

UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION TO CANADA:

FROM POST
INDEPENDENCE
TO POST WAR

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

21 & 22 April 2023
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Canada



Round Table

11:20AM, April 22, 2023

Across the Waves: Ukrainian Canadians on Identity and Community Belonging

In 2000-01, researching post-1991 Ukrainian immigration to Canada, renowned Canadian sociologist Wsewolod Isajiw interviewed 304 individuals in the Toronto area from amongst those who had arrived in Canada from Ukraine since 1991. Based on the answers received, Isajiw concluded that over the course of ten years, new arrivals have not linked up with the hromada in any significant way. Their active participation in existing Ukrainian organizations stood at 9 per cent and in Ukrainian organizations for new arrivals at 4%. Their attendance at activities sponsored by Ukrainian organizations was 8.0% 'very often,' 23.7% 'time to time,' 20.1% 'rarely,' and 48.2% 'never.' Even informally the new immigrants have maintained a certain social distance from local Ukrainian Canadians: less than 27% agreed or strongly agreed that it was 'easy to make friends with Ukrainian Canadians' (compared to just over 41% for making friends with non-Ukrainian Canadians).

Where are we in 2023, after another twenty years? How integrated are the representatives of the post-1991 immigration and their children with the established Ukrainian community in Canada? What sense of identity have they been sustaining for themselves while in Canada and how does this identity compare to the identities of members and descendants of previous immigration waves?

In this round table, representatives of post-1991 immigration wave(s) and the descendants of earlier immigration waves will gather to reflect on what makes them Ukrainian and/or Ukrainian Canadian. Community-based scholars, intellectuals and academics, our guests each represent one of the immigration waves of the Ukrainian Canadian community. Analyzing their diverse personal experiences of relating and belonging, while also considering broader historical and cultural contexts of their life paths, the presenters will ponder over the key questions when it comes to an understanding of the Ukrainian Canadian identity in Canada. What does it mean to be a Ukrainian Canadian? What aspects of Ukrainian culture, traditions, history and community life constitute the cornerstone of their identity? What can unite and bring together diverse waves and generations of Ukrainian Canadians? What is the future of Ukrainian identity in Canada?

By sharing their informed perspectives on these and other questions, participants will all contribute to an important meta-story of the ever-changing Ukrainian identity in Canada.

Participants

Roman Petryshyn, Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta

Mariya Lesiv, Associate Professor of Folklore, Memorial University Newfoundland

Oleksandr Pankieiev, Editor-in-Chief, Forum for Ukrainian Studies

Victoria Kostyniuk, MA candidate in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Alberta

Dmytro Yesypenko, Ph.D. Candidate in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies at the University of Alberta

Moderator: *Andrea Kopylech - Assistant Director (Operations), Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies*