



Press Release
For Immediate Release



49 NEW CANADIANS BECOME CITIZENS AT VIA RAIL'S UNION STATION IN WINNIPEG

Winnipeg, Tuesday, March 14, 2017 – Today at VIA Rail Canada's (VIA Rail) Union Station in Winnipeg, 49 new citizens, coming from 19 countries, joined the Canadian family during a community citizenship ceremony organized by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC), and VIA Rail.

Before the ceremony, the ICC and VIA Rail hosted roundtable discussions during which new citizens and their guests were invited to share their journeys to citizenship and reflect on what being a Canadian citizen means to them. A total of 100 people were present at the station to congratulate the new citizens.

"Just as VIA Rail helps Canadians connect with the country," said ICC CEO Charlie Foran, "so do the roundtables at our ceremonies encourage conversation, connection, and a celebration of what it means to become Canadian."

"One in five Canadians is an immigrant, and I think that we can all agree that Canada is the country it is today thanks to immigrants like you who, full of hope, potential, determination and courage, chose to settle here," said VIA Rail's President and Chief Executive Officer, Yves Desjardins-Siciliano. "People like you have built Canada, a country where the values of justice, peace and respect for others prevail."

VIA Rail is proud to host citizenship ceremonies in its stations since 2015. These ceremonies are part of a long standing relationship with the ICC and its Cultural Access Pass (CAP) program. Through this collaboration, VIA Rail offers new citizens who are members of the ICC's CAP program a one way or round trip ticket at 50 per cent off the lowest available fare, in any class (except for Prestige class on the *Canadian*), with no blackout periods in their first year of citizenship.

Since the offer was launched in 2012, over 23,000 new citizens have taken advantage of this offer and travelled on every route that VIA Rail offers, visiting almost all of the 400 Canadian communities VIA Rail serves. Most new citizens chose to travel within the Québec City – Windsor corridor, but some also chose to take the *Canadian*, an incredible journey between Toronto and Vancouver.

About The Institute for Canadian Citizenship

Powered by a passionate and committed national network, the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC) delivers programs and special projects that inspire Canadians to be inclusive, create opportunities to connect, and encourage active citizenship. The ICC is a national charity co-founded by the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson and John Ralston Saul.

About VIA Rail Canada

As Canada's national rail passenger service, VIA Rail (viarail.ca) and its 2,600 employees are mandated to provide safe, efficient and economical passenger transportation service, in both official languages of our country. VIA Rail operates intercity, regional and transcontinental trains linking over 400 communities across Canada, and safely transports nearly four million passengers annually. The Corporation was awarded seven Safety Awards by the Railway Association of Canada over the last eight years. For more information, visit: www.viarail.ca/en/about-via-rail.

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