the global marketplace” (Parliament of Canada, 1997). These statements before the Standing Committee provide primary evidence of the federal government’s role as a *dynamic stakeholder* within the ECA advocacy coalition.

The *Not Just Numbers* immigration legislative review that was released by the government in 1998 was the result of the federal governments consultations from 1994-1997 (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada 1997, Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008). The authors preface the report by declaring that “the report we submit suggests neither opening our borders wide nor shutting them tight. Rather, it focuses on the fundamental goals of immigration and protection in Canada, and seeks to translate them into well-managed programs” (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada 1997, 2). As shown previously, the consultation process involved several of the members of the social justice sub-coalition. For one, the CCR drew attention to the price of ROLF and the potential social impacts after migrants landed, but as well as influencing the types (i.e., those from richer countries) of applicants. The 1995 proposed federal budget increased immigration fees to \$975 per adult, the citizenship fee would see an increase, as well as the introduction of a “fee for the right of citizenship” (Department of Finance Canada 1995, 40-41). This raised concerns about some of the policies that would discriminate and offer

difficulties for highly educated and skilled immigrants from non-European and poorer countries during the selection process (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, 74). There were two crucial conclusions from the report. First, that “Current research indicates that economic, cultural and social benefits of immigration far outweigh the tensions it may occasionally cause” (Minister of Public Works and Government Services 1997, 26). This conclusion supported the larger ECA advocacy coalitions stable core policy belief in the social justice and economic productivity of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework. The second crucial conclusion of the report was the idea that “Provinces are obviously better equipped than the federal government to discharge this responsibility since they can tailor reception and labour market integration services to local needs” (Minister of Public Works and Government Services 1997, 27). This conclusion reinforced provinces’ membership within the economic productivity sub-coalition and the larger ECA advocacy coalition.

In 2001, the federal government passed the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Immigration and Refugee Protection Act [S.C. 2001, c. 27], Government of Canada). The 2001 *Immigration Act* offers more evidence that the federal government related to both the economic and social justice sub-coalitions. The Act states under the Objectives and Application section 3(1) that “[T]he objectives of this Act with respect to immigration are (a) to permit Canada to pursue the maximum social, culture, and economic benefits of immigrations...[and] (j) to work in cooperation with the provinces to secure better recognition of the foreign credentials of permanent residents and their more rapid integration into society” (Government of Canada 2021, 1). Additionally, under section 12 subsection 2, the 2001 *Immigration Act* established the economic immigration class. Section 12(2) states that “[A] foreign national may be selected as a member of the economic class on the basis of their ability to become economically established in Canada”

(Government of Canada 2021, 2). Lastly, the 2001 *Immigration Act* provided powers to the Minister (referring to the Minister of Immigration): For “the purpose of supporting the attainment of economic goals established by the Government of Canada, the Minister may give instructions establishing a class of permanent residents as part of the economic class referred to in subsection 12(2) and, in respect of the class that is established, governing any matter referred to in paragraphs 14(2)(a) to (g), 26(a), (b), (d) and (e) and 32(d) and the fees for processing applications for permanent resident visas or for permanent resident status and providing for cases in which those fees may be waived” (Government of Canada 2021, 2-3). The policies and regulations that were implemented through the 2001 *Immigration Act*, such as section 12(2) and 14, reflected what the stakeholders of both sub-coalitions expressed during consultations, and the dynamic policy motivations of the federal government. Following the 2001 *Immigration Act*, in March of 2002, the federal government released a report called “Building A Nation, The Regulations under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, Report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration” (Parliament of Canada, 2002). Regarding recognition of foreign credentials, the report states that foreign credential recognition is “[A]n issue that is not addressed by the proposed regulations but is one that arose repeatedly in the course of the Committee’s hearings is the problem faced by a significant number of immigrants who come to Canada expecting to work in their field of expertise” (Parliament of Canada 2002, 15). The report goes on to argue that the expectation by highly educated and skill immigrants to work in their field is “not unreasonable,” given that Canada’s points system gives a considerable amount of weight to “workforce requirements” (Parliament of Canada 2002, 15). The report’s statement on the federal government’s concerns on foreign credential recognition concludes by stating:

What consistently happens, and what will certainly continue to occur, is that skilled workers arrive in Canada expecting to be able

to apply for jobs as engineers, electricians or physiotherapists, only to discover that licensing requirements preclude them from seeking work in their profession or trade. Although the Regulation of professional and trade accreditation is primarily within the jurisdiction of the provinces, the Committee feels that more can and should be done by the Department. Not only should prospective immigrants be told of the possibility of licensing requirements and advised to discuss such issues with the appropriate regulatory bodies before applying to immigrate, the federal government should act as a facilitator in assisting licensing bodies to determine foreign equivalencies. (Parliament of Canada 2002, 15)

The “Building a Nation” report in 2002 fortified the federal government’s recognition of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition of highly educated and skilled immigrants admitted to Canada. Through the report, the federal government as a stakeholder in the ECA advocacy coalition, again recognized that the Canadian immigration policy framework remained incapable of effectively and efficiently integrating highly educated and skilled immigrants into the Canadian labour market.

The duality of the policy motivations of the federal government as a stakeholder in the ECA advocacy coalition are not considered in Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier’s construction of the ACF, and therefore a new conceptualization is required. The federal government’s involvement in the ECA advocacy coalition was crucial. This is because the federal government enjoys authority over certain immigration policy decisions (i.e., program funding) that provincial governments and NGOs do not have, which would ultimately be central for the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework. However, to place the federal the government solely in either the social justice or the economic productivity sub-coalitions would diminish its significance as an actor in the larger coalition. The significance of the federal government as a dynamic stakeholder is twofold. First, it is significant due to the policy sub-system that the ECA advocacy coalition operated within. The decentralized federal nature of Canada divides certain policy

responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments. Immigration policy had largely been a policy sub-system which the federal government held a monopoly over, until Québec demanded more legislative powers. Jurisdiction on immigration policy is constitutionally shared between the federal and provincial governments (Dodson 1997, i). However, while immigration policy by the 1990s had become decentralized, much immigration policy power remained in the hands of the federal government (Paquet 2014, 522). As Paquet argues, “Provincial governments claimed they were better situated than the government of Canada to ensure economic development and growth, and that immigration policy was a way to help them and Canada achieve economic growth” (Paquet 2022, 344). The federal government retained the power to determine standards for immigrants’ entry, such as the make-up of the points system, some power over the Provincial Nominee Program, and was responsible for insuring funding immigration programs (Seidle 2013, Paquet 2014). However, since provincial nominee programs were introduced in the 1990s, “the second half of the 2000’s, immigration has become part of provincial electoral agenda’s” (Paquet 2014, 520). Additionally, at the end of the day, the federal government has the superior power to legislate immigration policy standards that provincial immigration programs must adhere to. Therefore, having ECA as a federal standard practice would address the issues of immigration skill underutilization and immigration credential non-recognition as identified by the ECA advocacy coalition. As explained in the section on the economic sub-coalition of this chapter, provinces shared the policy motivations of the inclusion of ECA services as standard practice for Canadian immigration when in bilateral negotiations with the federal government relating to the economic advantages of ECA (Owen 2007, Kostov 2008, Seidle 2013, Paquet 2014, Couture Gagnon 2020, Banerjee et al. 2022). Similarly, members of the social justice coalition and the federal government shared the opinion that the inclusion of ECA would have a positive impact on the social gains of

Canadian immigration policy (Immigration Canada 1990, Parliament of Canada 1995, CCR 2001, Parliament of Canada 2002, OCASI, 2022). Therefore, for the ECA advocacy coalition to achieve its ultimate policy goal of the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework, the federal government, with its considerable legislative authority within the immigration policy-subsystem, was an essential actor.

The second reason the federal government, as a dynamic stakeholder, is significant is because of the guidance instruments that it used. The use of statutory authority and participation by outsiders were the federal government's chosen guidance instruments. Statutory authority involves mandating policy objectives, making decisions contingent upon specific findings, affecting the policy preferences and powers of participants, and regulating the range of sanctions and judicial review (Sabatier and Pelkey 1987, 283). Because the federal government maintains significant authority over immigration policy, its involvement is imperative for policy change. Participation by outsiders to "directly influence the policies of a regulatory agency," through consultations, was heavily used by the federal government to implement much of the legislation discussed in this case study. The use of statutory authority and participation by outsiders by the federal government to help achieve the policy goals of the ECA advocacy coalition was crucial to the formal inclusion of ECA services in the immigration policy framework.

Because of the efforts of the ECA advocacy coalition, in 2003 the Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP) was created. The purpose of this program was to provide funding to provincial governments and NGOs to support foreign credential recognition (Government of Canada, 2020c). The FCRP was designed not to directly provide money to individuals but to provide funding and resources to provincial and territorial governments, and organizations (e.g., regulatory bodies, national associations, and credential assessment agencies) to aid in assessing

and recognizing international credentials and work experience that immigrants acquired outside Canada (Government of Canada, 2020c). This program reflects the policy issue of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition that the ECA advocacy coalition sought to address. By providing funding to provinces, credential evaluation services and immigrant advocacy organizations, the FCRP addressed the problem of highly educated and skilled immigrant qualifications and credentials not being properly evaluated or recognized within the Canadian labour market after admission.

The FCRP additionally built upon the underdeveloped credential evaluation framework that evaluation companies had previously attempted to establish. This framework, known as the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, is a “joint commitment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to work together to improve foreign credential recognition processes in Canada” (Government of Canada, 2020c). The advocacy coalition triggered the establishment of the FCRP, and the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications is a by-product of the advocacy coalition’s success, which helped in establishing a nation-wide, uniform assessment framework. The federal government’s goal for the program and framework was to provide “internationally trained individuals in target occupations with timely credential recognition service. This means these individuals will know within one year whether their qualifications, including their credentials, meet Canadian requirements, what other requirements they may need, and which other occupations match their skills and experience. Governments have supports and processes in place to meet this service standard” (Government of Canada, 2020c). Members of the sub-coalitions engaged in negotiating provincial nominee programs with the federal government and advocated for better integration programs for highly educated and skilled immigrants in Canada through

consultations to address immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition. In summary, the creation of the Foreign Credential Recognition Program in 2003 was the result of the ECA advocacy coalition successfully advocating the importance of including ECA in the Canadian immigration policy framework.

## **Conclusion**

The previous analysis demonstrated how each member of the ECA advocacy coalition, individually, contributed to the inclusion of ECA in the Canadian immigration framework. Each of the members of the advocacy coalition recognized the problem of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition within Canadian society. Individually, the members of the ECA advocacy coalition did not possess the necessary guidance instruments and authority to include ECA into the official Canadian immigration policy framework. Thus, the combined policy resources of the economic productivity and social justice sub-coalitions, and the dynamic stakeholder, were essential in achieving the larger advocacy coalitions policy goal. For the broader ECA advocacy coalition, the decision to include ECA in the immigration policy framework involved the issue of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition in the Canadian labour market.

The inclusion of education credential assessment within the Canadian immigration policy framework was the result of the two sub-coalitions and the dynamic stakeholder working parallel to one another within the broader ECA advocacy coalition. On the one hand, the members of the economic productivity sub-coalition, identified as provincial governments and World Education Services, were motivated for the inclusion of ECA because of the economic benefits of ECA for immigration and the Canadian and provincial labour markets, but were also interested in its ability

to remedy immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition (Parliament of Canada 1996, Owen 2007, Seidle 2013, WES 2020). On the other hand, the members of the social justice sub-coalition, identified as the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants and the Canadian Council for Refugees, were looking to shape a more just and less discriminatory selection process, as well as to remedy immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2008, Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2020). Lastly, the federal government was presented here in a new conceptual role, the dynamic stakeholder. Carefully analyzing key immigration policies implemented from 1962 until 2003, the federal government's motivations for the inclusion of ECA within the immigration policy framework was comparable to the motivations of both sub-coalitions. The 1962 *Immigration Act*, followed by the 1967 and 1976 reforms, showed the federal government's policy goals shifting from a predominantly economic strategy standpoint (Reitz, Seidle 2013, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Reitz et al. 2014), to a two-pronged economic and social immigration policy strategy. The two-pronged approach is represented by the point system. Then, in 1994-1997, the federal government held consultations in which most ECA advocacy coalition stakeholders were actively involved (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2014, 74). The CCR's, OCASI and the provincial governments' active roles in the consultations on immigration with the federal government, combined with WES' collaboration with provincial governments, corresponds to the ECA advocacy coalition's creation in 2000 (Parliament of Canada 1995, 1996, 1997, Owen 2007, WES 2020). Following the consultations, the federal government adopted the 2001 *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. However, the 2001 *Act* was still insufficient in addressing immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition of highly educated and skilled immigrants' foreign credentials. Thus, the Foreign Credential Recognition Program was established as the policy solution that would provide funding

mechanism and framework to address immigrant credential nonrecognition, and thus immigrant skill underutilization, by creating a nation-wide foreign ECA framework.

## Chapter 3

### **Conclusion**

Immigration in Canada is a vital aspect of Canadian politics and policies. It contributes to the state's policy strategy for the growth, diversity, and prosperity of its population, as well as the economy (Reitz 2005, Kostov 2008, Seidle 2013, Triadafilopoulos 2013, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022, Paquet 2022). However, immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition have affected the economic and social contributions of highly educated and highly skilled immigrants in Canada (Reitz 2005, Reitz 2013, Reitz et al. 2014, Banjeree et al. 2022). This paper aimed to answer the following question: Why were Education Credential Assessment services adopted in the Canadian immigration policy framework in 2003. This paper argued that it is because a specific advocacy coalition consisting of stakeholders who, for two different motives, sought to address the policy issues of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition, that education credential assessment services were adopted into the Canadian immigration policy framework in 2003.

Chapter 1 of this paper discussed the evolution of immigration policy in Canada and how key stakeholders identified immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition as a policy issue. Chapter 1 also outlined the advocacy coalition theoretical framework as designed by Hank Jenkins-Smith and Paul Sabatier (1994). Chapter 2 conducted an in-depth analysis, applying this theoretical framework and using a process tracing method in which key actions of the ECA stakeholders relating to Canadian immigration policy were identified as contributing to the creation and success of the ECA advocacy coalition. Tracing key actions of provincial governments, World Education Services, the Canadian Council of Refugees, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, and the federal government, this paper demonstrated that there

was no sole actor to credit the inclusion of ECA within the Canadian immigration policy framework. The inclusion of ECA is because of the active consultations and advocacy for the necessity of education credential assessment to solve the problem of immigrant skill underutilization and credential non-recognition by highly educated and skilled immigrants by the members of the ECA advocacy coalition. Through the coalitions advocacy, the FCRP was created to include ECA in the Canadian immigration policy framework in 2003.

The main contribution of my case study to the scholarship of policymaking and the ACF lies in the conceptualization of the dynamic stakeholder. Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier introduced the policy broker as a mediator between two coalitions – a neutral actor of sorts (Sabatier 1988, 133). But the ECA advocacy coalition did not have a policy broker. The dynamic stakeholder addresses two issues that Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier did not consider: 1. That a single stakeholder is fundamental to the function of a larger advocacy coalition and 2. That this stakeholder is not neutral, unlike a policy broker, and that its policy motivations are dynamic and associated with both sub-coalitions. In the case of the ECA advocacy coalition, the federal government took on the role of the dynamic stakeholder. The federal government was a crucial stakeholder in the ECA advocacy coalition whose policy motivations were associated with both the economic productivity sub-coalition and the social justice sub-coalition. The introduction of the role of the dynamic stakeholder within the ACF contributes to the discussion of policymaking within Canada by widening the criteria of stakeholders who can be included in an ACF analysis. The case of the ECA advocacy coalition contributes to the wider study of policy change through the ACF framework. In my case study, the social justice and economic productivity sub-coalitions were not working against one another for policy change, as Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier's original ACF suggests, but instead they were working parallel to one another. This suggests the applicability of

the ACF in explaining a wider variety of cases of policy change insofar as the framework could be used in cases which Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier's original Advocacy Coalition Framework did not account for.

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