

# WELCOME PLACE ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19





With over 70 million global refugees, we all have our work cut out for us.

---

## Message from the Board Chair **Bruce Waite**

The last year has seen significant changes for **Welcome Place**. Six years ago, the board created a new constitution which laid the groundwork for us to adapt and react to major changes that have occurred in the newcomer sector. In partnership with management, we created a mutually agreed Strategic Plan, and a plan for achieving these goals. While this year has been busy on many fronts, there are several notable achievements that the management and staff have delivered.

We continue to create new programs and services with a goal to improve outcomes for newcomers as they integrate into our community. Our unique host matching program continues to add services and offer more programming to help and support newcomers in building their life in Canada. Our public awareness efforts continue to grow ensuring our communities are aware of the challenges faced by our settlement system and newcomer families.

Our Privately Sponsored Refugee team has created a new, more accountable, transparent and equitable process for community groups expressing interest to support refugees settling in Canada. We also offer more training, education and supports for these groups than ever before.

We now have a presentation from department members at board meetings to help guide us in our planning and decision making. Through this, we have received an invaluable frontline perspective about the many services we provide and continue to improve on to create better outcomes.

As a board, we have three stakeholders we are accountable to. We must create the best possible outcomes for our clients. We must acknowledge our staff and ensure their needs are met. And, we must provide a return to our public and private funders through successful integration of our clients into our communities.

Thank you to every member of our team. You continue to do an amazing job. The commitment and passion from our staff is second to none.

To our long-term funders, the Government of Canada, Province of Manitoba, United Way, Winnipeg Foundation and hundreds of private donors, thank you. Your support is helping us navigate the challenging financial times of the changing and demanding refugee sector. You have placed your trust with a team of skilled, passionate and committed people who not only have a vision, but a solid plan to take this organization and the work we do forward. With over 70 million global refugees, we all have our work cut out for us.

And to the newcomers that we serve, know that we are continuously improving our services and providing the support and care you need, ensuring **Welcome Place** stays true to its name.





## Report from the Executive Director **Rita Chahal**

2018-19 was a year marked with significant changes at **Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council (MIIC)**. The most significant change was of course setting a strategic course for us as our board completed a plan. Implementing that plan is well underway as we adjust to the new realities of the global refugee crisis with over 70 million displaced people, and Canada's continued commitment to resettling refugees, especially in Manitoba.

The commitment and loyalty of our staff is unwavering in spite of the constant and varying demands on our agency. We had a substantial increase in staffing with defined departmental and overall organizational restructuring. Our processes and procedures are clearer as we continue to focus on client service excellence.

There are also significant new norms that impact us. The federal and provincial governments continue to realign their focus from our traditional client base of Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) to Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) and Refugee Claimants (RCs). This has required us to respond and adapt quickly. In addition, MIIC has continued to work closely with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and local mental health specialists to provide settlement services to specific high need groups.

We began much needed renovations of our building and residence units that have been the first temporary homes for thousands of clients since 2011. Moving forward, the need for temporary and permanent housing that is both sustainable and affordable will continue to grow. We remain committed to being part of the solution to deal with the housing shortage in Winnipeg. As an agency we must be prepared to serve other emerging special-needs refugee populations under The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) watch. We trust the federal government will remain in conversation with MIIC as the government shares its plans for resettling GARs in Manitoba.

The core services we provide are only possible with the financial support of our federal and provincial governments, community funding partners and donors. The provincial government's commitment to investment in settlement services for RCs and PSRs is significant for MIIC. We thank all of our financial supporters for their generosity and gentle guidance. We especially thank the volunteer law students from the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Law, who continue to provide their legal expertise while working with refugee claimants.

Thank you to our Board of Directors, my leadership team, staff, consulting contractors and volunteers for their commitment, dedication and expertise to care for our clients with dignity and respect. Thank you to Bruce Waite for his leadership in charting the direction for MIIC for the next five years.

It is our clients who continue to be my inspiration and humble me with their strength, perseverance, kindness, renewed joy and hope to begin a new life in our wonderful province and country. Thank you for the privilege to serve you!

**“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”**

– Nelson Mandela

# Agency Highlights in 2018 and 2019



## ACCOMMODATIONS

Last year **411 clients** lived in temporary accommodations at **Welcome Place**. Staff from the Housing Department helped **196 clients** move into permanent accommodations.



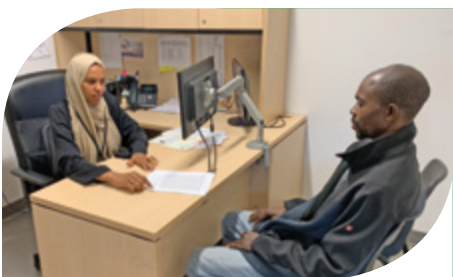
## SETTLEMENT

Last year MIIC served **3,566 new and existing clients**. Among them were **598 new Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs)** primarily from Eritrea, Syria, and Somalia and **244 new Government Assisted Refugees (GARs)** primarily from Congo, Iraq, Somalia and Syria.



## LIFE SKILLS

**23 Life Skill Trainers (LSTs)** provided **2,005 hours of services to clients** in Arabic, Burmese, English, Farsi, French, Karen, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kurdish, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tigrigna and Urdu.



## REFUGEE CLAIMANTS

In-Canada Protection Services staff and **35 student volunteers** from the **University of Manitoba's Faculty of Law** served **628 refugee claimants**.



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

**40 community volunteers** donated **2,470 hours**, more than double the hours from last year. **181 new refugee clients** were matched with **65 new Canadian volunteers** through the Volunteer Matching Program. A new match resulted in the sponsorship of a refugee family's relative.



## SPONSORSHIP SERVICES

**Welcome Place** took on **127 PSR cases** under its Sponsorship Agreement. **260 individuals (103 families)** arrived in **Winnipeg**. New assessment and follow-up tools, training, and allocation systems were developed to keep up with the Canadian Government's plan to resettle 19,000 refugees under the PSR program.



## TOUCH OF KINDNESS

**We teamed up with registered charity, Don't Cry...I'm Here**, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to provide **our newcomer children with culturally appropriate dolls and stuffed bears**. The charity hand-made custom outfits for the dolls and bears that represented our clients' homelands and brought familiarity and comfort in their new environment.

## Ismail & Hulya's Story

After Erdoğan and the AKP party were re-elected in the 2018 Turkish presidential election, Ismail and Hulya decided that it was time to leave Turkey in hopes of a better life.

"We weren't running from war," explains Ismail, "but we were afraid for our kids and for our future."

Ismail was working as a Flight Dispatcher for Turkish Airlines and heard that Canada was accepting a large number of refugees. The school year had just finished and Hulya, a high-school German teacher, began researching where in Canada they would want to live.

Hulya grew up in Germany before moving to Turkey at 12-years-old, and was interested in where German people were living in Canada. She began to connect with Canadians on Facebook, and after some research, Hulya discovered there was a large Mennonite community in Manitoba.

Three months later, in September of 2018, Hulya arrived in Winnipeg with her sons Ugur and Baris. Instantly, she felt at home.

"I didn't call my husband because I was so happy here," Hulya remembers. "We went many times to Polo Park and to the playground. After three or four days I called him and he said, 'Where are you?'"

Welcome Place provided Hulya and her boys with a temporary home at Welcome Place Residence, and In-Canada Protection Services staff helped her with her refugee claim and navigating through the legal system.

Ismail planned to join his family in February of 2019, but in October, 2018, Hulya learned from an Immigration Officer that if Ismail didn't arrive in the next couple of days, his Visa would expire. He would have to join his family right away, or wait until after Hulya became a permanent resident and applied

for him to join her. It would have taken another three or four years.

"I left with just what I could take with me and I jumped on the plane." Ismail barely made it. "The plane was at 1:00. At 12:00 I was still at the office. I just left everything."

A string of lucky coincidences and help from a friend enabled Ismail to arrive in Canada before his Visa expired.

Ismail and Hulya lived at Welcome Place Residence for about a year. The boys attended Victoria Albert School, Hulya improved her English at Red River College, and Ismail, a trained pilot in Turkey, started taking online courses in order to receive his pilot's license through Transport Canada. Over the winter, the family would spend many weekends at The Forks learning to skate.

This summer Ismail, Hulya and their boys moved to an apartment in a new neighbourhood. Hulya hopes to attend the University of Manitoba and teach German in schools again, Ismail is preparing to pass his exam with Transport Canada, and the family continues to engage with the community and practice their English at places like CHAI Immigration Centre.

Their families still remain in Turkey, but Hulya hopes to bring her sister here one day.

"Here the people are warm," explains Ismail. "You can feel the warmth here. And we survived the minus fifty degrees. So what else do we need to live here?"



**"We weren't running from war, but we were afraid for our kids and for our future."**

– Ismail



## Sahar's Story

Since the early 1990s hundreds of thousands of people in Somalia have died from disease, starvation and war.

Among those who died in the war were the parents of Sahar Abdi Hersi, now 33 years old, and a permanent resident in Winnipeg.

After her parents died, Sahar lived in Somalia with her two brothers and sister until 2012. Seeking safety and protection, she left Somalia and journeyed to Egypt.

Alone in Egypt, Sahar lived in a house with friends and worked as a childcare provider earning only \$25 a month. She struggled financially and personally. As a single woman, she discovered that conditions were not much safer in Egypt. It wasn't safe for her to take a taxi alone for fear of harassment, or to carry a purse or bag at night for fear of theft.

Sahar had an uncle looking out for her across the globe in Winnipeg. Mohamed Noor sent care packages to Sahar when she needed it, and eventually sponsored her journey to Winnipeg last year.

On a cold day at the end of October 2018, Sahar arrived in Winnipeg. At first, it was

hard to adapt to her new surroundings. She didn't know where to go, or how to get there, and she described snow as the biggest shock to her.

Sahar gives credit to her uncle, Welcome Place, and the Entry Program at Altered Minds Inc. for helping her adjust to life in Winnipeg. As a Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR), Sahar received help from Welcome Place's Life Skills Services. Staff showed her where grocery stores and hospitals were, helped her to schedule appointments, and referred her to other organizations like the Entry Program.

In less than a year, Sahar has made remarkable progress resettling. She has learned a little English, started volunteering with the Entry Program, and has been working at Granny's Poultry in Steinbach for the past three months.

At Granny's she packages chickens and is the only female employee brave enough to spend two hours each day as a Live Bird Hanger. She's saving her wages to bring her brother, Dahir, to Winnipeg. Eventually she hopes to bring all of her siblings to Canada and care for them.

Caring really comes as second nature to Sahar. She spends time outside of work helping her elderly next-door neighbour and plans to study nursing at University of Manitoba one day.

For today, Sahar is just happy to be living in Winnipeg. "I'm Canadian now," she says with a smile, "and I'm thankful."

**In less than a year, Sahar has made remarkable progress resettling.**

**"I'm Canadian now. And I'm thankful."**

– Sahar

## Daniel's Story

Since Daniel Gakuru arrived in Winnipeg a year ago, he has purchased a bicycle and an education savings account for each of his kids. Here in Canada, Daniel can envision a bright future for himself, his wife, and their seven children.

Daniel was born in the Congo. In 1996 he fled with his parents, his sister and three brothers to a refugee camp in Rwanda. There he lived for 22 years.

Though the camp provided safety for his family, Daniel quickly discovered that refugees did not have the same rights as citizens. Refugees could not work or live outside of the camp. Salaries were small and families could barely afford basic necessities. Some families could only afford to eat one meal per day.

"Some people lose their hope," says Daniel. "They think that even to die or to live - they are the same."

Daniel kept busy in order to keep his spirits up. He met and married his wife, Dative, and worked as a carpenter in the camp.

Soon the couple started having children and it became more difficult to provide for his family. Daniel's monthly salary was enough to buy only a 25kg bag of rice and 4L of cooking oil. With four children at home, it wasn't enough.

After work, Daniel began taking English courses at night and in 2012 he finished secondary school. In February of 2015, he received his Diploma and he began to teach English and grammar. He made a little more money but started worrying about his children's future.

"Imagine," Daniel says, "to stay always and forever in a refugee camp."

Luckily, he wouldn't have to. On a Friday in 2016 his family was told they would have their first interview with the UN Refugee Agency. Almost two years later, on June 7, 2018, Daniel's family moved to Winnipeg. His parents, his sister's family, and his twin brother's family live here too.

For the first five weeks Daniel's family lived at the Welcome Place Residence. Welcome Place staff introduced Daniel's family to local customs, showed them where to shop, and helped them fill out paperwork, set up appointments and apply for Welfare.

In the last year the family has moved to a house in the North End and had their seventh child. Daniel got his beginner's driver's license, and the kids have started school and are making friends.

"When you see how they are changing their behaviour, see that they like this place here, and they are improving their English," Daniel explains. "their life is good."

The five older kids are now attending Wellington and Hugh John MacDonald School, Dative is starting English classes, and Daniel is hoping to find work. Eventually Daniel plans to go back to school for Carpentry.

In the evenings, the family enjoys going to the park to ride their bicycles, and every Sunday Daniel's extended family meets at Church.



**"When you see how they are changing their behaviour, see that they like this place here, and they are improving their English: their life is good."**

– Daniel



## About Us

**Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council (Welcome Place)** has provided comprehensive services to refugees and refugee claimants arriving in Manitoba, including temporary residential accommodation and orientation to Canada, for over 70 years.

### MISSION

The mission of Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council is to welcome and provide settlement services for refugees and immigrants living in Manitoba.

### VISION

To be the leader in Manitoba in providing settlement services for refugees and immigrants.

### VALUES

#### Diversity

We support equitable treatment of all persons and embrace cross-cultural differences.

#### Rights of All

We welcome all without bias.

#### Working Together with Dignity and Integrity

Our relationships are based on mutual trust and respect.





## The 2018-2019 Team

### EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Executive Director: **Rita Chahal**  
 Executive Assistant: **Marchris Gladys**  
 Director, Finance and Operations: **Shane Henderson**  
 Director, Settlement Services: **Marta Kalita**  
 Director, Development and Communications: **Kris Olafson**  
 Assistant Director, Reception, Education and  
 Community Services: **Karen Montgomery-Gibbes**  
 Manager, Information Technology: **Saman Azizkhani**  
 Bookkeeper: **Margaret Aikenhead \***

\*CONTRACT



### MANAGEMENT TEAM

Senior Manager, Reception and  
 Volunteer Services: **Jean Pierre Venegas**  
 Senior Manager, Client Services: **Ermias Yoseph**  
 Co-Team Leader, Settlement Services: **Slobodan Mitrovic**  
 Co-Team Leader, Settlement Services: **Felicien Rubayita**  
 Team Leader, Reception Services: **Alazar Negasi**  
 Team Leader, Life Skills Services: **Flora Aruna**  
 Team Leader, Housing Services: **Valentina Cerka**  
 Team Leader, In-Canada Protection: **Ghezae Hagos Berhe**

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: **Bruce Waite** COMMUNITY AT LARGE  
 Vice Chair: **Dev Dabas** HINDU  
 Past Chair: **Ruth Magnuson** LUTHERAN  
 Secretary/Treasurer: **Johan Macces** CATHOLIC  
 Director: **Monty Lomow** JEWISH  
 Director: **Anita Neville** JEWISH  
 Director: **Merdia Imame** MUSLIM  
 Director: **Marilyn Anderson Corkum** UNITED  
 Director: **Imran Pirmohamed** MUSLIM



## Programs and Services

**Reception Services** provides assistance to clients as soon as they arrive at the Welcome Place Residence.

- Client families are temporarily housed in one or two units depending on the size of their family.
- Our Residence consists of 30 self-contained units that can accommodate up to 120 clients.

**Settlement Services** provides Settlement and Resettlement Assistance Programs (RAP) to newcomer clients.

- The department consists of four units: Settlement, Housing, Volunteer Matching Program and Front Desk Reception.
- Staff speak 26 different languages and dialects including languages of lesser diffusion.

Our **Volunteer Matching Program** is aimed at building community support for newcomers.

- Staff match clients by language with local volunteers during their first year in Canada.
- This program provides newcomers with social and emotional support and enhances community living through cultural exchange.

**Life Skills Services** supports clients in acquiring practical skills for their new life in Canada.

- Main focuses include: culture, safety, hygiene, permanent housing, neighbourhood support, banking, public transportation, nutrition, shopping, and registering for SIN and MB health cards.
- Clients who faced multiple barriers overcame challenges thanks to ongoing support tailored to their particular needs.

**Volunteer Services** connects newcomers to the community through group activities.

- Our clients are invited to participate in social, cultural, and recreational activities including outings to arts organizations, sporting events, movie nights, various field trips, and holiday celebrations.
- The Children’s Breakfast Program, launched in 2014, provides breakfast to children living at Welcome Place before the school day begins.
- We deliver conversational English and computer classes to our clients to help them engage when in the community.

As a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH), our **Sponsorship Services** work with community members in Winnipeg to resettle refugees under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) program.

- We provide support, assistance and advice to sponsors and newly arrived refugee families.
- In response to the Canadian Government’s plan to resettle 19,000 PSRs in 2019, we have developed new assessments, training programs and a sponsorship allocation system to ensure services are delivered efficiently.



**In-Canada Protection Services** provide paralegal services to refugee claimants, and assistance with navigating through the legal and social system.

- Claimants are assisted with filing claims, completing forms, drafting support documents, and preparing for hearings within the timelines set by the refugee hearing process.
- A staff counsellor is assigned to each claimant to provide settlement services, including referrals for housing, medical needs and employment.





## “Thank you, **Canada.**”

Daniel Gakuru felt encouraged to share his story (see page 6) because of the generosity his family has received after just one year in Winnipeg. He said that speaking about his experience was his first opportunity to say, “Thank you, Canada,” until he has the means to do more.

Funding and donations allow us to continue to provide the highest level of service and support to families like Daniel’s arriving in Manitoba to find a better, safer life. With your help, we hope to add to our resources and expand our programs. To find out more about the support that we offer, or to donate, please visit [miic.ca](http://miic.ca).

If you would like to donate by cheque, please make your cheque payable to Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council and mail it to us at 521 Bannatyne Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3A 0E4.

Thank you!

## Our **Support**

The work we do is possible because of the support of our funders, and the generosity of our donors. We also thank private donors and faith group donors.

### CORE FUNDERS



Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

Manitoba



United Way  
Winnipeg

### FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS



Waterfront  
Foundation Inc.



MANITOBA / NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO SYNOD  
ÉVANGÉLICAL LUTHÉRIEN D'UNION EN CANADA



les Filles  
de la Croix



University  
of Manitoba

Robson Hall  
Faculty of Law



Legal Aid Manitoba  
L'Aide Juridique du Manitoba





## Report of the Independent Auditors on the Summary Financial Statements

To the Directors of Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc.

### Opinion

The summarized financial statements, which comprise the summarized statement of financial position as at March 31, 2019, and the summarized statement of operations for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. for the year ended March 31, 2019.

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements, in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### Summarized Financial Statements

The summarized financial statements does not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summarized financial statements and the auditors' report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements and the auditors' report thereon.

### The Audited Financial Statements and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial statements in our report dated June 20, 2019.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summarized financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summarized financial statements are a fair summary of the audited financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary of Financial Statements".

CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

500-Five Donald Street  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3L 2T4  
Tel: 204-284-7060  
Fax: 204-284-7105  
[www.bookeandpartners.ca](http://www.bookeandpartners.ca)

Winnipeg, Canada  
June 20, 2019

# MIIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. Summarized Statement of Operations

Year ended March 31

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada:		
Settlement services	<b>\$1,693,869</b>	\$ 1,716,413
RAP and accommodation services	<b>868,500</b>	749,936
Province of Manitoba	<b>160,000</b>	160,000
Fundraising and donations	<b>147,368</b>	141,797
Amortization of deferred contributions	<b>130,195</b>	145,910
Winnipeg Foundation	<b>123,155</b>	119,345
United Way	<b>118,020</b>	107,780
Rental income	<b>95,966</b>	101,469
Manitoba Housing	<b>65,550</b>	28,600
Miscellaneous	<b>36,986</b>	26,050
Privately sponsored refugees-administration fee	<b>33,501</b>	13,150
City of Winnipeg-Property tax grant	<b>27,889</b>	27,315
Other grants	<b>2,500</b>	25,000
	<b>3,503,499</b>	3,362,765
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
Salaries and benefits	<b>2,591,637</b>	2,508,183
Amortization	<b>187,718</b>	206,137
Accommodation and food	<b>36,491</b>	41,266
Mortgage interest	<b>56,104</b>	48,783
Rent and parking	<b>24,272</b>	24,130
Other	<b>604,263</b>	588,192
	<b>3,500,485</b>	3,416,691
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 3,014</b>	\$ (53,926)



Photos provided by Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council (Welcome Place).

# MIIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. Summarized Statement of Financial Position

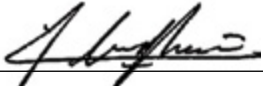
March 31

<b>Assets</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
Current		
Cash	\$ 258,142	\$ 443,129
Accounts receivable	81,536	74,877
Inventory	-	80,835
Prepaid expenses	10,197	4,883
	<b>349,875</b>	603,724
Property and equipment	<b>3,573,361</b>	3,741,453
Funds held in trust	<b>605,488</b>	26,143
	<b>\$4,528,724</b>	\$ 4,371,320

<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
Current		
Payables and accruals	\$ 268,583	\$ 308,793
Deferred contributions	8,260	225,914
Current portion of long-term debt	35,348	40,149
	<b>312,191</b>	574,856
Long-term debt	<b>1,227,258</b>	1,259,353
Deferred contributions for property and equipment	<b>2,293,371</b>	2,423,566
Funds held in trust	<b>605,488</b>	26,143
	<b>4,438,308</b>	4,283,918

<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>2019</b>	2018
Internally Restricted	120,348	139,974
Unrestricted	(47,316)	(70,957)
Invested in property and equipment	17,384	18,385
	<b>90,416</b>	87,402
	<b>\$4,528,724</b>	\$ 4,371,320

APPROVED BY THE BOARD

 DIRECTOR

 DIRECTOR

THE COMPLETE SET OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, INCLUDING NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT, ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST BY CONTACTING THE ORGANIZATION'S OFFICE.



WELCOME PLACE 521 Bannatyne Avenue | Winnipeg, MB R3A 0E4 | [miic.ca](http://miic.ca)

