

# Immigrants & the Labour Market: A London Perspective

**CITY OF LONDON**

**Housing, Social Services and Dearness Home**

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## CONTEXT

This report has been developed as a result of a direction by London City Council in 2014 to explore mechanisms to eliminate or reduce barriers experienced by newcomers in accessing employment and employment-related services in London.

The report has been developed amidst the following contexts and realities:

- A tight labour market – our economy is undergoing significant transition and immigrants are also impacted by the changing needs of employers
- A robust system of services and supports for immigrants – London’s organizations and approaches have been recognized provincially and nationally for their creativity and impact
- Differentiation of immigrant classes that need differing degrees of support – classification of immigrants for entry to Canada includes: economic, investor, refugee, family reunification and student
- Immigrants are coming from a broader range of source countries with less experience in the North American market. For many the bridges to economic success are longer and not as direct as previously
- Immigrants are significant for London’s future economic success.

The lens of this report is within a community context. We acknowledge that there are many topics, including bridges between school and community which will need to be addressed in future reviews.

The report was led by the Housing, Social Services & Deerness Home division utilizing a multi-faceted approach, which included the hiring of an immigrant Intern through the City’s Paid Internship program, supports from the City’s Policy & Planning Support and consultations with ethno-cultural organizations, employment and settlement providers, and Social Services Employment staff. A review of best practices and of local research & planning documents was also undertaken. Key system partners provided review and guidance throughout the process.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to examine immigrant employment in the City of London with a specific emphasis on what is working well with respect to employment supports and services and where there are opportunities to address barriers that are experienced by immigrants with respect to employment supports and services.

It examines the current state of the London labour market for immigrants, provides an overview of employment barriers and supports for immigrant employment in London and also examines some best practices with respect to immigrant employment supports and services locally, nationally and internationally. The report concludes with a set of recommendations to enhance London services to address immigrant employment barriers and challenges.

### **By the Numbers:**

In 2011 the City of London was home to 76,585 immigrants representing 21.2% of the total population. Although the number of immigrants residing in London increased 45% between 1981 and 2011 the proportion of immigrants to the total population of the City of London has remained at about 21% over the last three decades. The composition of London’s immigrant population is however changing as recent immigrants to London are more likely to have come from the Americas, Africa or Asia and less likely to have come from Europe compared to earlier immigrants.

According to the 2011 National Household Survey the average unemployment rate in London for non-immigrants was 8.5% compared to 8.8% for immigrants. The unemployment rate for both non-immigrants and immigrants in London was higher than that of Ontario (8.1% non-immigrants and 8.6% immigrants) and Canada (7.6% non-immigrants and 8.3% immigrants). However, on a positive note, the gap between the non-immigrant and immigrant unemployment rates was lower in London compared to Ontario and Canada.

The slightly higher unemployment rate for immigrants as compared to non-immigrants masks the labour force realities faced by many recent immigrants based on their period of immigration. According to the 2011 National Household Survey the unemployment rate for recent immigrants, those that arrived between 2006 and 2011, was 18.9% for London, 14.6% for Ontario, and 13.3% for Canada.

Research on labour market integration indicates that the employment outcomes of immigrants and specifically recent immigrants have been declining. Many immigrants are having difficulty obtaining and maintaining employment that is commensurate with their skills, education and experience. A variety of factors contribute to poor labour market outcomes including lack of foreign credential recognition, lack of Canadian work experience, unfamiliarity with Canadian workplace culture, limited social networks, changes in the Canadian labour market and the changing characteristics of immigrants (country of origin, visible minority status, language ability etc.).

Employment opportunities for immigrants and specifically recent immigrants are important for several reasons. First, employment represents the primary source of income through which most individuals meet their basic needs such as housing and food. Secondly, many skilled workers come to Canada with the expectation that they will be able to obtain employment commensurate with the education and work experience. When these expectations are not met, incentives to remain in Canada are reduced. Thirdly, the prospect of a stagnant domestic labour pool combined with an increasing demand for skilled workers in our knowledge-based economy enhances the need to integrate immigrants into the Canadian labour market in a timely fashion.

## **Recommendations**

As a community London has the components of a robust and effective system to support immigrants in attaining economic inclusion in the community. The recommendations contained in the Highlights of Findings and Opportunities Moving Forward section on page 6 can be implemented at the local level; although we do recognize the need for broader systemic changes in areas such as the standardization of language programs and credential recognition by regulatory bodies. Based on the research conducted for this report and input received from the community the themes going forward should be:

- Enhanced focus on timely economic integration
- Enhanced coordination and marketing/outreach of the service system
- Enhanced services and supports
- Reduction of broader system barriers

## Introduction

In 2011 the City of London was home to 76,585 immigrants representing 21.2% of the total population. Although the number of immigrants residing in London increased 45% between 1981 and 2011 the proportion of immigrants to the total population of the City of London has remained at about 21% over the last three decades. The composition of London's immigrant population is however changing with recent immigrants to London are more likely to have come from the Americas, Africa or Asia and less likely to have come from Europe compared to earlier immigrants.

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Research on labour market integration indicates that that the employment outcomes of immigrants and specifically recent immigrants have been declining. Many immigrants are having difficulty obtaining and maintaining employment that is commensurate with their skills, education and experience. A variety of factors contribute to poor labour market outcomes including lack of foreign credential recognition, lack of Canadian work experience, unfamiliarity with Canadian workplace culture, limited social networks, changes in the Canadian labour market and the changing characteristics of immigrants (country of origin, visible minority status, language ability etc).

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The purpose of this report is to examine immigrant employment in the City of London with a specific emphasis what is working well with respect to employment supports and services and where there are opportunities to address barriers are experienced by immigrants with respect to employment supports and services.

This report consists of 4 chapters. Chapter One provides a socio-demographic profile of immigrants in the City of London and examines the economic and labour market context in which immigrants seek employment. Chapter Two examines the employment barriers faced by immigrants locally and nationally based on both existing research and direct feedback from service providers, ethno-cultural leaders and community groups. Chapter Three provides an overview of initiatives for immigrant employment in the City of London as well as examples of best practices nationally and internationally. Chapter Four provides some concluding thoughts on immigrant employment and suggests a number of areas where local opportunities exist to enhance the supports and services available to assist immigrants in labour market integration.

## Highlights of Findings and Opportunities Moving Forward Immigrants & the Labour Market – A London Perspective

Identified Needs and Barriers	Community Responses What are we doing? What's working well?	Gaps that Remain	Opportunities Moving Forward
<b>Theme 1</b> <b>Enhanced Focus on timely Economic Integration</b>			
<p>Connection to settlement and employment services need further support for some immigrants</p>	<p>London has a wide array of settlement, employment and educational services and supports available, some of which have been nationally and even internationally recognized</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further support is required to make sure information is provided at first point of contact for immigrants, for example settlement services, ethno cultural groups, faith communities, etc.</li> <li>• Earliest contact after arrival possible is necessary with accurate information</li> <li>• Greater difficulty is faced by an immigrant who is a visible minority, female, and/or university educated, especially those with foreign education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen working relationships among settlement, employment and ethno cultural groups/organizations so information is accurate and shared with immigrants at earliest possible opportunity after arrival</li> <li>• Developing and implementing Community Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (Strategic Plan for the City of London 2015-2019)</li> <li>• Implementing strategies from ACFOLA, 2015 needs Assessment for Labour Market Integration and Planning</li> <li>• Greater attention should be given to groups facing multiple barriers to employment: women, recent immigrants, and professionals/skilled</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 2</b> <b>Enhanced Coordination and Marketing/Outreach of the Service System</b>			
<p>Accurate and up to date information on services for immigrants is not always available and there is limited support for marketing and outreach to get information to</p>	<p>London &amp; Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP) (<i>Immigrants, Service Providers and System Partners</i>)</p> <p>London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) (<i>Employers</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need updated list of all services related to education, employment, settlement and related services for immigrants</li> <li>• No supported or resourced structure for marketing and outreach that is systemic and consistent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased and accurate information about services required to inform clients as they bridge to first employment and beyond</li> <li>• City leadership and resources to enhance marketing and outreach information about available services. Improved dialogue with</li> </ul>

Identified Needs and Barriers	Community Responses What are we doing? What's working well?	Gaps that Remain	Opportunities Moving Forward
immigrants at earliest opportunity	<p>Employment Sector Council London Middlesex (ESCLM) (<i>Service Providers and Funders</i>)</p> <p>LMLIP Employment and Education Sub-councils working together to strengthen relationships and co-ordinate services/programs</p>		<p>service providers, immigrants, ethno cultural groups and community leaders to ensure that accurate, timely and current information on the effective planning, delivery, and evaluation of programs and services is available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus planning on ensuring full utilization of employment services</li> <li>• Centralized information system</li> </ul>
Lack of systemic, stable structure and resourced information sharing, marketing, and outreach	<p>LMLIP (<i>Immigrants, Service Providers and System Partners</i>)</p> <p>LMIEC (<i>Employers</i>)</p> <p>ESCLM (<i>Service Providers and Funders</i>)</p> <p>Leadership by WIL Employment Connections for program development and partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better informed and coordinated settlement services and other mainstream social services especially in the fields of employment and education, both of which are critical to a successful settlement process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger alignment between frontline, settlement, literacy, education, employment services, and ethno cultural groups</li> </ul>
Usage of formal and informal networks to support immigrants in accessing information	<p>London has a broad array of ethno-cultural associations and faith based institutions that new immigrants often access soon after arrival.</p> <p>Cross Cultural Learner Centre has strong linkages with various ethno-cultural associations and faith communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated list of all ethno-cultural groups, first contact organizations in order to support necessary marketing, information sharing, and outreach</li> <li>• Enhancing the role of ethno-cultural groups in providing important information to immigrants connecting with them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the capacity development of informal networks as a way to improve economic outcomes for immigrants through accurate and relevant information sharing</li> <li>• An effective system of information sharing for the purpose of marketing and outreach to immigrants so receiving information required sooner and in order to make informed decisions</li> <li>• Enhanced outreach work to all ethno-cultural groups and different communities to raise the level of awareness of programs and services to support immigrants</li> </ul>



Identified Needs and Barriers	Community Responses What are we doing? What's working well?	Gaps that Remain	Opportunities Moving Forward
Limited education and information for employers to support the integration and hiring of immigrants	LMIEC - Mentorship for Immigrant Employment Programs LMIEC Job Match Network WIL Employment Connections LMLIP Employment Sub-council planning resource fair for employers to increase awareness of not for profit services and programs related to immigrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incongruity in employers acceptance of international credentials</li> <li>• Cultural awareness</li> <li>• Effective implementation of strategies by local employers including the City of London to increase diversity within their own workforces and through the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer education</li> <li>• Advocate for system change</li> <li>• Continued and increased support and investment in LMIEC resources (mentorship, Job Match Network)</li> <li>• Municipal promotion and support of local Job Match Network postings through LEDC and City of London social media channels</li> </ul>
Stable and multi-year funded supports for immigrants about labour market and resources	London and Middlesex Immigration Portal Worktrends.ca Organizations' websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to promote resources and services more widely</li> <li>• Need to educate all groups who provide first contact support with information</li> <li>• Need to have current and accurate information resource on services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systemic, stable, and structured support for promotion of resources and services</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 3</b> <b>Enhanced Services and Supports</b>			
Systemic approach to increasing cultural competency and awareness within the community at all levels	As immigration patterns have changed London has become home to a more diverse group of immigrants  Settlement, employment and educational programs and services are doing work around cultural competency and cultural awareness  LMIEC – Mentorship Program Cross Cultural Learner Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and awareness of mentoring opportunities at all levels that support the acquisition of essential skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased promotion of cultural competency and cultural awareness to facilitate economic integration and social inclusion at all levels across the community with City of London showing leadership in its promotion and actualization</li> <li>• Build capacity of ethno-cultural community to provide support, information, and referrals for immigrants to existing services</li> </ul>
Language Training for specific types of employment	Language training is readily available for immigrants seeking to learn English or French.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialized language training in a broader range of professions and skilled trades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced opportunities for specialized language training in a broader range of professions and skilled trades</li> </ul>

Identified Needs and Barriers	Community Responses What are we doing? What's working well?	Gaps that Remain	Opportunities Moving Forward
	<p>The Centre for Lifelong Learning offers ESL programming which includes all fluency levels; specialized language training in administrative/ clerical and customer services, and food and beverage services and enhanced language training for construction technologies or light industrial.</p> <p>The Wheable Centre for Adult Education offers ESL programming which includes all fluency levels along with specialized language training for law enforcement, retail, food and hospitality, childcare, personal support worker, healthcare, hairstyling, and business.</p> <p>Fanshawe College: Occupation Specific Language Training (OSLT)</p> <p>Fanshawe College: Bridging Program for Internationally Trained Nurses</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of Bridging programs</li> <li>• ESL classes to provide increased information and linkages to other educational &amp; employment supports</li> <li>• Increase specialized language training with workplace/career focus</li> </ul>
<p>Lack of a systemic and supported approach to marketing and outreach for significant services available in the community for employment</p>	<p>There is a wide array of employment services and supports available in London that can be accessed by immigrants</p> <p>Fanshawe College's Bridging for Internationally Educated Nurses (BIEN)</p> <p>LMIEC Job Match Network</p> <p>LMIEC Mentorship</p> <p>Access Centre for Regulated Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment services and supports are not always fully utilized do to a lack of information or accessible information</li> <li>• Need for more Bridging programs in areas where demand is identified by immigrants and through determination of labour market trends</li> <li>• Placement opportunities are often not tied to employment supports</li> <li>• A community culture that supports volunteerism, mentoring, entrepreneurial activities, and supporting immigrant success when</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the level of awareness of the employment supports that are available through outreach, referral, and accessibility</li> <li>• Increase number of Bridging programs for skilled professionals in areas where demand is identified by immigrants and through determination of labour market trends</li> <li>• Services/supports to bridge clients from first job to job related to skills, qualifications, and desired career</li> <li>• Promote pre-employment skill training</li> </ul>

Identified Needs and Barriers	Community Responses What are we doing? What's working well?	Gaps that Remain	Opportunities Moving Forward
	Job Search Workshops WIL Employment Connections	job obtained • Need for various types of specialized training eg. taxi operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen communication and involvement with Western and Fanshawe</li> <li>• Ongoing funding for LMIEC Job Match Network</li> </ul>
Culture that does not maximize on promotion of voluntarism	WIL Employment Connections Volunteer Work Placement Program  Programs and services through Pillar Nonprofit Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A need for enhanced volunteer opportunities in the skilled trades and professions (engineers and physicians in particular)</li> <li>• There is a need to identify champions to support voluntarism within different ethno-cultural communities as an important part of the employment process</li> <li>• There is also a need to utilize ethno-cultural specific messages and communication techniques to promote voluntarism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness within immigrant communities of the value of voluntarism as a potential pathway to paid employment through the acquisition of hands on training, Canadian experience, soft skills development, and networking opportunities</li> <li>• Identify and work with champions of ethno-cultural communities</li> <li>• Support movement to paid employment</li> <li>• Create a community culture at all levels that supports the use of volunteers in a supportive and respectful manner to provide relevant Canadian work experience and recognize the experience as significant in the employment process</li> </ul>
Limited understanding of the importance and significant contribution mentoring makes to the immigrants' experience of the Canadian workforce culture	LMIEC - Mentorship for Immigrant Employment Program, Peer Mentoring, 1:1 and Group Mentoring  The City of London's Paid Internship Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for more mentoring opportunities within specific fields such as engineers and medical professions at all levels</li> <li>• Promotion and championing of mentoring programs to the private sector as a significant experience for immigrants in our community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing and promotion of benefits of mentoring both the employer and the immigrant</li> <li>• Strengthen City/LMIEC ties</li> <li>• City of London and others to lead by example and increase the number of mentoring matches at all levels and in all departments</li> </ul>
Limited awareness of the hidden job market within the community	Some employment services and programs in the community explore/examine the hidden job market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to enhance supports to assist immigrants to understand and access this hidden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for service providers to explore program development incorporating strategies to access</li> </ul>

Identified Needs and Barriers	Community Responses What are we doing? What's working well?	Gaps that Remain	Opportunities Moving Forward
	LMIEC - Mentorship for Immigrant Employment Program	job market in order to increase labour market success	<p>the Hidden Job Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop connections to the range of community network opportunities, e.g. business clusters, service clubs, professional associations, etc.</li> </ul>
Supports for employers and immigrants to retain and maintain successful employment	Some employment services provide job retention supports to employers and immigrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for the development of a skilled job retention program to assist immigrants with both job retention and career development. The program would examine performance criteria and cultural codes of Canadian employers and ongoing support for newly hired individuals could be achieved through a mentoring program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for service providers to explore development in the area of Job Retention Programs</li> <li>• Consideration of pilot programs and seed money to develop such programs or services</li> </ul>
Limited supports to entrepreneurial/ programs/opportunities	<p>The London Small Business Centre provides training and support to starting and growing businesses.</p> <p>The London Small Business Centre and Latin American Career Development Centre (LACDC) offer seminars in Spanish for prospective business people.</p> <p>Hispanic Business Opportunities (HBO), a project of the London Chamber of Commerce, offers professional networking and supports for business owners, including seminars that address various issues pertaining to business ownership.</p> <p>LMLIP – Employment Sub-council twice annual self-employment session for immigrants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many immigrants cannot afford to access fee for service business supports</li> <li>• Many immigrant entrepreneurs lack access to capital which is compounded by an absence of Canadian financial history</li> <li>• Need to tie appropriate language supports to entrepreneurial supports</li> <li>• A need for enhanced mentoring opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs</li> <li>• A need for a mechanism to connect immigrant entrepreneurs with business owners wishing to sell their businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance micro-loan/micro credit access for immigrant entrepreneurs</li> <li>• Explore social business and cooperative business support for immigrants as a form of both economic and social integration</li> <li>• Mentoring opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs with both immigrant entrepreneurs (especially from own ethno-cultural background) and non-immigrants</li> <li>• Link immigrant entrepreneurs with existing businesses for sale and to support transition to ownership</li> </ul>

Identified Needs and Barriers	Community Responses What are we doing? What's working well?	Gaps that Remain	Opportunities Moving Forward
	City/LEDC – development of video to attract entrepreneurs and online guide to provide information on supports		
<b>Theme 4</b> <b>Reduction of Broader System Barriers</b>			
Awareness of process to receive Foreign Credential Recognition and lobbying of licensure groups to have a fair, economically viable process that is of reasonable but not insurmountable length	<p>The Access Centre for Regulated Employment (ACRE) provides information and application assistance to internationally trained individuals seeking licensure or related employment in regulated professions</p> <p>Internationally Trained Worker Loan program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many foreign trained workers abandon the process because of length, cost, and complexity of the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to support broader system change</li> <li>• Credential Passport to support standardization of credentials</li> <li>• Federal budget (2015) announcement – make Foreign Credential Loans pilot permanent</li> </ul>
Standardization of Language Training Services	Local organizations providing language work together to coordinate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disparity of programming across government ministries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination between Provincial and Federal ministries to lead to standardization</li> </ul>
Need for consistent sustainable funding	Organizations funded to deliver settlement and employment services are client focused and work to stretch their resources as far as possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal funding for settlement services has decreased annually over the past 4 years</li> <li>• Innovative programming is usually pilot funded – need for sustainable funding</li> <li>• Other levels of government are not filling the gaps when reductions are made</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City to advocate for Federal and Provincial funding and consider identifying municipal funding to match immigrants needs with the services they require within the community</li> </ul>

\*Detailed information is contained in the broader document.

# Chapter 1

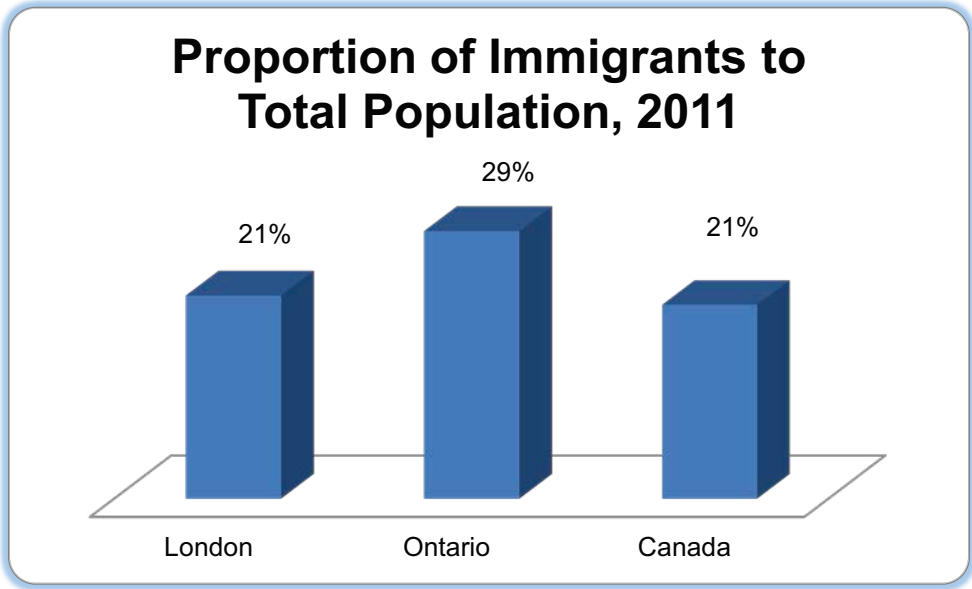
## 1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

### Demographics<sup>1</sup>

**Highlights:**

- Although the number of immigrants residing in London increased 45% between 1981 and 2011 the proportion of immigrants to the total population of the City of London has remained at about 21%.
- In the 1990's and the 2000's the percentage of foreign born individuals by period of immigration declined in London compared to Ontario and Canada due at least partially to local economic conditions.
- Recent immigrants to London are more likely to have come from the Americas, Africa or Asia and less likely to have come from Europe compared to earlier immigrants.

Approximately 21% of the total population of the City of London are immigrants which were the same as the whole of Canada (21%), but lower than Ontario (29%).<sup>2</sup>

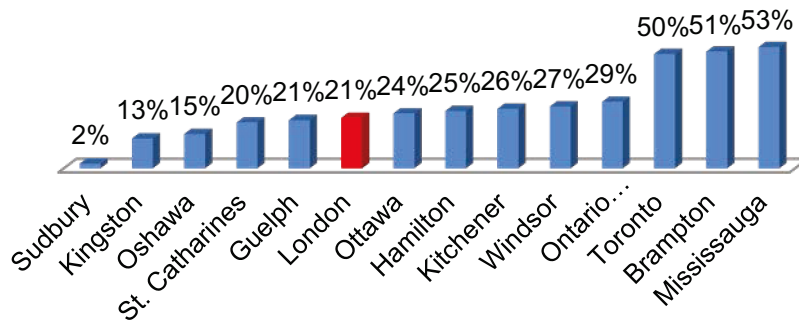


The number of immigrants residing in London increased 45% between the 1981 census and the 2011 census; however the proportion of immigrants to the total population of London has remained at approximately 21%.

Census	Number of Immigrants (London)	Percentage Change	Percentage of the Population (London)
1981	52,635		20.7%
1986	52,780	+0.2%	19.6%
1991	61,045	+15.7%	20.1%
1996	67,520	+10.6%	20.7%
2001	69,175	+2.5%	20.7%
2006	75,620	+9.3%	21.7%
2011	76,585	+1.3%	21.2%

Within Ontario, across different cities, there is a significant variation in the proportion of immigrants to the total population. In the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), immigrants represent 50% or more of the total population in cities such as Toronto, Mississauga, and Brampton.

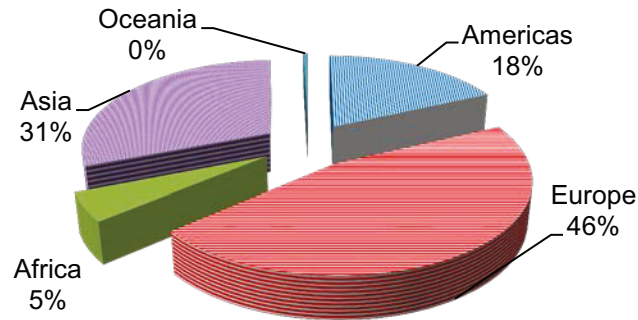
### Proportion of Immigrants to the Total Population, 2011 Selected Cities in Ontario



The proportion of immigrants to the total population in London of 21% is similar to other cities in Ontario to which London is often compared to such as Guelph, Ottawa and Hamilton.

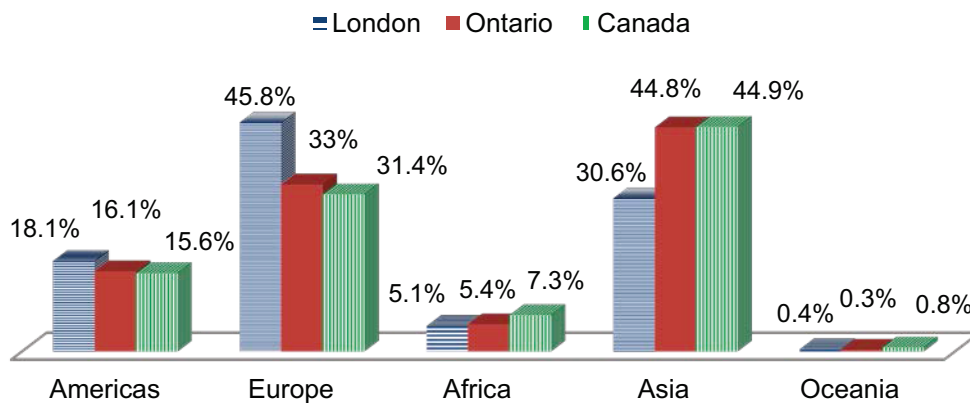
Just under, one half of the immigrants residing in London originated from Europe and just under one third originated from Asia.

## City of London Total Immigrant Population by Region of Birth, 2011



The proportion of immigrants from Europe residing in London (45.8%) was higher than the proportion of immigrants from Europe residing in Ontario (33%) and Canada (31.4%). Conversely, the proportion of immigrants from Asia residing in London (30.6%) was lower than the proportion of immigrants from Asia residing in Ontario (44.8%) and Canada (44.9%).

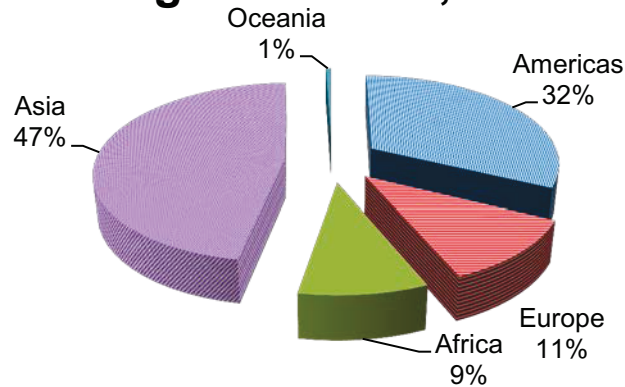
## Total Immigrant Population by Region of Birth, 2011



Patterns of immigration have changed over time, and for recent immigrants residing in London, just under, one half originated from Asia and just under one third originated from the Americas.

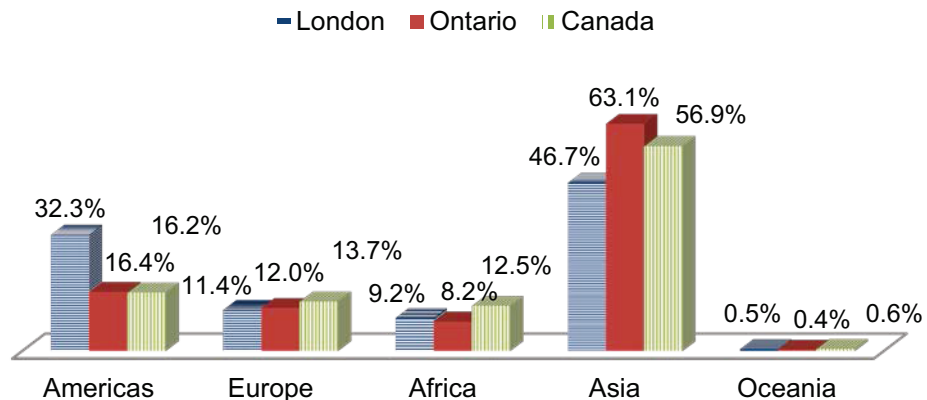


## **City of London Recent Immigrant Population by Region of Birth, 2011**



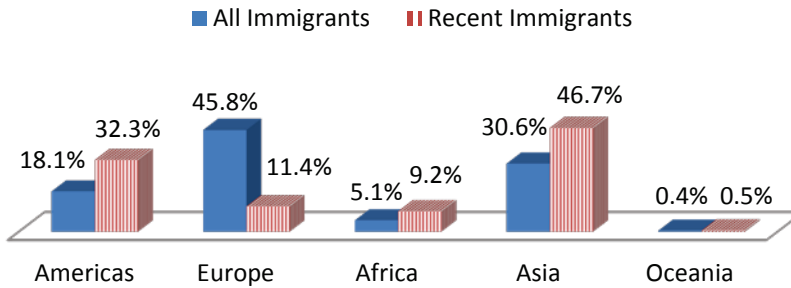
The proportion of recent immigrants from the Americas residing in London (32.3%) was higher than the proportion of recent immigrants from the Americas residing in Ontario (16.4%) and Canada (16.2%). Conversely, the proportion of recent immigrants from Asia residing in London (46.7%) was lower than the proportion of recent immigrants from Asia residing in Ontario (63.1%) and Canada (56.9%).

## **Recent Immigrant Population by Region of Birth, 2011**



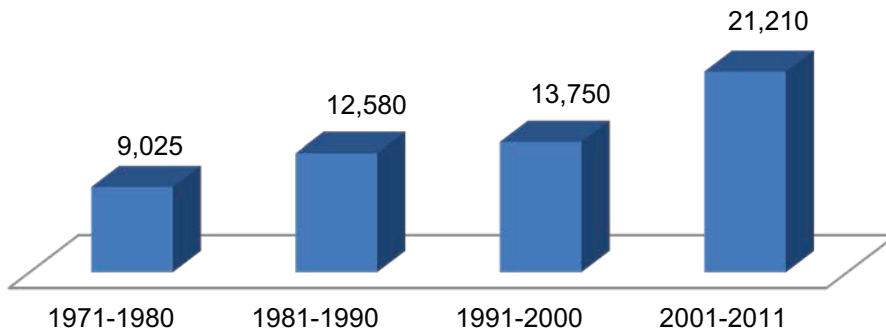
Recent immigrants to London are more likely to have come from the Americas, Africa or Asia and less likely to have come from Europe compared to earlier immigrants.

## City of London Total Immigrant and Recent Immigrant Population by Region of Birth, 2011

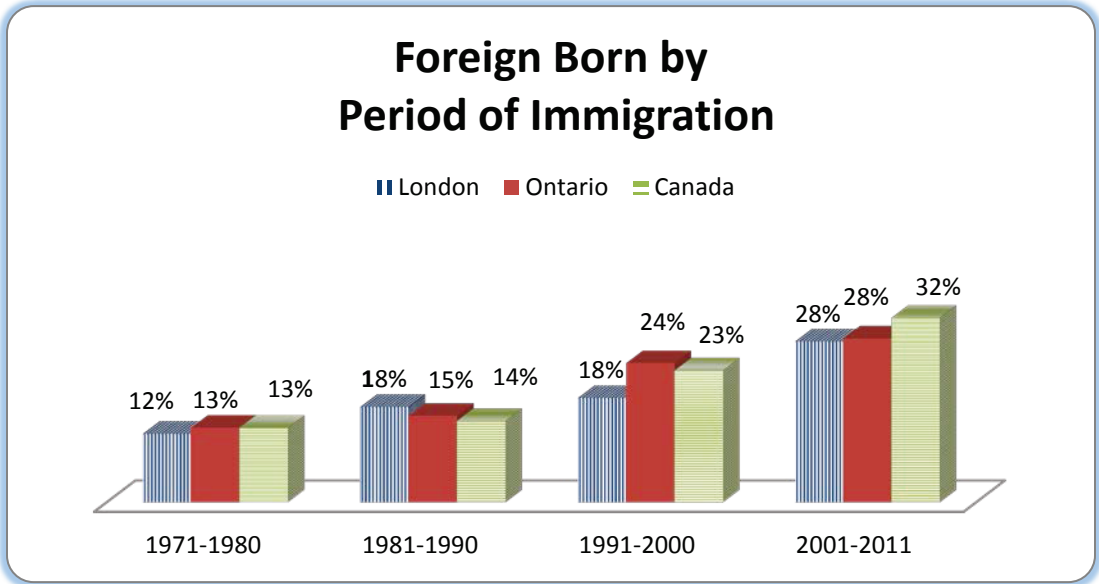


The number of foreign born individuals by period of immigration residing in London has increased each decade since the 1970's driven at least partially by increasing immigration levels to Canada decade over decade.<sup>3</sup>

## City of London Foreign Born by Period of Immigration



The percentage of foreign born by period of immigration is similar for London, Ontario and Canada for the 1970's and 1980's. In the 1990's the percentage of foreign born by period of immigration declined in London compared to Ontario and Canada. In the 1990's London's traditional economic strengths in the financial services industry and secondary manufacturing were hard hit by North American Free Trade which would have had a negative impact on London's ability to attract and retain immigrants.<sup>4</sup>



In the 2000's the percentage of foreign born by period of immigration was lower for London and Ontario compared to Canada. Once again economic factors were at play with Ontario's economy struggling through the 2000's especially compared to many western provinces.<sup>5</sup>

## Economic and Labour Market Context

### Highlights:

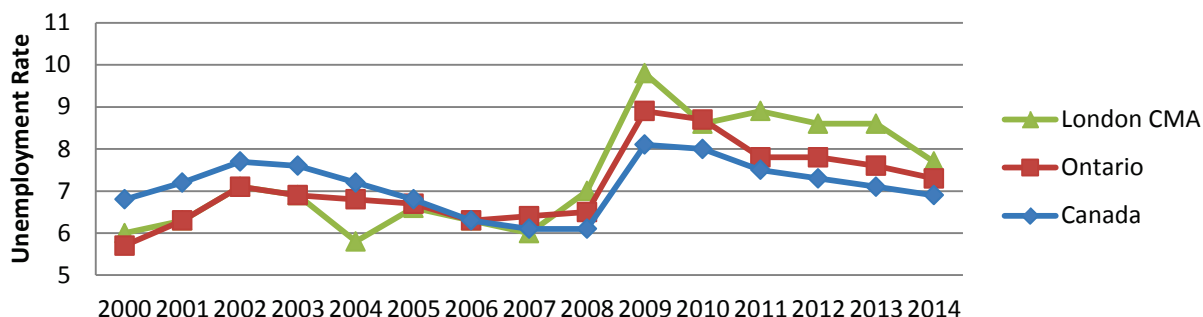
- London's economy was hit hard by the 2008-2009 recession with an economic recovery that has been slow and uneven and labour market indicators have not yet returned to pre-recession levels.
- In 2011, the average unemployment rate in London for non-immigrants was 8.5% compared to 8.8% for immigrants.
- The unemployment rate for recent immigrants, those that arrived between 2006 and 2011, was 18.9% for London.
- Recent immigrants who are visible minorities experienced an overall unemployment rate of 22.0% in London with specific visible minority groups experiencing higher than the overall average rate: Black (41.1%), Korean (29.3%), Southeast Asian (28.6%) and Arabic (24.3%)
- In 2010, regardless of their level of education, immigrant women's earnings were roughly 95% of those of their native-born counterparts. For men, the extent of convergence differed by education level. In 2010, less-educated male immigrants' earnings were 78% of those of their native-born counterparts, compared with 93% for more-educated immigrant workers

Prior to 2007, when the strong Canadian dollar began to take a toll on the manufacturing industry, the employment growth in South-Western Ontario including the City of London was robust. This was primarily due to strong growth in Canada's technology triangle and investments in the auto industry in the region. However, since 2007, a strong currency and subsequent recession hit hard on the region's employment growth, especially in the manufacturing sector.<sup>6</sup>

London's employment was hit hard by the 2008-2009 recession, during the economic downturn, the city lost approximately 7,300 jobs between 2008-2009.<sup>7</sup> London's economic recovery has been slow and uneven with labour market indicators still not having returned to prerecession levels.

London's unemployment rate began to increase after 2007 when at 6.0% it was below that of Ontario (6.4%) and Canada (6.1%) and since that time it has remained higher than the Ontario and Canadian rates through 2014.<sup>8</sup> As of February 2015 London's unemployment rate was 7.0% which is almost on par with that of Ontario (6.9%) and Canada (6.8%).

## Annual Labour Force Unemployment Rate London, Ontario and Canada (2000 to 2014)



According to research conducted by Altus Consulting for the City of London' recent trends in employment by sector for London Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)<sup>9</sup> include:

- In 2011, the top three sectors in the CMA's economy were manufacturing, trade and health care services;
- Over the 2006-2011 period, the CMA lost some 8,600 jobs, mainly due to the poor performance in the primary and manufacturing sectors;
- As a result, the share of the manufacturing sector employment in the CMA has declined from 16.1% to 12.4% over the period;
- Over the last five years, the major drivers of growth in employment have been in construction, FIRE (finance, insurance, real estate and leasing), health care and other services;
- Compared to the distribution of employment in Ontario by sector, in 2011, the London CMA was significantly over-weighted in educational and health care services and under-weighted in professional, and information and cultural services; and
- While the share of Ontario's employment in the information and culture service sector increased over the 2006-2011 period, the sector's share in London CMA's employment actually declined.<sup>10</sup>

Overall, Altus Consulting in the report, *Employment, Population, Housing and Non-Residential Construction Projections, City of London, Ontario, 2011 Update*, concluded that London will have some difficulty competing with Kitchener/Waterloo in the high-technology manufacturing sector and Windsor/Sarnia in the automotive sector. Nonetheless, London has its own advantages. The city has been increasingly competitive and remained on the forefront of research within the life sciences. The city has also started to invest in logistics (the Airport/Gateway project) and lightweight material industries. According to the research conducted by Altus Consulting, the City of London is well poised for future economic growth and will likely perform only slightly slower than competing centres within southwestern Ontario.

### 1.2 IMMIGRANT WORKFORCE INVOLVEMENT: LONDON, ONTARIO, AND CANADA

The experiences of recent immigrants to Canada have received considerable attention from the media and researchers since the mid-1990s. Their employment and unemployment rates and their earnings are, in general, substantially different from those of native-born Canadians.

According to the Statistics Canada report *Earnings and Incomes of Canadians Over the Past Quarter Century*, which examined the time period 1980 to 2005 the earnings gap between recent immigrant workers and Canadian-born workers widened significantly. In 1980, recent immigrant men who had some employment income earned 85 cents for each dollar received by Canadian-born men. By 2005, the ratio had dropped to 63 cents. The corresponding numbers for recent immigrant women were 85 cents and 56 cents, respectively.<sup>11</sup>

The earnings gap between recent immigrants and Canadian-born workers was larger among individuals with a university degree than among their less educated counterparts. In 2005, recent immigrant men with a university degree earned only 48 cents for each dollar received by Canadian-born male university graduates. In contrast, recent immigrant men with no university degree earned 61 cents for each dollar received by their Canadian-born counterparts.<sup>12</sup>

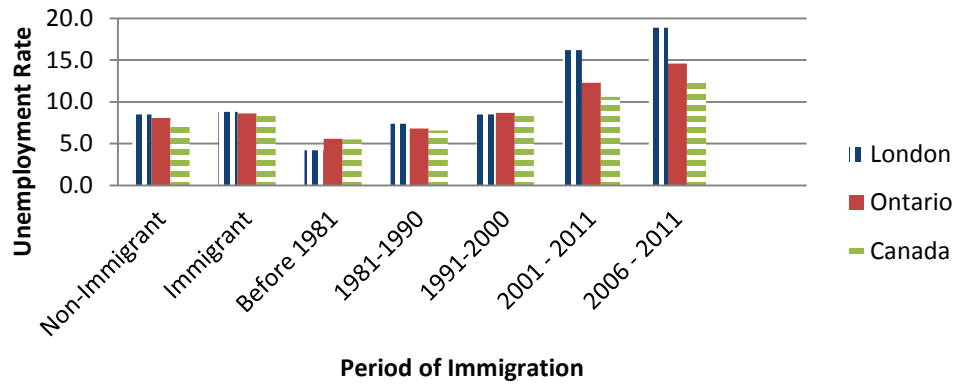
Recent Statistics Canada research points out that immigrant and native-born workers experienced substantial growth in annual real wages and salaries from 1991 to 2010. However, although the earnings and pension coverage of immigrant and native-born employees partially converged over the 20-year period, significant differences still remained. By 2010, regardless of their level of education, immigrant women's earnings were roughly 95% of those of their native-born counterparts. For men, the extent of convergence differed by education level. In 2010, less-educated male immigrants' earnings were 78% of those of their native-born counterparts, compared with 93% for more-educated immigrant workers.<sup>13</sup>

However, on a positive note the gap between the non-immigrant and immigrants unemployment rates was lower in London compared to Ontario and Canada. According to data from Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey, the average unemployment rate in London for non-immigrants was 8.5% compared to 8.8% for immigrants. The unemployment rate for both non-immigrants and immigrants in London was higher than that of Ontario (8.1% non-immigrants and 8.6% immigrants) and Canada (7.6% non-immigrants and 8.3% immigrants).<sup>14</sup>

The slightly higher unemployment rate for immigrants as compared to non-immigrants masks the labour force realities faced by many recent immigrants based on their period of immigration. According to the 2011 National Household Survey the unemployment rate for recent immigrants, those that arrived between 2006 and 2011, was 18.9% for London 14.6% for Ontario and 13.3% for Canada. While the situation improves when the period of immigration is expanded to 2001 to 2011, the unemployment rates for these immigrants remains higher than non-immigrants or immigrants from earlier periods of immigration at 16.2% for London, 12.3% for Ontario and 10.6% for Canada.<sup>15</sup>

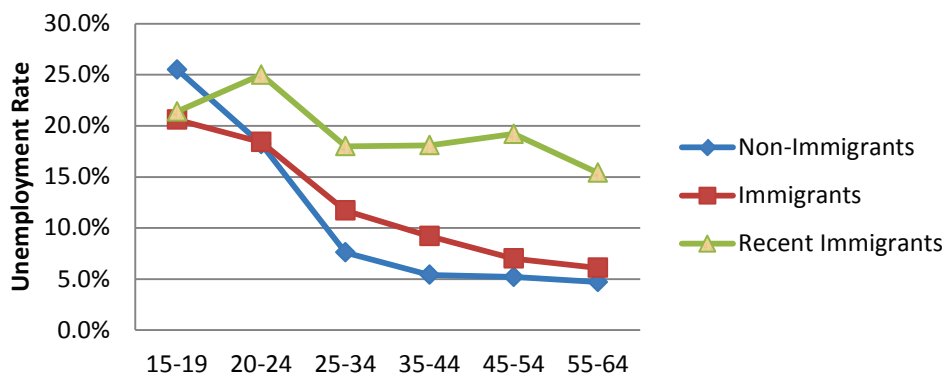
Immigrants from earlier periods of immigration fared much better in terms of their unemployment rates. In 2011, the unemployment rate for immigrants who arrived between 1991 and 2000 was 8.5% for London, 8.7% for Ontario and 8.3% for Canada. The unemployment rate for immigrants who arrived between 1981 and 1990 was 7.4% for London, 6.8% for Ontario and 6.6% for Canada. Immigrants who arrived prior to 1981 had the lowest rates of unemployment at 4.2% for London 5.6% for Ontario and 5.5% for Canada.<sup>16</sup>

## 2011 Unemployment Rate by Immigrant Status and Period of Arrival



There was variation in the unemployment rate based on age group for non-immigrants, immigrants and recent immigrants in London. The unemployment rate is higher for non-immigrants (25.5%) in the 15-19 years age group than immigrants (20.6%) and recent immigrants (21.4%). For both non-immigrants and immigrants the unemployment rate drops sharply through corresponding higher age groupings with the non-immigrants unemployment rate remaining slightly lower than the immigrant unemployment rate.

## 2011 Unemployment Rate by Age Cohort and Immigrant Status



The exception to this trend occurs when the unemployment rate for recent immigrants was examined over different age groupings. The unemployment rate for recent immigrants aged 25 to 34 years was 18%. In contrast, non-immigrants and immigrants the overall unemployment rate for recent immigrants rose to 18.1% for individuals aged 35 to 44 and to 19.2% for individuals aged 45-54. This proportion dropped to 15.4% for individuals aged 55-64.

## Chapter 2

### 2.1 EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS EXPERIENCED BY NEWCOMERS: LONDON, ONTARIO, AND CANADA

#### Highlights:

- There are a number of barriers that impede immigrant labour market participation. These include: lack of Canadian work experience; credential recognition; licensing for regulated professionals; language and cultural barriers and smaller/less diverse social networks.
- Immigrants have higher levels of self-employment than non-Immigrants
- Financing has consistently been identified as the major barrier to immigrant self-employment

The impression that today's immigrants are not progressing as well as past generations of immigrants who came to Canada can be backed up based on available research.

According to the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) 2003 data, 60% of new immigrants worked in a field other than they had before arriving in Canada.<sup>17</sup> Many factors contributed to these results with “not enough Canadian experience” and “foreign experience not accepted” ranking at the top for immigrants aged 25 to 44 who experienced difficulties finding employment.<sup>18</sup>

**Table: Types of Difficulties Experienced by Immigrants Aged 25 to 44 Who Experienced Difficulties Finding Employment and Time since Arrival<sup>19</sup>**

All difficulties cited			
All Immigrants	0 to 6 months	7 to 24 months	25 to 48 months
Not enough Canadian job experience	62.6%	62.4%	49.8%
No connections in the job market	33.1%	37.1%	37.1%
Foreign experience not accepted	42.6%	37.9%	36.6%
Foreign qualifications not accepted	39.2%	38.0%	35.4%
Lack of employment opportunities	29.1%	42.7%	32.4%
Not enough Canadian job references	33.2%	34.8%	32.1%
Language problems	38.2%	34.6%	31.9%
Not able to find a job in my field	14.9%	34.8%	29.8%
Not knowing enough people working	15.5%	20.1%	20.4%
Not having family or friends who could help	9.8%	13.4%	15.4%
Discrimination	7.6%	13.2%	14.6%
Not knowing how to find a job	9.7%	10.1%	10.4%
Childcare constraints	n.a.	3.3%	4.6%
Transportation constraints	8.7%	6.4%	3.9%
Not knowing the city	6.3%	5.5%	3.5%
Other	9.0%	9.5%	12.9%



Citizenship and Immigration Canada's research report *Who Drives a Taxi in Canada?* Noted that "... taxi driving is identified as a skill level C in the National Occupational Classification, which usually requires secondary school and/or occupation-specific training." About 35% of Canadian-born taxi drivers and 53% of immigrant taxi drivers had at least some postsecondary education and may be overqualified for their job. Over-education occurs both among Canadian-born and immigrant taxi drivers, but the rate was higher among immigrants."<sup>20</sup>

There are a number of barriers that impede immigrant labour market participation in the areas in which individuals have been trained and/or have experience. These include: employer and regulatory requirements for Canadian work experience; credential recognition; licensing for regulated professionals; lack of labour market language training; lack of customized upgrading and support opportunities; and lack of information overseas and in Canada.

### ***Foreign credential recognition:***

The assessment of foreign credentials is a process that confirms the validity of academic credentials, while the recognition of qualifications refers to the verification that the education, skills and experience obtained in another country are comparable to the standards established for Canadian professions and trades. According to Government of Canada's Progress Report 2010 on foreign credential recognition, there are two categories of occupations in Canada: non-regulated and regulated. Eight out of ten jobs are in non-regulated occupations where employers are solely responsible for determining that a prospective employee has the skills, education and experience necessary for the position. Some employers may require that prospective employees with qualifications from outside of Canada have their education and experience evaluated by a credential assessment agency. As this process is time consuming and expensive, it is easier for the employer to select an alternative candidate.<sup>21</sup>

In many professions, staying on top of trends and technologies is crucial. When skilled, foreign-born workers with foreign credentials come to Canada and are required to go through a lengthy licensing or re-qualification process, they are being disconnected from their profession, their potential networks, and further development of their skills.

One of the main reasons behind difficulties related to credential recognition is that there are too many stakeholders. In the 13 jurisdictions in Canada, there are more than 50 regulated occupations and more than 400 regulatory bodies. Yet, regulated occupations make up only about 15% of Canada's labour market. In the other 85% of the labour market, the general educational qualifications of immigrant candidates are evaluated by the thousands of employers responsible for hiring professionals and skilled workers in the unregulated occupations, such as tourism, textiles and software technology. Outside the labour market, foreign credential recognition is also important to Canada's more than 200 accredited post-secondary institutions that must assess foreign education or credentials to place immigrant students in their programs.<sup>22</sup>

There exists an incongruity in employers' acceptance of international credentials. For example, immigrants who obtained their highest degree in the Philippines, the United States, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong, or Poland exhibit similar labour market outcomes as those studying in Canada, with relatively higher employment rates and lower unemployment rates. In contrast, immigrants who received their highest education in Pakistan, Iran and China did particularly poorly, with relatively higher unemployment rates<sup>23</sup>.

Recent work by the ACFOLA's labour market partnerships research team also revealed the same kind of data. In their study, respondents who had their training from Europe appeared to have a lower unemployment rate than those who had education from other countries.<sup>24</sup>

**Table: Newcomer with Partially Accepted Foreign Credentials after Four Years in Canada<sup>25</sup>**

Country of Highest Education or Last Permanent Residence	Foreign Credentials Accepted		
	Total, Fully or Partially	Fully	Partially
United States	54%	51%	3%
United Kingdom	49%	43%	6%
France	37%	24%	13%
South Korea	17%	10%	7%
India	43%	27%	16%
China	33%	28%	5%
Philippines	42%	17%	25%
Pakistan	48%	34%	13%
Romania	45%	34%	12%
Russia	46%	26%	19%
All Others	42%	28%	13%

### **Canadian Experience:**

The requirement for Canadian experience often bars newcomers from employment. A Statistics Canada Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants in Canada (LSIC) 2001-2005 identified a lack of Canadian experience as being the most common barrier to finding meaningful employment in Canada. Different studies have also cited lack of Canadian experience as the main barrier for employment. ACFOLA's recent study of London's African community identifies similar data where one in every three respondents named this as a major barrier to employment.

The requirement for Canadian experience may encompass both the hard skills of how particular jobs are accomplished in Canada, as well as soft skills, which are more difficult to articulate and may include understanding Canadian workplace culture and acquiring the communication skills necessary to operate effectively within it. A recent Institute for Research on Public Policy report suggests that, for many employers, the Canadian experience requirement is not as much about technical knowledge as it is about workplace socialization, including mastery of the social etiquette prevalent in Canadian workplaces.<sup>26</sup>

### **Language, accent and communication barriers:**

Language, accent and communication barriers prevent many immigrants from getting a job where they can utilize their expertise. It is a roadblock to employment for professionals, skilled trades, and for immigrants who normally do not have higher education from their former countries. Lack of official language skills leads to limited social networking for employment search. The recent ACFOLA study of the London area revealed that 26% of respondents stated language and communication as a major barrier to being employed.<sup>27</sup>

In some cases, cultural barriers were also cited as a barrier for newcomers being able to find employment. A lack of language skills makes acquiring and understanding information more difficult and the potential of misinformation and misunderstanding is more common. Community engagement assumes communication and the ability to articulate community issues. The Canadian Council on Social Development found that immigrants were more likely to say they had not been personally asked to volunteer or did not know how to become involved.<sup>28</sup>

The HR Council for the Non Profit Sector's Labour Force Study revealed that after hiring, turnover rates for new immigrants and members of visible minorities in the first year of employment were higher than for workers from other groups. The study emphasizes that language and communication challenges are significant barriers to the effective integration of immigrants. Many survey respondents mentioned their hesitation to fully participate in their workplace due to their limited language fluency, limited understanding of the cultural nuances of the language, and the challenges associated with marked accents. One small employer highlighted the important role of language proficiency in the integration of a newcomer into a small and close-knit team, including participation in social settings during and after work "Small talk can be a great part of the sector." In addition, fluency in language is important in sharing ideas and participating in discussions in the organization.<sup>29</sup>

### ***Immigrants have smaller and less diverse social networks:***

Finding a job is a key aspect of economic success in Canada. Much of the literature related to job searching in North America and Europe mentions the importance of personal networks. Canadian data from the 2008 General Social Survey (GSS) indicates that just over 26% of both Canadian-born and foreign-born workers had relied, at least partly, on relatives and friends to find their main job.<sup>30</sup>

People immigrating to Canada often leave family and friends behind and must reconstruct their social networks in their adopted country. According to the 2008 GSS, the social networks of foreign-born individuals were smaller and less diverse than those of Canadian-born. Excluding members of their households, the foreign-born individual had, on average, fewer relatives to whom they felt close. They also had fewer close friends and other friends compared with people born in Canada.<sup>31</sup>

The social networks of immigrants are smaller and less diverse than those of the Canadian-born. However, data from the 2008 GSS suggest that the networks of immigrants may grow and diversify the longer they are in Canada. Human capital, such as education and work experience, is an important determinant of employment and income but recent immigrants have been having some difficulty in quickly converting their educational advantages into economic ones. Social networks in conjunction with human capital may contribute to explaining some of the differences between the labour market experiences of newly arrived immigrants and those of other Canadians.<sup>32</sup>

## **2.2 IMMIGRANTS IN SELF-EMPLOYMENT**

Immigrants from all immigration categories, coming from a wide range of countries, establish businesses in Canada; thereby contributing to the economy, society, and culture. Immigration is fueling labour market growth, and immigrants have higher levels of self-employment than their Canadian-born counterparts.<sup>33</sup> Research conducted by Statistics Canada also points out that

children of immigrants are more likely to be self-employed than those Canadians who did not have immigrant parents.<sup>34</sup>

Starting a business is challenging and failure rates are high, for both immigrants and Canadian-born. Over the past decade, 98.5% of new jobs in Canada were created by firms with under 100 employees, and almost 60% were created by firms with fewer than five employees. In Ontario, the self-employment rate has risen substantially since the early 1970's, with the self-employed labour force growing at more than two times the rate of wage and salary employment to reach the level of 2.7 million self-employed people in Canada as of 2009.<sup>35</sup>

Immigrants have become a major source of job creation in this country through both investments and business formation. Immigrants have higher rates of self-employment in comparison to the Canadian born population: in the late 2000's, about 19% of immigrants were self-employed compared with 15% of Canadian-born individuals. However, self-employed immigrants are more highly concentrated in the cohorts arriving before 1991, and they are less concentrated among recent immigrants. Entrepreneurship offers an important route to economic integration for new immigrants, and we must encourage immigrant entrepreneurship in Canada.<sup>36</sup>

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), a majority of SME (small to medium enterprise) owners intend to exit their businesses within the next decade, mainly due to retirement, with as many as two million jobs affected. Attracting motivated and entrepreneurial workers and business people from around the world may help turn these risks into opportunities for new immigrants, small business owners, their employees and the economy in general. The CFIB recommends that governments "strive to attract more entrepreneurial workers and qualified business people from around the world who are interested in purchasing existing Canadian businesses."<sup>37</sup>

London Small Business Centre (SBC), commissioned an *Entrepreneurial Climate Study 2014* where they examined the entrepreneurial environment within four counties in Southwestern Ontario: Elgin, Lambton, Middlesex, and Oxford. In this study, by far the most significant barrier for all groups was having sufficient financial resources. This was a particularly widespread barrier among intenders. Fear of failure and a lack of a solid business plan also hold back many intenders from starting their own business.<sup>38</sup>

**Table: Barriers to Self-Employment among Intenders, Owners and Past Owners<sup>39</sup>**

	<b>Intender</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Past Owners</b>
Insufficient financial resources	46%	26%	35%
Fear of failure	16%	7%	7%
Lack of a solid business plan	15%	4%	10%
Lack of knowledge/skills in my area of business	9%	5%	3%
Lack of knowledge about legal and regulatory requirements	5%	6%	6%
Family commitments	8%	3%	6%
Age/health problems	4%	1%	11%
External economic conditions	3%	2%	6%
Lack of confidence/motivation	2%	4%	3%
Lack of mentoring/good strategic advice and support	2%	1%	2%
Other	9%	14%	11%
Don't know/nothing	9%	34%	30%

### ***Financing:***

Financing has consistently been identified as the most difficult issue for immigrant entrepreneurs. In a 2010 study on immigrant entrepreneurship in York Region, difficulties acquiring start-up funding were most commonly cited as an important obstacle for newcomer entrepreneurs. In general, a person needs a two-year untarnished credit history in Canada to obtain a bank loan.<sup>40</sup>

Recent newcomers for the most part do not qualify for The Ontario Self Employment Benefit Program (OSEB) because they lack a Canadian employment history as an employee. Also, OSEB is not available to persons with a background in business ownership because they also lack the required employment history. As such, this program excludes entrepreneurial newcomers.

### ***Networking/Lack of social and professional networks:***

Lack of networks is also identified as an obstacle to starting and maintaining a business. The absence of networks extends from school, postsecondary, and neighbourhood-based connections that many Canadian-born citizens automatically have, to the lack of professional networks and mentors who can “show the ropes” to a newcomer wanting to start a business.

### ***Lack of knowledge of the community:***

Immigrants often lack an understanding of local demographics and community interests believing that hard work will be sufficient to attract customers or clients:

- Certain business locations are affordable because they are not desirable, and this poses challenges for entrepreneurs on a budget; and
- Immigrants need assistance identifying viable business locations.

### ***Lack of a solid business plan:***

Many guides to developing a business plan do exist, but few programs that allow knowledgeable individuals to sit down with a prospective business owner to walk them through the process of developing a viable business plan. In the Wise5 pilot program for newcomer entrepreneurs, a key informant interviewed for this research noted the most interesting finding of the pilot: newcomers on average took three times longer than Canadian-born participants to write a business plan. This was observed in classroom situations where newcomers worked alongside Canadian-born individuals. This may be due to language barriers, but also lack of familiarity with Canadian regulations.<sup>41</sup>

## **2.3 COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES ON IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS**

Discussions and consultations with leaders of ethno-cultural organizations, employment and settlement organizations, as well as immigrants were held in late 2014 and early 2015. These discussions identified the following employment barriers (Refer to Appendix 2, Appendix 3 and Appendix 4):

## **Service Providers**

From a service provider perspective unmet needs and barriers to immigrants' employment include:

### **Language Barriers/Career Development Program**

- Need more bridging programs for skilled professionals;
- Need more specialized language training programs: language preparation for the workplace/specific career focus, Canadian day to day language comfort levels;
- Post-employment or job retention's language supports; and
- Lack of ESL programs for people who are "in the middle".

### **Canadian Experience**

- Employer attitude towards immigrant community tends to result in recruiting people with Canadian experience; and
- Unionized work environment is less welcoming/flexible to allow temporary placements, etc.

### **Self-Employment**

- Inaccessibility to credit, eligibility for programs and a complex regulatory environment are significant barriers.

### **System/Service Delivery**

- More information (details for front line) to make better referrals is required such as increased Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS);
- Tighter alignment between settlement, front line, literacy/education and employment services;
- Bridging clients from short term (survival) to permanent (career) with funding support;
- Consistency with available funding – multi-year sustainable funding;
- Access to programs based on 'status', e.g. work permits;
- Recognition of important need for sustained funding versus year to year to build on successes/consolidation/availability of services;
- Making good decisions based on need versus what is available or funded;
- New Canadians ability to access resources and information;
- Employment Services are underutilized and there is no unified data about how many immigrants are not accessing the service; and
- Transportation gap: Lack of public transit to get to workplace/time.

## **Representatives and Leaders of Ethno-Cultural Groups**

From the perspective of representatives and leaders of ethno-cultural groups, unmet needs and barriers to immigrants' employment include:

### **Employment Services and Supports**

- Slow access to available services;
- Employment supports are not fully used because of the lack of access to information;
- Repetitive services – perception that service providers interested in opening file to increase their numbers;
- Lack of coordination among service providers;

- Perception that service provider staff is not always welcoming;
- Support service is faulty: no evaluation and monitoring - what are the actual number of people getting employment;
- Need for a broader range of training options to be available, for example “cab training.”
- Underutilizing Western University and Fanshawe College as resources;
- Concept of volunteer placement is based on 1970’s concept; immigrants need money to feed their family; and
- Conversely there need to be more volunteer opportunities especially in the technical and professional fields.

### **Foreign Credential and Work Experience Recognition**

- Lack of credential recognition: foreign degrees are not respected;
- Discrimination against getting admission into the professional courses in the educational institution; and
- Greater understanding of the Canadian hiring process and hidden job market is required.

### **Self-employment/Entrepreneur Initiatives**

- Language and cultural barriers;
- Lack of funds;
- Lack of Canadian financial history which makes borrowing almost impossible;
- Limited business knowledge;
- Limited knowledge of the Canadian business context, for example tax regulations
- Lack of programs for becoming an entrepreneur;
- Small business training and services are expensive;
- Money needed to review business plan;
- Need for more mentoring opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs with both immigrant entrepreneurs (especially from their own ethno-cultural background) and non-immigrant entrepreneurs; and
- Opportunities to link immigrant entrepreneurs with existing businesses for sale and to support the transition in ownership.
- More people should be encouraged to explore self-employment as an option while at the same time acknowledging that entrepreneurship is not suitable for everyone

### **Language**

- Lack of specialized language training programs for skilled and professional immigrants;
- Language can be a barrier; especially with a foreign accent; and
- Language is not always an issue; soft skills and cultural norms can be more of a barrier

### **Employer Concepts and Attitude**

- Employer attitude towards the immigrant community results in a tendency to recruit people with Canadian experience;
- Skills mismatch with the Canadian labour force; and
- Unionized employment system can be a barrier.

### **Immigrant Attitude**

- Lack of social networks, knowledge of and about Canadian labour market and service providers;
- A belief that employment opportunities are lacking; and

- Immigrant attitude for the volunteer placement – its value may not be recognized and/or the necessity of paid employment may prevent accessing this option.

## **Community Groups**

### **ACFOLA's Needs Assessment for Labour Market Integration & Planning**

In 2014, African Canadian Federation of London & Area (ACFOLA) completed a needs assessment on self-employment and labour market integration of African Canadians in London Ontario. This needs assessment study is the first community-based research project in which the African community in London and surrounding areas participated and raised their voices about the areas of concern. The main objectives of this research project were to:

- Conduct a needs assessment and document the community's potential, priorities and needs in the areas of employment, education, skills development, health, housing, access to social services, sense of belonging and community participation, and other related issues for better provision of services; and
- Provide community-based information necessary for the formulation of the Strategic Economic Development Plan (SEDP) as a tool for government agencies, potential funders, and service providers.

The study outlines the picture of the African Community's employment related information, these are: unemployment rates, barriers to employment, employment related training, satisfaction with current work, employment based on immigration status and length, employment education and country of education, access to employment services and income/ education related information.

The following is a summary of the recommendations that focus on employment:

- To address barriers faced as a result of employers not recognizing foreign education, look at locally standardized tools to permit access to appropriate employment;
- To enhance the willingness of London community and of employers to embrace fully integration of recent immigrants through career skill development, mentoring for various formal workforce and entrepreneurship and recognition of qualifications;
- Short term retraining programs to provide a bridge between previous qualifications and requirements of Canadian employers;
- Promote pre-employment skill training;
- Job creation efforts should be focused on professional occupations and full time employment opportunities;
- Proactive approaches by the African community for changing economic realities and labour market requirements such as self-employment through formation of collaborative income generating business ventures;
- African community should be proactive in forging partnerships with other communities to promote mentorship and employability;
- ACFOLA needs to strengthen its collaboration with employment services to enhance confidence of African immigrants to embrace available employment service tools;
- Strengthening advocacy component of programs to educate employment services and employers about key issues facing African communities;
- Promote anti-discrimination programs to boost workforce development;



- Creation of sustainable youth empowerment programs to strengthen career development;
- Target programming and resources specific to the needs of women; and
- ACFOLA should work collaboratively with service providers, settlement agencies and employment services to support recent/newcomer African immigrants in accessing services and cater to their multiple needs<sup>42</sup>

### **Community Conversation with London's African Community**

In July 2013, the City of London invited members of London's African community to participate in one of two sessions to talk about employment. The purpose of the sessions was to provide African community members with an opportunity to share and learn from each other. The City of London engaged Pillar Consulting & Advisory Services to facilitate the sessions. The following questions were discussed by both groups:

1. What has been your experience in looking for work?
2. What challenges or barriers have you experienced in looking for work?
3. What has helped you look for work?
4. What supports or services do you need from the community to help you find employment?
5. What innovative solutions do you have to address unemployment?
6. What would you like to see as next steps from this discussion?

Attendees identified the following barriers to accessing employment: lack of Canadian experience, immigrant status, race/ethnicity/gender, judgement based on neighbourhood, lack of connections, lack of qualifications, discrimination and stereotypes, language and accent barriers, transportation, cultural barriers and isolation, lack of training and workshops, service providers who are not culturally sensitive to needs.

Participants provided the following suggestions to support gaining employment and new and innovative ideas that could be introduced in the London community. It is important to note that some of the ideas and suggestions for services to support job seekers are already available in the London community, these are:

- Create youth focused services: youth employment website, youth employment opportunities, youth mentorship programs;
  - Offer workshops: resume writing, interview preparation, how to start your own business, how to search for employment, information on available services, computer skills and how to network in Canadian culture;
  - Employment events: have more job fairs, create events to enhance networking opportunities, provide mentors and/or guides from the African community who have already successfully secured employment;
  - Develop opportunities to gain experience and knowledge: co-ops, apprenticeships, internships, volunteer opportunities, jobs and probationary work experience;
  - Enhance the service delivery:
    - Determine what each person needs and create a plan to help that person quickly and efficiently;
    - Provide education to service providers about cultural differences and the needs of the immigrant and newcomer population;
    - Create services that connect job seekers directly to employment and employers
- Engage multiple stakeholders in the conversation, specifically employers; and

- Provide education to the community, employers, and service providers about the skills of the African community;
- Community level initiatives: build the capacity of the cultural community to provide support for immigrants and newcomers, continue the dialogue about African employment and create strategies to address barriers (move to action), build supports within the African community;
- Provide access to transportation; and
- Create opportunities for incentives for business ventures.

## Chapter 3

### LONDON'S INITIATIVES FOR IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT AND LEADING PRACTICES: LONDON, CANADA, AND THE WORLD

#### PART A: PREPARING FOR A JOB SEARCH

##### Navigating Available Resources

###### *London and Middlesex Immigration Portal*

The London and Middlesex Immigration Portal ([www.immigration.london.ca](http://www.immigration.london.ca) and [www.immigration.middlesex.ca](http://www.immigration.middlesex.ca)) is a one-stop information source for newcomers and potential newcomers to the city of London and Middlesex County. With funding from the Province of Ontario, it became the first of 28 local immigration portals. It continues to receive project funding and strong recognition from the province for its enhancements. Once a year, staff representing the 28 portals across the province meet to share information and ideas and to exchange best practices.

The work of the London and Middlesex Immigration Portal is guided by a Steering Committee composed of the community's service agencies, and secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. It features content on living, working and settling in London and Middlesex, quarterly newsletters, and a multilingual *Ask a Question* feature which gives readers the ability to connect with settlement counsellors in one of thirteen languages. Recent work includes a campaign to attract international students and new content for employers and job seekers. The enhanced labour market section provides information for both the immigrant job seeker and employers wishing to hire immigrants. It includes testimonials, tips on documents to take to Canada, how to prepare for employment and connecting with employers, as well as a local job feed.

The London and Middlesex Immigration Portal is mobile-friendly, and content can be viewed in multiple languages.

##### Employment Services: Preparing for a Job Search

###### *Employment Sector Council London Middlesex (ESCLM)*

ESCLM is one voice for the London-Middlesex employment and training sector. For more than 20 years, ESCLM has been a centre of innovation and collaboration for the London area employment and training sector. It prides itself on the remarkable work of more than 40 public and non-profit organization members that collectively serve many thousands of employers and job seekers. ESCLM is a critical labour market planning and workforce development resource.

###### *WIL Employment Connections (including Essential Job Search Skills Workshops, Placements)*

WIL Counselling and Training for Employment and WIL Employment and Learning Resources Corporation (operating as WIL Employment Connections) are non-profit organizations dedicated, primarily, to facilitating the economic and social integration of immigrant women and men and Canadian women and men into the broader community of London and area. To this

end, WIL provides services in information, referral, assessment, employment counselling and preparation, and facilitation of volunteer work experience placements leading to employment. In 2014-15, WIL provided employment supports and services to 1,262 immigrant job seekers originating from 111 different countries. Immigrants to Canada represent 75% of WIL's annual clientele. WIL has extensive experience managing and sponsoring municipal, provincial and federally-funded community projects, programs and services.

WIL's Essential Job Search Skills Program consists of a series of workshops specifically designed to help job seekers find and keep employment. Offered as a one week program (5 days full-time), Monday to Friday. Workshops include:

- Effective Job Search Strategies
- Resumes and Cover Letters
- Completing Job Application Forms
- Job Interviews
- Workplace Success

Graduates of WIL's employment preparation workshops are eligible to participate in an 8-week Volunteer Work Placement Program. This highly successful program provides immigrants and newcomers with valuable Canadian work experience, further knowledge of Canadian business culture, and greater ability to form networks in their profession for the purpose of securing paid employment.

WIL has established ongoing working relationships with hundreds of local employers who have hosted volunteer work placements and/or hired WIL's clientele. A qualified team of Employment Advisors work with clients to research local companies to identify potential opportunities for placement, and connect with employers.

#### *Cross Cultural Learner Centre (Job Search Workshop)*

The London Cross Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC) has been operating in London since 1968. During the first 12 years, services focused primarily on providing education and information to the community on global and international development issues. During the movement of Vietnamese refugees to London in the mid-70's, the CCLC extended its support and linkages in the community to assist with refugee needs. The CCLC was able to connect refugees with an informed community, ready and willing to provide a helping hand. With tremendous support from the faith communities, London began to build its strengths as a refugee reception centre and the CCLC began its expansion into settlement services.

In 1980, the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre incorporated as a non-profit, charitable organization. CCLC is now well known locally and nationally as a one-stop, multi-service support network for newcomers yet still maintains its reputation in the global education field.

The Job Search Workshop (JSW) Program provides thorough needs assessment by trained Assessors, 1 to 1 job search coaching, pre-employment workshops conducted in a computerized environment, specialists who understand the job search needs of newcomers, a personalized action plan, an environment in which to learn about job search strategies and Canadian business perspectives and ongoing follow up and support.

### *Fanshawe College (Bridge Training)*

Fanshawe College offers the Bridging for Internationally Educated Nurses (BIEN) program. This program has been approved by the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) to bridge to Ontario nursing registration and provides theory and clinical experience necessary to meet CNO evidence of practice requirements.

### *LUSO Community Services*

LUSO Community Services is a multicultural, non-profit charitable organization dedicated to promoting inclusiveness, well-being and prosperity in the London community. It is a provider of community social services with a holistic approach to community development. It provides programs and services in the community for children, youth, families and seniors of culturally diverse and ethnic backgrounds.

LUSO offers programs specifically for immigrants, newcomers and refugees including settlement services and an employment support program with a focus on Career Connections, Employability Planning, Employment Focused supports, and Post Support Follow Up.

### *Collège Boréal*

Collège Boréal is an Employment Ontario service provider specializing in programs/services for French language immigrants seeking employment in English and French speaking work environments. Assistance is provided with employment and interview preparation, skills training, resume and cover letters, job search and networking skills.

### *Pathways Skill Development and Placement Centre*

Pathways assists individuals to overcome multiple challenges to meaningful employment by providing a holistic series of programs and services for employment related needs. Services include: employment preparation, industry-leading skills training, employment placement, and enhanced workplace language preparation. The *Skills to Work Pilot Project* offers Pathways Skill Training programs to ethno-cultural young adults age 18 -29. This partnership project provides Light Industrial, Construction Technologies, and Administrative Clerical training. The breadth of this funding allows newcomers to Canada including: refugees, refugee claimants, Canadian citizens, and first or second generation Canadians to take part in Pathways programs.

### *London Employment Help Centre (LEHC)*

The London Employment Help Centre is a community-based, not-for-profit charitable organization providing career counseling, employment adjustment and placement services to displaced workers as well as advocacy services to individuals who have lost their social benefits.

The LEHC provides information on certification requirements, professional associations, licensing etc., self-assessment of skills and marketability. Participants are assigned individual counsellors to assist and support them through the process of application, certification, facilitated group job search and training may be provided. Individuals who reach ESL level 8-9

and obtain the required certification for their professions are assisted with job development services (placement into jobs).

#### *Other Services and Supports in London*

In addition to the above noted organizations, immigrants in London can also access a full range of high quality employment services from other agencies including; Fanshawe Career Services, Goodwill, LEADS, London Training Centre, Nokee Kwe, Western Career Services, and Youth Opportunities Unlimited.

### **Language Training**

#### *Centre for Lifelong Learning, London District Catholic School Board*

The Centre for Lifelong Learning offers a full range of English as a Second Language (ESL) programming which includes all fluency levels; specialized language training in administrative/clerical and customer services, and food and beverage services and enhanced language training for construction technologies and light industrial.

#### *Wheable Centre for Adult Education, Thames Valley District School Board (including Language Training in the Workplace and Enhanced Language Training)*

The Wheable Centre for Adult Education offers a full range of English as a Second Language (ESL) programming which includes all fluency levels along with specialized language training for law enforcement, retail, food and hospitality, childcare, Personal Support Worker, healthcare, hairstyling, and business.

#### *Fanshawe College: Occupation Specific Language Training (OSLT)*

Fanshawe College designs and delivers occupation-specific language training which addresses language barriers, differences in workplace culture, difficulties in obtaining recognition for foreign qualifications and international experience, discrimination, and lack of workplace integration and diversity programs.

### **Foreign Credential Recognition**

#### *Access Centre for Regulated Employment*

The Access Centre for Regulated Employment (ACRE) provides information and application assistance to internationally trained individuals seeking licensure or related employment in regulated professions. Serving all of Southwestern Ontario, services include: provincial licensure/certification information and application submission assistance, personalized work plans for clients seeking licensure/certification in Ontario, facilitating document procurement, translation, assessment, evaluation and notarization, technical language support, relevant labour market information, information and assistance with the certification processes of related occupations, computer terminals, internet access and exam preparation resources, facilitating connections between employers and internationally trained individuals, referral to community

partners for training and upgrading opportunities, and accessing the funds necessary to get foreign credential recognition.

Since May 2007, when ACRE opened, it has registered 3,592 clients, provided counselling to 2,786, sent 1,047 applications, obtained 619 credential/certification including Credential Evaluation Reports and 187 licenses resulting in employment for 1,118 clients.

#### *Ontario Works – Internationally Trained Physicians Pursuing Canadian Medical Certification Pilot Project*

The City of London's Ontario Works office has been assisting internationally trained physicians through the medical credentialing process since early 2000. This process was developed at a time when the city was experiencing a significant shortage of doctors and physicians with international credentials who were in receipt of Ontario Works and unable to move forward. Ontario Works uses an integrated approach to support the internally trained physicians working in partnership with the Access Centre for Regulated Employment and WIL Employment Connections with a strong emphasis on a clear plan and commitment by the client. Financial supports include exam registration cost, equipment, and textbooks. There are some obstacles to measure success rates due to the complexity and length of the Canadian Medical Certification and licensing processes, however, the positive impacts of this approach are demonstrated as follows:

- 64 internationally trained physicians were provided support to take 94 credentialing exams
- 21 people or 33% moved to a residency or physician assistant position
- 23 or 36% left Ontario Works for employment, usually in a medically related field, particularly research assistant

#### *The Regional Municipality of York's Innovative Foreign Credential Process*

The Regional Municipality of York did not stop and wait when they ran into trouble evaluating skilled immigrant credentials, they created their own tool. A major barrier to employment for new immigrants is recognition of foreign credentials and experience. With a growing number of new immigrants calling it home, York Region decided in 2009 to make a conscious effort to diversify its workforce. A reliable and innovative tool was needed to help its recruiters and hiring managers overcome this obstacle. Not able to find an evaluation tool elsewhere to help them assess applicants, York Region developed one of its own: Foreign Credentials Evaluation Process Guide.<sup>43</sup> Easy to use, the guide is designed to promote an effective hiring process that leads to hiring decisions based on merit and does not exclude diverse candidates.

York Region is already seeing a growing number of skilled immigrants within its workforce. York Region is also a leading employer partner with Professional Access and Integration Enhancement (PAIE), a bridging program that provides internships and was instrumental in the recent hiring of internationally-trained engineers by York Region.

Twenty-seven percent of the Region's workforce now consists of immigrants and, at last count York Region's employees speak more than 60 languages. York Region was recognized for its innovative work with skilled immigrants in April 2013, receiving the TRIEC (Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council) Immigrant Success (IS) Toronto Star Award for Excellence in

Workplace Integration. The IS Awards recognize employer leadership and innovation in recruiting and retaining skilled immigrants in the Toronto Region.

#### *Local Government's Centre for Validation, Malmö, Sweden*

Malmö has the highest share of foreign born individuals in Sweden; it has seen that number grow rapidly, nearly doubling between 1990 and 2006. Responding to relatively high levels of unemployment among the immigrant population during the early 1990s, local authorities began investing in skills recognition for immigrants. The local government of Malmö, Sweden established a **Centre for Validation** where education and skill attainments based on foreign formal education and work experience are validated. Today the Centre for Validation offers a variety of services ranging from evaluating individual education and suggesting suitable further education and training; evaluating acquired work competences and experiences; and offering a “*competencies portfolio*” to make immigrants’ education and skills attainment more visible and understandable to local employers. The latter is seen as a key document for job applications. The number of people who have received validation from the centre has increased in all three services since 2004. However, qualification recognition is restricted to secondary level educational attainments; higher educational attainments can only be validated at the state level.<sup>44</sup>

### **Loans for Licensure Support**

#### *Internationally Trained Worker Loan Program*

The Internationally Trained Worker (ITW) Loan Program provides access to the funds necessary to achieve foreign credential recognition and employment outcomes commensurate with their international education, skills and experience. The Loan Program is delivered through the Access Centre for Regulated Employment (ACRE) with Libro Credit Union as the financial partner. The interest rate of the loan is Libro’s Prime Rate plus 1% per annum. During the training/licensure period the applicant is required to pay monthly interest only (up to two years) and a flexible repayment plan is established when employment is obtained or training/licensure has been completed (whichever comes first). The loan maximum is \$15,000 per applicant. Loans assist ITWs in covering the direct and indirect costs related to foreign credential recognition, including: qualification assessment; exam and licensure fees; tuition fees for training and skills upgrading; books and course materials; professional association fees and other cost relating to obtaining accreditation/training as required.

Since its inception, two years ago, the Loan Program has recommended 118 loans to the lender (Libro), 110 loans have been approved with the average loan value of approximately \$8,600. The total amount approved or committed as of March 25, 2015 is \$942,600 and the total amount disbursed is \$584,179.

#### *Ottawa Community Loan Fund (OCLF), Ottawa, Ontario*

Since 2000, Ottawa Community Loan Fund has been serving those who cannot access a traditional bank loan. In the fall of 2012, OCLF expanded their character-based micro-loan and counseling programs with benefits targeting immigrant groups. Ontario Centres of Excellence funded an Immigrant-focused pilot program from October 2012 to March 2013 with excellent results. Based on one-month follow-ups, 45% of attendees reported that they had taken actions



to improve their credit score; and 10+ loans had been disbursed or were in process to support Professional Development and business ideas for improved Immigrant integration and success. Encouraged by these results, Community Foundation of Ottawa has provided bridge funding so that OCLF could continue this program during the summer of 2013, featuring Smart Outreach to selected immigrant communities by government-funded Summer Students under OCLF supervision.

OCLF is in advanced discussions with both Ontario Trillium Foundation and Citizenship and Immigration Canada for additional multi-year funding to continue and extend the program with focused benefits to immigrants. In addition, micro-loans of up to \$15,000 are available specifically for Francophone immigrants in Ontario who wish to start small businesses. Applicants are also eligible for a training program to help them apply for and secure credit to establish their business. The lead partners are FedDev Ontario, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Fondation Franco-Ontarienne.<sup>45</sup>

### *Alberta's Immigrant Access Fund (IAF), Calgary, Alberta*

The Immigrant Access Fund is a grassroots effort started in 2003 by a group of Calgarians led by Dr. Maria Eriksen who saw the need to help newcomers from other countries, maximize their careers in Canada. The group collaborated with the Alberta Network of Immigrant Women to research the issues around immigrant employment. Though women were the focus of the study, additional information revealed that immigrant men also require this type of service.

Analysis of demographic and labour force data showed that the number of skilled workers entering the labour force would not be able to match the growing demand. At the same time that people could not find a doctor and oil companies could not find engineers, internationally trained doctors and engineers were working in occupations unrelated to their fields. The study concluded that satisfying the requirements of professional associations, regulatory bodies, and apprenticeship board present considerable obstacles to immigrants trying to obtain licensing and training to practice their trade or profession in Canada.

Most immigrants need to find work quickly to cover living costs and cannot afford expensive re-qualifying programs, nor to repeat their formal training. In addition, their lack of credit history, collateral, or suitable employment limits their access to traditional credit sources to fund the upgrading or licensing necessary to pursue their employment goals. Internationally trained people usually need funds for things like exam fees, regulatory body fees, assessments, and living allowance. Since student loans are an option only if enrolled in full-time studies, they are usually not an option for most applicants.

The group determined that a micro loan program designed specifically to help immigrants initiate the process of licensing and training, thereby securing employment in their profession or trade would address a key gap in services for immigrants and respond to an immediate and growing need for skills in Alberta. Though immigrants faced other more systemic obstacles to licensing, removing the financial obstacle moved them one step closer to success, and to ultimately making their best possible contribution to the economic and social success of Canada.

The first IAF loans were approved in 2005. Two loans, both to international medical graduates, were approved. By the end of March 2012, 737 loans totaling \$3.5 million had been approved in Alberta. Since March 2011, with support from the Foreign Credentials Recognition Office of

Citizenship and Immigration Canada, IAF Canada has been created to introduce IAF loans in other provinces. Immigrant Access Fund of Saskatchewan Inc. (IAF Saskatchewan) launched in February 2012. IAF Canada is currently reaching across Canada to provide loans to skilled immigrants who cannot access a micro loan from a local program. So far their loans have supported people in 66 occupations; 58% are men and 42% are women. IAF loaned more than five million dollars with an average amount of \$6,500.<sup>46</sup>

## **PART B: ACCESSING THE JOB MARKET**

### **Accessing the Hidden Job Market: Developing Professional Networks and Enhancing Soft Skills**

#### *London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) Mentorship for Immigrant Employment Programs*

The London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council Mentorship for Immigrant Employment programs bring together internationally trained individuals with local mentors in their field to gain a better understanding of the regional job market; establish valuable networking contacts; and learn more about sector-specific language and professional practice in Canada through one-to-one industry specific matches, group mentoring sessions and peer mentorship opportunities. Involving eight local partners, the programs are supported with investments from the federal and provincial government, United Way of London-Middlesex and RBC Foundation.

With over 425 matches made to-date, the programs help newcomer job seekers:

- Establish and grow their professional network in London and surrounding area
- Network in targeted occupation/industry
- Connect with Canada's hidden job market
- Increase confidence in the job search
- Expand access to local labour market information
- Refine job goals
- Identify transferrable skills

And as a result - secure meaningful employment in their professional field.

With the involvement of over 325 employer volunteers and 14 Corporate Champion companies, the programs help local employers:

- Strengthen leadership and coaching skills
- Improve inter-cultural awareness
- Expand communication skills
- Gain an international perspective on their field or occupation
- Spot talent for potential recruitment - before the competition

Approximately 390 newcomer job seekers have achieved commensurate employment in their fields after completing LMIEC Mentorship for Immigrant Employment initiatives. Newcomer participants (mentees) report that the program improved their understanding of the Canadian work environment, boosted their self-confidence, increased their knowledge about their profession and improved their ability to network professionally. Likewise, employer participants (mentors) have reported that participating in the program has improved their understanding of

the benefits of hiring newcomers, their cultural awareness, leadership and coaching skills, and overall knowledge of the barriers immigrants face when looking for work in Canada.

### *Making Connections Project, Halifax, Nova Scotia*

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) has made workforce recruitment and retention a primary goal and has engaged the Greater Halifax Partnership (the Partnership), the city's lead economic development organization, to deliver a winning local solution – the Halifax Connector Program. The Connector Program is designed to meet recruitment and retention goals by building and expanding networks between newcomers to Halifax and established members of the community.

The low tech, high touch approach is working. More than 500 local connectors representing some 300 organizations have already participated, working with 428 international students and newcomers. Furthermore, 177 new immigrants have found jobs in Halifax through the program.<sup>47</sup>

## **Connections to the Job Market**

### *London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) Job Match Network*

The London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council Job Match Network is a program developed as a direct response to a long-expressed need by local employers for coordinated access to qualified Canadian newcomer talent. The LMIEC Job Match Network not only helps retain those newcomers that have settled in London, but also makes London a go-to-destination for skilled immigrants from across Canada.

The LMIEC Job Match Network works together with partner organizations across London Region to screen, match, short-list and market newcomer job seekers to regional employers seeking their specialized skills. By providing local employers centralized access to an expanded pool of qualified talent, the LMIEC Job Match Network helps companies of all access the top talent they need at the right time.

Through federal, provincial and municipal funding, the LMIEC Job Match Network has connected over 260 immigrant job seekers with commensurate employment opportunities in or related to their field in our region.

### *Skills International*

Skills International is a partnership with COSTI Immigrant Services (Toronto) hosted by WIL Employment Connections. The [www.skillsinternational.ca](http://www.skillsinternational.ca) website is an on-line tool which connects pre-screened internationally educated professionals with employers who need their skills. This searchable resume database exclusively profiles the skills of Ontario's internationally educated professionals. Over 100 different Ontario community-based agencies, which work with immigrants to provide connections to the labour market, post the resumes of qualified and screened applicants to this database.

Employers can perform a variety of searches based on relevant criteria including skills, experience and education to review resumes of qualified candidates, helping to ease existing

and looming shortages. Skills International also provides candidates with resources including a variety of video streams for job preparation including interviewing. Candidates and employers also have the ability to participate in Virtual Job Fairs through proprietary technology and application at [www.jobfair.com](http://www.jobfair.com)

Since its beginning in 2006, Skills International has served a total of 20,500 clients with an average 8,500 active participants. 5,328 clients have reported successful employment outcomes. It has worked with 166 partnering agencies and about 1,200 employers. In June of 2013, Skills International launched its first Virtual Job Fair and to date 6 have been held, with over 70 employers participating and an average of 1,500 participants registering to attend online.

## **PART C: ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

### **Entrepreneurship/Self-Employment**

#### *London Small Business Centre (LSBC)*

The London Small Business Centre provides training and support to starting and growing businesses. From concept through start-up and early growth stages, the Centre is a one-stop source for information, guidance, and professional advice on starting and running all aspects of a successful business. This includes researching client ideas to developing their business concept, preparing their plan, and managing their own business. Programs offered by the Small Business Centre include: Business Planning Basics, Networking Wednesdays, Starting a Small Business, Banking on Success to understand financing, Access to Professionals, and advisory assistance.

#### *Business Supports for Spanish Speakers*

Spanish-speakers in the London area have access to a continuum of supports in Spanish, beginning with services for business start-up and moving on to supports for existing businesses. The London Small Business Centre and Latin American Career Development Centre (LACDC) offer seminars in Spanish for prospective business people. Hispanic Business Opportunities (HBO), a project of the London Chamber of Commerce, offers professional networking and supports for business owners, including seminars that address various issues pertaining to business ownership.<sup>48</sup>

#### *Impact Loan*

In its inception, Impact Loan was a 3 year pilot that was implemented by a number of community partners through London's Child and Youth Network. With immense success in its pilot stage, Impact Loan is now delivered by Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes in partnership with the help of their partners the London Small Business Centre and Libro Credit Union. Loans and business supports are provided to people who are starting their own business in order to create financial stability for themselves and their families.

To date, 21 loans have been issued to begin or to support the start-up phase of new businesses. A total of \$91,000 has been provided and 2 loans equaling \$10,000 have been paid back in full. Through this program, 2 entrepreneurs have been able to hire staff. The

success of this program is in part due to the collaborative nature of the partners. Impact Loan has connected entrepreneurs with their partners such as Libro Credit Union, the Small Business Centre, volunteer business mentors, and other London and Middlesex organizations that offer networking and support services to entrepreneurs. Currently, 6 of their borrowers have been matched to business student partners from Western and Ivey. This partnership has helped address some of their very practical business challenges such as marketing, websites, and sales pitches.

In the first four months of 2015, they have already delivered 3 promotional talks to the Cross Cultural Learners Centre, as well as the London Intercommunity Health Centres Women of the World program. Impact Loan strives to give entrepreneurs the best chance of success through coaching, planning, connecting, networking, and other supports.

### *Winning Strategies for Immigrant Entrepreneurship (Wise5), Southwestern Ontario*

Winning Strategies for Immigrant Entrepreneurship was a research project focusing on five communities in Southwestern Ontario: Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Niagara, and Windsor. Between March 2011 and March 2012, immigrant entrepreneurs were interviewed and people who work with them in these five communities, conducted a literature review, and scanned the country for best practices in terms of policies and programs promoting entrepreneurship. The report contains recommendations that would not only help immigrant entrepreneurs succeed, but they are also applicable to Canadian-born populations. Some recommendations included:

- Every municipality and region examine its offerings to ascertain whether or not it offers a range of supports that accommodate the diversity of need among prospective entrepreneurs;
- Service providers and stakeholders meet to identify potential areas of collaboration in promoting entrepreneurship locally;
- Service providers list and include program details on their own websites;
- Service providers promote their services -- including any available interpretation supports or services in languages other than English -- through the “ethnic” media;
- Employment service providers become educated about the benefits and viability of self-employment as an option for clients;
- Governments and other stakeholders work with financial institutions to expand the availability of financing for new businesses;
- Service providers and other relevant stakeholders explore the creation of mentorship opportunities focused on business, possibly through the Chamber of Commerce, which is already an important local support for small businesses;
- Chambers of Commerce forms a task force to examine how their own organizations might better incorporate immigrants, including through ethnic business groups and through speakers that can promote the value of diversity; and
- Municipalities explore the idea of a tax holiday for businesses in their first year of operation.

### *Entrepreneurship Connections, Greater Toronto Area*

Supporting newcomer entrepreneurs is a strategy that benefits both new immigrants, for whom their own business can improve their economic well-being, and for the region, where small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures help build a robust economy. Entrepreneurship

Connections, a partnership between ACCES Employment and the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), achieves both these benefits. New immigrants frequently come with a spirit of enterprise and strong business experience but can lack the knowledge, support, and professional network to start a business here in Canada.

Entrepreneurship Connections helps immigrants overcome these barriers by increasing their knowledge about local markets, legal and regulatory requirements, and potential sources of finance as well as helping them to build business networks. The success rate for the 4-week intensive program during its first year of existence was encouraging with 70% of 2013 participants either having already launched their business or in the process of starting. The future of the program also looks promising with new elements, including a mentoring component, being added. In 2014 enrollment has increased by over 50% and BDC is looking for opportunities to replicate the program with suitable community partners across the country. This initiative received Immigrant Success Awards which recognized leadership and innovation in recruiting and retaining skilled immigrants in the Toronto Region.<sup>49</sup>

*The City of Philadelphia Bridge the Divide between Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Mainstream Financial Institutions, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

Access to capital is a common challenge faced by immigrant entrepreneurs. While some business owners rely on informal lending circles for the financial stimulus they need; working outside the formal economy can also limit further growth. The City of Philadelphia is working to bridge the divide between immigrant entrepreneurs and mainstream financial institutions. With a lending circle model familiar to many immigrant communities, the Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA) helps microenterprises become credit-worthy.

ROSCA was launched in 2010 when the city invited two of its community partners, micro-lenders FINANTA and Entrepreneur Works, to design and coordinate a lending circle program to help low-income business owners. ROSCA lending circles typically are made up of 14 entrepreneurs who receive a \$1,400 loan and must pay back \$100 per week during a 15-week period. Participants gain a credit history while developing professional networks and relationships with lenders (who report back to credit bureaus). Business counselling workshops help entrepreneurs improve their business processes as well as appreciate the importance of credit and ongoing investment in their businesses.

The Department of Commerce offers its English for Entrepreneurs course to ROSCA graduates to help improve customer service and increase sales. Classes are given in Mandarin, French, Korean, and Spanish by delivery partners such as the Welcoming Centre for New Pennsylvanians and teach business owners the nuances of American English. Topics include cross cultural communication, as well as conflict resolution, safety and security. Philadelphia's combined programs to support entrepreneurs are revitalizing city neighbourhoods while making the city's economic development efforts more inclusive and successful.<sup>50</sup>

*Migrant Entrepreneurship Program, Munich, Germany*

Munich has over 35% of residents with a migration background. The city estimates that the over 12,000 migrant-run businesses has resulted in the employment of over 100,000 people from all sectors of life. Migrant Entrepreneurs in Munich (MEM) program is run by the city's Department of Labour and Economic Development, Local Employment and Qualification Policy. It is part of the Munich Employment and Qualification Program (MBQ), through which the City of

Munich pursues its primary labour market strategy. Currently sponsoring more than 110 projects and activities, the program seeks to improve the employment prospects of disadvantaged persons in Munich's labour market. Migrant entrepreneurs belong to one of the key target groups.

MEM describes the four pillars of its migrant entrepreneurship program: providing assistance, helping with qualifications, creating dialogue, and promoting recognition. Launched in 1999 to provide training for established migrant entrepreneurs and their employees, the program has grown to include specialized services to help new and emerging entrepreneurs get started, develop business plans, or help them assess their qualifications and needs for further training. The Business Dialogue Forum with Migrants offers support for business start-ups through counselling services with experts. Other offerings include a training course on how established entrepreneurs or business leaders can mentor young entrepreneurs and pass on the required knowledge and relevant skills needed to succeed in the labour market.

MEM is now considered Munich's information and counselling hub for business development in the city's migrant communities, helping small business operators and employers and future entrepreneurs to build bridges with mainstream institutions. With growing recognition for the Phoenix Prize, cities such as Nuremberg have expressed interest in replicating its success. MEM team members are increasingly in demand at local and international conferences and seminars to share good practices on migrant entrepreneurship. Funding for the program comes from the City, the European Social Fund and the European Union.<sup>51</sup>

#### *Waterloo Region Newcomer Business Network*

Inspired by a student intern from China on a volunteer work experience with the City of Kitchener, the Waterloo Region Small Business Centre (SBC) has created a series of seminars aimed at immigrants. Held every other month, these free seminars are intended to provide information and instruction as well as networking opportunities to meet experienced New Canadian entrepreneurs who are successfully operating a business. Topics are chosen based on input from immigrant participants and community stakeholders. After each meeting, business counsellors are on hand to schedule follow-up appointments with participants. The goal is to build a network and also to attract some mentors. Though SBC staff themselves do not speak other languages, the SBC offers appointments in various languages through access to community translator services.

## **PART D: EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT**

### **Employer Engagement in Newcomer Labour Market Integration**

#### *London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council*

The London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) was launched in 2008 as a business-led organization with the purpose of connecting local employers to Canadian newcomers and, in turn, strengthen our regional economy primarily by:

- Advancing, promoting and marketing the business case for recruiting and retaining immigrants;

- Connecting area companies with immigrant employment tools and resources including search tools to access newcomer talent, mentoring programs and credential evaluation screening supports;
- Convening employers to identify emerging gaps and priorities in talent attraction and retention; and
- Delivering strategies and programs to bridge labour market supply and demand.

The LMIEC has grown from an initial Task Force of 14 employers to a Council of over 250 Employer Leaders sharing the business case for hiring newcomer talent with well over 1,500 business representatives to-date. Through employer participation, LMIEC has delivered a number of successful programs to improve the labour market integration of immigrant job seekers including the LMIEC Job Match Network, a suite of LMIEC Mentorship for Immigrant Employment programs, a Global Experience at Work partnership with the London Chamber of Commerce and the Employer Leadership Strategy. With the support of federal, provincial, municipal and private sector investments, over eighteen community and regional partners work together through these LMIEC initiatives to connect employers with newcomer talent. The LMIEC was recognized for its work with an Ontario Economic Development Award in February 2012, and over the years several founding employer members of the LMIEC have received a Newcomer Champion Award from the province of Ontario.

See Appendix 5 for “Ten Opportunities to Leverage International Talent” which is a resource document to support employers.

#### *Intercultural Education Services at London Cross Cultural Learner Centre*

The Cross Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC) has recently launched a Cultural Diversity Training Program. Through extensive research conducted by Dr. Victoria Esses, Dr. Jennifer Long, Dr. Melissa Stachel, and Dr. Secil Erdogan of Western University, CCLC has authored the training industries’ first intercultural competency program based entirely on a combination of social research and feedback from over 75 businesses. CCLC’s training program consists of 4 modules that include case studies, tools, and applications to empower participants to manage the different and complex communication dynamics of diversity within their organization or business.

#### *Global*

#### *Talent*

Two resource guides, one for employers (Hiring Immigrants Makes Good Business Sense) and one for immigrants (A Newcomers Guide to Finding Work in the London Region) were developed through the leadership of London Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) in partnership with the community. These guides provide information to assist with hiring, understanding, and managing challenges, building on international workforce, and creating an inclusive culture. These guides, produced in 2007, were extensively shared with employers and immigrant serving agencies.

LEDC actively promotes access to talent pools in London as part of both its business attraction and its business retention services. Access to immigrant talent is featured in many major events from Manufacturing Matters to the Student2Business Networking Conference as well as in company visits and sector meetings.



### *Race Relations Recognition Award*

A number of London companies in a variety of sectors have been recognized by the City of London in the Business and Labour category in recognition of their promotion of the diverse make-up of the Community, the workforce, and the richness that this diversity brings to the employment sector.

### *Muslim Employment Project, Brisbane, Australia*

This Project was initiated in conjunction with a number of government departments as part of the Australian Government's commitment to a National Action Plan to foster social cohesion. Aiming to assist unemployed Muslim people to maximize their employment opportunities, a key focus area of the project has been to work with non-Muslims to change attitudes. Activities have ranged from organizing community meetings with police and government representatives, to building links with job networks and employment service providers, to having discussions with employers regarding the advantages of employing Muslim workers and the preconceptions of Muslims that may exist amongst employers. Numerous referrals were made to employers, and almost 40% of participants secured part-time or full-time employment from 2006 to 2010.

### **Municipal Hiring Practices**

#### *The City of London's Paid Internship Program*

In 2013, the City of London launched a paid internship program which focussed on providing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, new immigrants, and recent post-secondary graduates. Six internships of four-month duration will be funded annually. Employment in these positions will typically begin in early fall and early in the New Year. The potential benefits for interns include:

- increasing their job readiness and marketability;
- providing exposure to workplace culture and systems;
- building skills and knowledge through meaningful work assignments;
- allowing professional networking and opportunities to obtain references; and
- developing strategies to overcome potential employment barriers

#### *The Regional Municipality of York's Innovative Foreign Credential Process, York Region, Ontario*

The Regional Municipality of York did not stop and wait when they ran into trouble evaluating skilled immigrant credentials, they created their own tool. A major barrier to employment for new immigrants is recognition of foreign credentials and experience. With a growing number of new immigrants calling it home, York Region decided in 2009 to make a conscious effort to diversify its workforce. A reliable and innovative tool was needed to help its recruiters and hiring managers overcome this obstacle. Not able to find an evaluation tool elsewhere to help them assess applicants, York Region developed one of its own: Foreign Credentials Evaluation Process Guide. Easy to use, the guide is designed to promote an effective hiring process that leads to hiring decisions based on merit and does not exclude diverse candidates.

York Region is already seeing a growing number of skilled immigrants within its workforce. York Region is also a leading employer partner with Professional Access and Integration Enhancement (PAIE), a bridging program that provides internships and was instrumental in the recent hiring of internationally-trained engineers by York Region.

Twenty-seven percent of the Region's workforce now consists of immigrants and, at last count, York Region's employees speak more than 60 languages. York Region was recognized for its innovative work with skilled immigrants in April 2013, receiving the TRIEC (Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council) Immigrant Success (IS) Toronto Star Award for Excellence in Workplace Integration. The IS Awards recognize employer leadership and innovation in recruiting and retaining skilled immigrants in the Toronto Region.

### *You are the Key Campaign, Bremen, Germany*

Located in north-west Germany, Bremen is the country's tenth largest city with a population of 500,000. Approximately one fourth of the region's population has a migrant background; the top three source countries are Turkey, Poland and the Russian Federation. To attract this largely untapped population, the city's education and training department embarked on its "You are the Key" campaign. Named after the iconic symbol of the city, the campaign targets minority youth as the key to the city's future and aims to make public service employment an attractive career option. Like similar programs in Hamburg, the city recruits for a wide range of departments, including police, firefighters, law enforcement, judicial administration, financial management, and general administration. Campaign messages were developed carefully to manage the tricky problem of how to recruit from the target populations (underrepresented minorities) while maintaining the city's commitment to equality. The city recruitment campaign targets youth and diversity for public service jobs and future city success.

In 2009, 19.6% of applicants came from a migrant background. By 2010, that number had jumped to 25% as a result of the campaign, with its use of examples of successful young city trainees in conjunction with recognizing the achievements of bilingual candidates. The look of the campaign itself was also received well by city employees, and many felt it strengthened the city's brand as an employer.<sup>52</sup>

## **PART E: PLANNING BODIES**

### **Strategic Planning Support**

#### *London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (Service Providers and Immigrants)*

The London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP) is a collaborative community initiative designed to strengthen the role of local and regional communities in serving and integrating immigrants. It is one of 34 Local Immigration Partnerships in Ontario funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and supported by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. LMLIP is a volunteer driven Council with 125 members and the support of close to 100 organizations and ethnic associations guided by a Central Council and six issue specific sub-councils: education; employment; health and wellbeing; inclusion and civic engagement; justice and protection services; and settlement. LMLIP's vision is a client centred approach that includes and works with immigrants to enhance their successful integration into Canadian society. LMLIP continues

its strategic plan to reach out to all sectors, consult with communities, organizations and ethnic associations to ensure that efforts are coordinated and partnerships established to facilitate a comprehensive approach to the successful integration of immigrants. The Employment Sub-council has a focus on enhancing employment outcomes and success for immigrants. Priorities of the Employment Sub-council include; communication/integration, employer connections and reduction of system barriers.

#### *London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (Employers)*

The London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) was launched in 2008 as a business-led organization with the purpose of connecting local employers to Canadian newcomers and, in turn, strengthen our regional economy primarily by:

- Advancing, promoting and marketing the business case for recruiting and retaining immigrants;
- Connecting area companies with immigrant employment tools and resources including search tools to access newcomer talent, mentoring programs and credential evaluation screening supports;
- Convening employers to identify emerging gaps and priorities in talent attraction and retention; and
- Delivering strategies and programs to bridge labour market supply and demand.

The LMIEC has grown from an initial Task Force of 14 employers to a Council of over 250 Employer Leaders sharing the business case for hiring newcomer talent with well over 1,500 business representatives to-date. Through employer participation, LMIEC has delivered a number of several successful programs to improve the labour market integration of immigrant job seekers including the LMIEC Job Match Network, a suite of LMIEC Mentorship for Immigrant Employment programs, a Global Experience at Work partnership with the London Chamber of Commerce and the Employer Leadership Strategy. With the support of federal, provincial, municipal and private sector investments, over eighteen community and regional partners work together through these LMIEC initiatives to connect employers with newcomer talent. The LMIEC was recognized for its work with an Ontario Economic Development Award in February 2012, and over the years several founding employer members of the LMIEC have received a Newcomer Champion Award from the province of Ontario.

See Appendix 5 for “Ten Opportunities to Leverage International Talent” which is a resource document to support employers.

#### *Employment Sector Council London Middlesex (Service Providers and Funders)*

ESCLM is one voice for the London-Middlesex employment and training sector. For more than 20 years, Employment Sector Council London-Middlesex (ESCLM) has been a centre of innovation and collaboration for the London area employment and training sector. It prides itself on the remarkable work of more than 40 public and non-profit organization members that collectively serve many thousands of employers and job seekers. In addition, funders from all levels of government (municipal, provincial and federal) meet monthly to share, to discuss and to plan for greater employment outcomes in the London and Middlesex area. ESCLM is a critical labour market planning and workforce development resource.

## Chapter 4

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

As a community London has the components of a robust and effective system to support immigrants in attaining economic inclusion in the community. Our review has identified a need for connecting immigrants quickly to the right services through increased awareness of all stakeholders (providers, government, ethno-cultural groups, and other related organizations) including immigrants of the services, programs, and tools available to them.

The recommendations contained in the Highlights of Findings and Opportunities Moving Forward section (page 6 of this report) are ones that can be implemented at the local level; although we do recognize the need for broader systemic changes in areas such as the standardization of language programs, credential recognition by regulatory bodies, and sustainable funding by Federal and Provincial governments. Based on the research conducted for this report and input received from the community, the themes going forward should be:

- Enhanced focus on timely economic integration
- Enhanced coordination and marketing/outreach of the service system
- Enhanced services and supports
- Reduction of broader system barriers

#### **Enhanced Focus on Timely Economic Integration**

As cited in the introduction to this report, according to data from the 2011 Statistics Canada National Household Survey, the average unemployment rate in London for non-immigrants was 8.5% compared to 8.8% for immigrants and it was acknowledged that the slightly higher unemployment rate for immigrants as compared to non-immigrants masks the labour force realities faced by many more recent immigrants. For recent immigrants, those that arrived between 2006 and 2011 the unemployment rate was 18.9% and for those that arrived between the years 2001 to 2011 it was 16.2%. Or put another way, a half generation after arrival the immigrant unemployment rate is still double the non-immigrant rate.

If London as a community is going to maximize its opportunities to attract and retain immigrants there needs to be an enhanced focus on the time it takes for economic inclusion. While there have been numerous success stories; for a significant number of recent immigrants, economic integration remains elusive and this is further compounded if the recent immigrant is a visible minority, female and/or university educated.

At the community level an enhanced focus on timelines can serve as one lens on how we are doing with respect to the economic integration of immigrants and groups within the immigrant community.

#### **Enhanced Coordination and Marketing/Outreach of the Service System**

Supports and services for immigrants are delivered through a robust and complex system of partnerships which include all levels and various ministries of government, ethno-cultural organizations, non-governmental organizations (immigrant serving and generic agencies), and public sector organizations. Awareness of resources and supports must also be enhanced for

all including immigrants, ethno-cultural organizations, service providers, and employers. Within the context of enhanced coordination and marketing/outreach, the focus will need to be on:

- Enhanced marketing and outreach for immigrants, ethno-cultural groups, service providers, and community leaders
- Enhanced service coordination between service providers, immigrants, community leaders, and the City of London to ensure the effective planning, delivery, and evaluation of programs and services
- Better coordination of settlement services and other mainstream social services especially in the fields of employment and education, both of which are critical to a successful settlement process
- Acknowledgement and support the informal and voluntary settlement sector of ethno-cultural associations and faith based institutions that new immigrants often access soon after arrival. The capacity of informal networks is often limited and the demands are potentially great; efforts to support capacity development of informal networks is, a way to improve economic outcomes for immigrants. An effective system of settlement services also requires the creation of strong linkages between the formal and informal sectors.

### **Enhanced Services and Supports**

Many immigrants are successfully supported into employment through existing services and supports. London organizations have been recognized provincially and nationally for their innovative, outcome focused programs and supports. However, there are gaps and needs that can be addressed through the enhancement of services and supports. Based on the research conducted on best practices and feedback from the community there are a number of enhancements to the available services and supports that should be considered:

- Promotion of Voluntarism
  - Raise awareness within immigrant communities of the value of voluntarism as a potential pathway to paid employment through the acquisition of hands on training, Canadian experience, soft skills development, and networking opportunities.
  - There is a need to identify champions to support voluntarism within different immigrant communities.
  - There is also a need to utilize ethno-cultural specific messages and communication techniques to promote voluntarism.
- Language Training
  - While language training is readily available for immigrants seeking to learn English or French there is a need for enhanced opportunities for specialized language training with respect to a range of professions and skilled trades.
- Mentoring
  - There is a need to enhance mentoring programs to support economic and social inclusion for immigrants. Mentors should be drawn from both the immigrant and non-immigrants community. Mentors could have a supportive role through a number of scenarios:
    - Entrepreneurs – business planning, business development and start-up, expansion, networking etc.

- Professionals – transition to the Canadian context, career development, networking, etc.
  - Skilled Trades – transition to the Canadian context and networking
  - New hires – job retention support and career development
- Job Retention Program
    - There is a need for the development of a job retention program to assist immigrants with both job retention and career development. The program would examine performance criteria and cultural codes of Canadian employers and ongoing support for newly hired individuals could be achieved through a mentoring program
- Hidden Job Market
    - Most employment opportunities are not advertised creating what is termed a ‘hidden job market.’ There is a need to enhance supports to assist immigrants to understand and access this hidden job market in order to increase labour market success
- Entrepreneurial Supports
    - Immigrants face many of the same challenges in starting a business as the Canadian born population. However, they may have some additional barriers in terms of language, lack of familiarity with business culture, lack of social networks, access to financing, and discrimination. Some enhanced key entrepreneurial supports could include:
      - Organize training for immigrant entrepreneurs similar to employment preparation programs
        - Development of a mentoring program for immigrant entrepreneurs
        - Enhance micro loan/micro credit access for immigrant entrepreneurs
        - Explore social business and cooperative business support for immigrants as a form of both economic and social integration

### **Reduction of Broader System Barriers**

Economic success for immigrants is a complex issue that is impacted by the broader system which includes Federal and Provincial government priorities, immigration policies and regulatory requirements. Significant changes have been occurring, particularly at the Federal level, in regards to immigration policies and funding for settlement services which although creating some opportunities, has also negatively impacted the supports and services available for immigrants. Our review found that there is a local role in the broader system issues of foreign credential recognition, standardization of language services and the need for consistent, sustainable funding. The City of London has a key role in addressing these areas through advocacy work. One opportunity to move forward is identified as follows:

- City to advocate for Federal and Provincial funding and consider identifying municipal funding to match immigrants needs with the services they require within the community

## ENDNOTES:

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated all data in this section is derived from: Statistics Canada. 2013. Canada (Code 01) (table). *National Household Survey (NHS) Profile*. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

<sup>2</sup> While the number of immigrants residing in London has increased over the last 30 years in absolute terms from 52,635 in 1981 to 76, 585 in 2011; immigrants as a percentage of the total population of London has remained almost the same – 1981 (20.7%) compared to 2011 (21.2%)

<sup>3</sup> There are a number of other factors at play including mortality rates effecting older immigrants, net inflow outflow rates of immigrants etc.

<sup>4</sup> Neil Bradford, *Economic Ideas and Development Strategy: The Case of London Ontario*, Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meetings, 2010, Concordia University, Montreal, pg. 7.

<sup>5</sup> The Conference Board of Canada's City Magnets III: Benchmarking the Attractiveness of 50 Canadian Cities analyzed and benchmarked the features that make Canadian cities attractive to skilled workers and mobile populations. Cities without the ability to act as magnets and attract new people will struggle to stay prosperous in the decades ahead. The 43 features they identify as making cities attractive are grouped into seven main categories: Society, Health, Economy, Environment, Education, Innovation, and Housing. The Conference Board used these seven indicators to assess the attractiveness to migrants of a city's economy. The indicators rely on a mix of standard (indicators 1 through 6) and innovative measures (7 to 8): GDP per capita, GDP growth, employment growth, unemployment rate, full-time employment (new), disposable income per capita, knowledge employment (jobs that are key to a successful, modern city), and proportion of workforce commuting outside the city. London as a city ranked 27 with a grade of C as an immigrant attractive destination with weak outcomes in the economy indicator.

Refer to Conference Board of Canada, City Magnets III: Benchmarking the Attractiveness of 50 Canadian Cities, Ottawa, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Altus Group Economic Consulting, Employment, Population, Housing and Non-Residential Construction Projections, City of London, Ontario, 2011 Update, Toronto, September 7, 2012, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Refer to Statistics Canada, CANSIM Tables 282-0116 and 282-0135.

<sup>9</sup> According to Statistics Canada a Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) consists of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a core. A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the core. The London CMA includes the municipalities of London, St. Thomas, as well as Thames Centre, Middlesex Centre, Strathroy-Caradoc, Adelaide Metcalfe, Central Elgin and Southwold.

<sup>10</sup> Altus Group, op. cit., p. 19.

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<sup>11</sup> Statistics Canada, *Earnings and Incomes of Canadians Over the Past Quarter Century, 2006 Census: Findings*, Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 97-563-X, Ottawa, Statistics Canada, pg. 21.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pg.23.

<sup>13</sup> Rene Morissette and Rizwan Sultan, *Twenty Years in the Careers of Immigrant and Native-Born Workers*, Statistics Canada, Economic Insights, Catalogue 11-626-X, Ottawa, 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Statistics Canada. 2013. *National Household Survey (NHS) Immigration and Ethno Cultural Diversity Topic Based Tabulations. Selected Demographic, Educational, Labour Force and Income Characteristics, Mother tongue, Immigration Status and Period of Immigration, Age Groups and Sex for the Population of Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions*. Custom data table accessed through the Community Data Program. Canadian Council on Social Development. <http://communitydata.ca/>

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Statistics Canada, *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, Process Progress and Prospects*, Ottawa 2003. p. 30.

<sup>18</sup> Statistics Canada, *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada*, Ottawa 2005. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2007000/t/4169309-eng.htm>

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Derived from Chart 8.

<sup>20</sup> Li Xu, *Who Drives a Taxi in Canada?* Citizen and Immigration Canada, Research and Evaluation, Ottawa, March 2012, p.1.

<sup>21</sup> Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Building Canada's Prosperity. Government of Canada Progress Report 2010 Foreign Credential Recognition*, Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, Ottawa, 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Penny Becklumb and Sandra Elgersma, *Recognition of the Foreign Credentials of Immigrants*, Parliamentary Information and Research Service, Library of Parliament, Ottawa, Revised 2008, pg. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Li Xue, and Li Xu, *Employment Outcomes of Post-Secondary Educated Immigrants, 2006 Census. Citizenship and Immigration Canada*. (Ottawa, September 2010, p. 1-2.

<sup>24</sup> G. Woldemicael, J.E. Odanga, I. Namukasa, A. Gerba, M. Baya, H. Mokanan and A. Abiola-Ogedengbe, *Needs Assessment for Labour Market Information and Planning: A Project on the African Community in London, Ontario*, African Canadian Federation of London and Area, London, 2015, p. 21.



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<sup>25</sup> Statistics Canada, *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, 2000-2005*, Ottawa, Modified 2010-09-29 <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2010109/tables-tableaux/11342/tbl009-eng.htm>

<sup>26</sup> HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector. *Recruitment and Retention of New Immigrants and Members of Visible Minorities in the Nonprofit Sectors' Workforce*. HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector, Ottawa, 2012.

<sup>27</sup> G. Woldemicael, *Needs Assessment*, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>28</sup> Katherine Scott, Kevin Selbee and Paul Reed, *Making Connections: Social and Civic Engagement among Canadian Immigrants*, Canadian Council on Social Development, Ottawa, 2006, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> HR Council, op. cit.

<sup>30</sup> Derek Thomas, *Personal Networks and the Economic Adjustment of Immigrants*, Statistics Canada, Canadian Social Trends, Ottawa 2011, p. 55.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>33</sup> Feng Hou and Shunji Wang, *Immigrants in Self Employment*, Statistics Canada, Perspectives on Labour and Income, Catalogue no. 75-001-X, Ottawa, June 2011.

<sup>34</sup> Feng Hou, Teresa Abada and Yuquian Lu, *Bosses of Their Own: Are Children of Immigrants More Likely Than Their Parents to be Self-Employed*, Statistics Canada, Social Analysis Division. Catalogue no. 11F0019M – 341, Ottawa, 2012.

<sup>35</sup> Sarah Wayland, *Winning Strategies for Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Five Communities. Final Report*, Wayland Consulting, March, 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Canadian Federation of Independent Business cited in Sarah Wayland, *Winning Strategies*, op.cit.

<sup>38</sup> Academia Group, *Entrepreneurial Climate Study Final Report*, Prepared for the Small Business Centre, London, 2014.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> Wayland, *Winning Strategies*, op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> G. Woldemicael, *Needs Assessment*, op. cit., p. 68.

<sup>43</sup> A copy of the guide can be found at:

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<http://immigration.simcoe.ca/hiring/Documents/Foreign%20Credentials%20Evaluation%20Process%20Guide.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> Refer to: [http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/doc1\\_16542\\_117615127.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/doc1_16542_117615127.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Refer to: <http://oclf.org/>

<sup>46</sup> Refer to: <http://www.iafcanada.org/>

<sup>47</sup> Refer to: [http://citiesofmigration.ca/good\\_idea/making-connections/](http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/making-connections/)

<sup>48</sup> Refer to: [http://www.londonchamber.com/committees/hispanic\\_business\\_opportunities/](http://www.londonchamber.com/committees/hispanic_business_opportunities/)

<sup>49</sup> Refer to: <http://triec.ca/>

<sup>50</sup> Refer to: [http://citiesofmigration.ca/good\\_idea/the-philadelphia-story-economic-integration-through-integrated-services/](http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/the-philadelphia-story-economic-integration-through-integrated-services/)

<sup>51</sup> Refer to: [http://citiesofmigration.ca/good\\_idea/reaching-out-to-migrant-entrepreneurs-in-munich/](http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/reaching-out-to-migrant-entrepreneurs-in-munich/)

<sup>52</sup> Refer to : [http://citiesofmigration.ca/good\\_idea/bremens-key-to-inclusive-hiring/](http://citiesofmigration.ca/good_idea/bremens-key-to-inclusive-hiring/)

## Appendix 1

### Additional Demographic and Labour Market Background Material

#### Demographic

The most frequent country of birth of recent immigrants residing in London included: Columbia, China, the United States, South Korea and Iraq.



The prevalence of non-official languages spoken also provides insight into immigration patterns. London was consistent to Ontario and Canada with the Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Italian and German languages appearing in the top ten non-official languages spoken. London stood in contrast to Ontario and Canada with the Polish, Korean, Dutch and Greek languages also appearing in the top ten non-official languages spoken in London and the absence of Punjabi, Hindi and Tagalog in the top ten. The absence of the Punjabi, Hindi and Tagalog languages in London ten non-official languages spoken was reflective of a much lower rate of immigrants from South East Asia residing in London compared to Ontario and Canada.

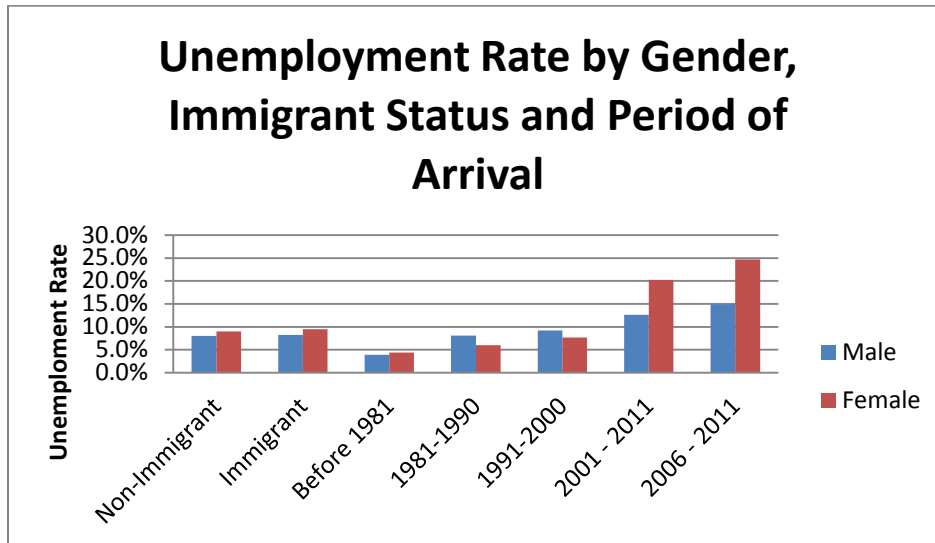
### Top Ten Non-Official Languages Spoken, 2011

London	Ontario	Canada
Spanish	Italian	Spanish
Arabic	Spanish	Italian
Chinese; n.o.s.	Punjabi	Punjabi
Polish	Cantonese	German
Portuguese	Tagalog	Tagalog
German	Hindi	Cantonese
Italian	German	Arabic
Korean	Chinese; n.o.s.	Chinese; n.o.s.
Dutch	Arabic	Mandarin
Greek	Portuguese	Hindi

Note: Chinese n.o.s. refers to Chinese not otherwise specified. Note that the category 'Chinese, n.o.s.' is comprised of a large number of persons who answered 'Chinese' to the question on mother tongue in the census, without any other specification. These may, therefore, include persons with Mandarin, Cantonese or any other Chinese language as their mother tongue.

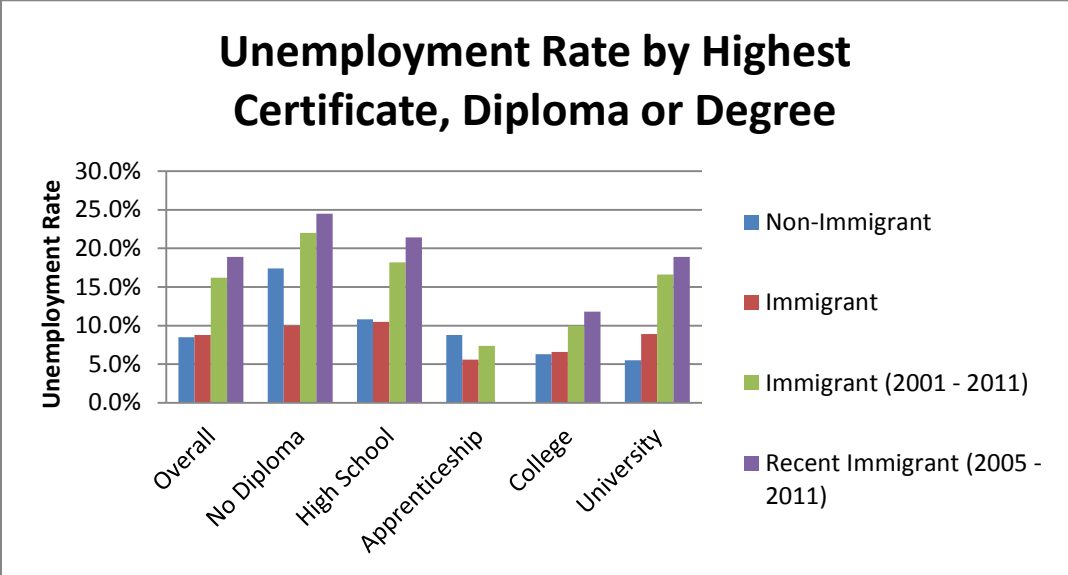
Gender when combined with immigrant status and period of immigration also produced some interesting patterns. According to the 2011 National Household Survey the male, non-immigrant unemployment rate was 8.0% compared to the male immigrant unemployment rate of 8.2%, whereas the female non-immigrant unemployment rate was 9.0% and the female immigrant rate was 9.5%.

Amongst recent immigrants in London there was a significant difference in unemployment rates based on gender with male recent immigrants experiencing an unemployment rate of 14.9% and female recent immigrant experiencing an unemployment rate of 24.7%. Amongst immigrants from earlier periods of arrival (1981-1990 and 1991-2000) the male unemployment rate was slightly higher than the female unemployment rate.



Research in the Canadian context suggests that there is a positive relationship between educational attainment and labour market success. (Refer to: Statistics Canada, Economic Downturn and Educational Attainment, Fact Sheet, Educational Indicators, Catalogue no. 81-599-X, Ottawa, June

2012). Based on the 2011 National Household Survey the unemployment rate for non-immigrants in London declined as the level of educational attainment increased. For non-immigrants the unemployment rate declined as educational attainment increased with the exception of university graduates who had a higher unemployment rate than college graduates (8.9% versus 6.6%) Of note the unemployment rate for non-immigrants was higher than immigrants for individuals with no high school diploma (17.4% versus 10.0%) and for individuals with an apprenticeship qualification (8.8% versus 5.6%). The unemployment rate for recent immigrants was higher at each level of educational attainment than non-immigrants or immigrations in general. Of particular note is an unemployment rate of 18.9% for recent immigrants who are university graduates which is more than triple the unemployment rate of non-immigrant university graduate (5.5%).



The participation rate is another standard labour market measure. The participation rate in Canada refers to the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over that are in the labour force; that is employed or actively seeking employment. According to the 2011 National Household Survey the participation rate in London was 68.1% for non-immigrants compared to 55.6% for immigrants. The gap in participation rate for non-immigrants compared to immigrants is higher in London as compared to Ontario where the participation rate was 67.7% for non-immigrants and 61.3% for immigrants and Canada where the participation rate was 67.8% for non-immigrants and 61.3% for immigrants.

The lower participation rate for immigrants in London may be an indicator of individuals having given up looking for work, thereby withdrawing from the labour force. The participation rate for recent immigrants in London was 58.8% which is higher than the overall immigrant average of 55.6% and is an indicator that in spite of a high level of unemployment amongst recent immigrants in London of 18.9% there is still a higher attachment to the labour force compared to all immigrants.

Participation rates in the labour force also vary depending on gender, immigrant status and period of immigration. In London the participation rate for non-immigrant males was 71.6% compared to 61.8% for immigrant males and 64.9% for non-immigrant females compared to 49.9% for immigrant females.

The participation rate for non-immigrant visible minorities was 66.5% which is slightly higher than the participation rate for immigrant visible minorities of 64.1%. The participation rate for recent immigrants was lower at 55.5% with a wide variation amongst specific visible minority groups: Korean (40.2%), Arab (41.9%), Latin American (62.7%), Black (65.8%) and Filipino (81.1%).

Table: Social networks of foreign-born and Canadian-born adults aged 18 to 75

	Foreign-born	Canadian-born
	<b>average number</b>	
<b>Contacts</b>		
<b>Friends and relatives</b>	<b>40.9</b>	<b>48.6</b>
Close relatives	6.8	7.6
Close friends	5.8	6.2
Other friends	28.3	35.0
<b>Contacts in city of residence</b>		
Close relatives	2.8	3.2
Close friends	3.9	4.3
Other friends	17.7	22.1
<b>Diversity of network</b>		
Different occupations among contacts	8.6	10.6
<b>Strength of ties</b>		
	<b>average percentage</b>	
Contacts considered close	40.9	44.2
<b>Frequency of contact</b>		
	<b>percentage</b>	
Have daily contact with friends and relatives	43.0	48.4
<b>Membership in organizations</b>		
Member of at least one organization	57.4	67.2

Based on data derived from Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2008

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2011002/t/11592/tbl1-eng.htm>

## Appendix 2

### Immigrant Employment Consultation with Service Providers Thursday, December 4, 2014

#### 1. What is working in providing employment services for immigrants?

- Community collaboration among non-profit agencies
- Take a pro-active approach in finding solutions
- Actively provide information to community about services/referral processes
- As a community have recognized importance of issue and have put systems/networks in place, e.g. LMLIP, LMIEC, ACCESS Centre
- Good relationship with funders, trust and take action, results show benefit of rapport
- More education for employers regarding benefits of hiring immigrants, e.g. LMIEC
- Newcomers more aware of where to access information
- Service providers more aware of immigrant needs
- Does not matter where one begins, multiple access points
- Broadened access to pre-arrival services, e.g. Immigration Portal
- Extended supports for families related to settlement services, e.g. SWIS
- Moving towards barrier free process from pre-arrival, arrival, settlement, employment, e.g. CAP

#### 2. What are the unmet needs?

- **Language barrier/career development program**
  - Need more bridging programs for skilled professionals
  - Need more specialized language training programs: language preparation for the workplace/specific career focus, Canadian day to day language comfort levels
  - Post-employment or job retention's language supports
  - Lack of ESL programs for people who are "in the middle"
- **Canadian Experiences**
  - Employer attitude towards immigrant community tends to result in recruiting people with Canadian experience
  - Unionized work environment is less welcoming/flexible to allow temporary placements, etc.
- **Self-Employment**
  - Access to credit, eligibility for programs, complex regulatory environment
- **System /Service delivery**
  - More information (details for front line) to make better referrals, e.g. SWIS
  - Tighter alignment between settlement, front line, literacy/education and employment services
  - Bridging clients from short term (survival) to permanent (career) with funding support
  - Consistency with available funding – multi-year sustainable funding
  - Access to programs based on 'status', e.g. work permits
  - Recognition of important need for sustained funding versus year to year to build on successes/consolidation/availability of services
  - Making good decisions based on need versus what is available or funded
  - New Canadians ability to access resources and information

- Employment Services are underutilized and there is no unified data about how many immigrants are not accessing the service
- Transportation gap: Lack of public transit to get to workplace/time

### **3. Suggestions for enhancing supports to improve employment outcomes**

- Streamlined referral system to ensure immigrants have access to this information
- Integrated training (settlement, services, employers) e.g. CAP, Agency/Services Fair, JDN
- Employer education – enhanced mentorship, training supports, incentives, employment equity
- United Way model – employer sponsored employee, success stories
- Expanded language programs focussed on everyday experiences/workplace focus real language acquisition, e.g. immersion in community
- Post-employment supports “how to fit in” both for employers and employees
- Better funding support for both short/long term so not forced to choose
- More flexible funding – client centred approach to funding, less restrictive and Multi-year sustainable funding
- Expand public transit in London and area to give job seekers access to work. Can we run transportation out of the city to Tillsonburg or St. Thomas?
- Larger media/communication strategy for educating the community (cultural diversity): How do we make collaboration stronger, faster? Increase use of services; encourage employers to welcome; change negative attitudes of Londoners; education and communication between employers and newcomers; continue to raise awareness on both sides regarding real versus perceived barriers to employment; social media to get people to connect engage agencies
- Advocate: Services and information before immigration/arrival
- City of London to celebrate successes as an employer welcoming diversity
- Business section articles directed at employers
- More referrals from the smaller agencies (between agencies and schools) to specialized services (education and communication) – need common message
- Improved access to small business resources (financial supports) needed
- Sharing success stories and testimonials (that are realistic)
- Child care and other vital supports
- Arrange technology and financial literacy



## Appendix 3

### Immigrant Employment Consultation with Representatives and Leaders of Ethno-Cultural Groups

#### 1. What are the unmet needs?

- Employer attitude towards immigrant community tends to result in recruiting people with Canadian experience
- Service providers lack diversity in their staff selection
- Service provider staff are not welcoming with less diversify
- Lack of credential recognition: foreign degrees are not respected
- Lack of specialized language training programs for skilled immigrants
- Lack of trade/professional language training
- Lack of social networks, knowledge of and about Canadian labour market and service providers
- London as a city is less attractive for the immigrant community
- City of London is not an ethnic friendly place, they need to start
- Lack of support and programs geared to being an entrepreneur
- Discrimination against gaining admission into the professional courses offered at educational institutions
- Hiring process and hidden job market
- Language barriers - especially foreign accent
- Support service is faulty: no evaluation and monitoring
- Employer commitment and attitude towards immigrant community
- Employer and organizational perspective in need of change
- Concept of volunteer placement is based on 1970's concept
- Volunteer placement is fruitful, immigrant need money to feed their family, this concept is making life more jeopardized
- Immigrant attitude for volunteer placements
- Service provider approach: short term and long term goals
- Service providers are interested in opening files to increase their numbers, but what is the actual number of people gaining employment
- Skills mismatch/unionized employment system make the situation more difficult
- Money needed to review business plan
- Small business training and services are expensive
- Underutilizing Western University and Fanshawe College in the total employment program
- Lack of coordination among service providers, immigrants, City of London, LIP and community leaders
- Lack of public relation coordination among community leaders, service providers, immigrant community, and City of London
- Problem in the structure of employment information system

- Repeating and very slow service providers
- Employment supports are not fully utilized due to lack of accessible information

## **2. Suggestions for enhancing supports to improve employment outcomes**

- Need to improve attitudes towards immigrant community
- Employer perspectives needs to change
- Cooperative business/micro finance initiatives for entrepreneur
- Developed and coordinated service information delivery system
- Centralized information system for immigration community
- City needs a centralized position (public relation professional) to make immigrant community, service provider access point
- London as a city needs to develop a strategy to attract immigrants/ Need to identify what would attract immigrants to the city
  - Need some solution for quick foreign credential recognition/competency base practices can be solution
- Programs should be developed for entrepreneurs
- Need stronger coordination between service providers
- Need to develop more employer related programs: how they work with the immigrant community
- FAIR SHARE
- More opportunities needed for the visible minority community
- Placement opportunities need improvement
- “Action” not document for Advocacy
- Cooperative can be solution
- Service provider staff need more training on being more welcoming
- Service providers can recruit more from visible minority to give a comfort zone
- Need communication and learning involvement of Western and Fanshawe: they can work with skilled immigrants to provide job specific language training, employment information network
- Monitoring and effectiveness of the different service providers’ program effectiveness
- Commitment of the community leaders
- More ethnic specific settlement workers needed because they are the first source of information
- Instant information booklet or information sheet can be available at all service points and can be distributed among the immigrant clients
- Help Line “211” can also be a solution they can give different information about employment services related information
- Fast track services need to be developed for immigrants
- Trade and professional language training and local market English training is needed

## Appendix 4

### Immigrant Employment Consultation with Ontario Works Employment Team

#### 1. How do Employment Support Specialist job responsibilities relate to the immigrant population?

Provides support along with community agencies in dealing with newcomers for employment supports, look at credentials, background, way to help them reach goal of recertification and help re-enter their field of expertise.

Organizations they are working with include:

- Access Center for regulated Employment
- WIL
- LUSO
- LEHC
- DAYA and FSTV

#### 2. As an Employment Support Specialist, define barriers to employment?

Barriers:

- Credentials not recognized in Canada (or provincially as each province also has own guidelines)
- Age barriers
- Different licensing processes
- Very expensive to apply for some certification (testing , courses) programs
- Skilled immigrant support themselves for the first year in Canada with the money they have, but then realize the process for finding work in their field is taking so much longer and they run out their money
- Miss information about the Canadian labour market and misunderstanding that government will take care of them
- Skilled immigrants have high expectations and do not want to adjust and work for lower paid jobs
- Cultural differences and language using in daily life
- Prejudice of employer also puts a barrier

#### 3. Effective mechanism to help immigrant community for success?

- Federal government needs to take more initiatives as they are bringing the immigrants
- Municipal governments need to be more innovative to helping the immigrant community
- All three level of government need to be work together
- Attitude development needs a special focus ; as they need to understand the reality of Canadian labour market and culture
- Good employment action plans

### 10 Opportunities to Leverage International Talent

#### 1. Promote the business case for hiring international talent

Today's shortage of skilled workers will only get worse. The good news is untapped talent is already here. One in five Londoners are immigrants and most are professionally trained. That's why hiring immigrants is the right thing to do – it makes for good business. Developed by the London Economic Development Corporation, the Global Talent Employer Guide is an excellent primer to assist your business in recognizing the importance of recruiting and retaining internationally trained individuals. To read an electronic version of this guide, please visit [www.globaltalent.ca](http://www.globaltalent.ca). For more information on the business case for hiring immigrants, to arrange a presentation or obtain a free consultation, please visit the London Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC) at [www.LMIEC.ca](http://www.LMIEC.ca).

#### 2. Mentor internationally trained individuals

The LMIEC Mentorship for Immigrant Employment Program brings together internationally trained individuals with local mentors in their field to gain a better understanding of the regional job market; establish valuable networking contacts; and learn more about sector-specific language and professional practice in Canada. This volunteer commitment of no more than a couple hours a month over a 4-6 month period is a valuable opportunity to increase intercultural awareness, learn about your field from an international perspective and support a newcomer's efforts to become professionally established in our region. The LMIEC also offers small group sessions for mentees & mentors throughout the year, and facilitates peer-mentoring opportunities. To become a mentor, contact [mentorship@LMIEC.ca](mailto:mentorship@LMIEC.ca) or 519-663-0774, x359. Online registration is available at [www.LMIEC.ca](http://www.LMIEC.ca).

#### 3. Become a Corporate Champion of the Mentorship for Immigrant Employment Program

Companies also have an opportunity to come on-board as Corporate Champions of the Mentorship for Immigrant Employment Program. Corporate Champions demonstrate a commitment towards enhancing cultural awareness, recruiting program mentors and promoting the program to London Region's broader business community. A pipeline for emerging talent, the Corporate Champion program is also an excellent opportunity to enhance leadership, management and coaching skills across a broad range of your existing employee base. Join the growing list of Corporate Champions by contacting [mentorship@LMIEC.ca](mailto:mentorship@LMIEC.ca) or 519-663-0774, x359.

#### 4. Host a Placement through WIL Employment Connections

Employers can take advantage of WIL's 8-week voluntary work placement program for internationally trained individuals. These placements provide your business with a no-risk opportunity to assess the skills and qualifications of a newcomer without making a financial commitment. Employers do not pay any wages and WSIB premiums are covered by the program. WIL's staffing specialists can also assist with recruitment for direct hire. Financial incentives may also be available. To arrange a placement or hire, contact a representative of WIL's Sales & Marketing Team at 519-663-0774 or [recruitment@WIL.ca](mailto:recruitment@WIL.ca). For profiles of candidates seeking placement and employment, please visit [www.wil.ca](http://www.wil.ca).

#### 5. Recruit and hire top newcomer talent

Does your company have specialized skill requirements? Need to widen your search for top talent? In collaboration with our community partners, the [LMIEC Job Match Network](#) attracts, screens, short-lists and markets qualified talent for job opportunities that are presently going unfilled in our region. Let us show you how the LMIEC can connect you to a hidden talent pool free of charge, please contact [info@LMIEC.ca](mailto:info@LMIEC.ca) or call 519-663-0774 x228 for more information.

## **6. Integrate SkillsInternational.ca into your company's recruitment practices**

SkillsInternational.ca is a one-of-a-kind database that unites internationally trained professionals with employers who need their skills. Available candidates are work-authorized, language-ready and pre-screened by over 125 partnering organizations. Over 750 employers have integrated this resource into recruitment practices. Don't miss out on this opportunity to save thousands of dollars in recruitment cost and build your competitive advantage in accessing a hidden talent pool of skilled individuals from across the province. For a demonstration or to set-up your account today, contact [info@skillsinternational.ca](mailto:info@skillsinternational.ca) or 519-663-0774, x237. Online registration is available at [www.SkillsInternational.ca](http://www.SkillsInternational.ca).

## **7. Recognize international credentials and skills sets with support of Access Centre for Regulated Employment**

The Access Centre for Regulated Employment provides information and application assistance to internationally trained individuals throughout Southwestern Ontario seeking licensure or related employment in Ontario's regulated professions. The only centre of its kind outside of the GTA, the Access Centre for Regulated Employment can assist your business by facilitating document evaluation for your employment candidates, new recruits or existing employees; helping your business understand international equivalencies to make informed hiring decisions; and working with existing employees interested in achieving full licensure in their field. Contact [info@accesscentre.ca](mailto:info@accesscentre.ca) or 519-858-2348. For more information, please visit [www.accesscentre.ca](http://www.accesscentre.ca).

## **8. Conduct mock interviews for internationally trained professionals**

WIL's Employment Preparation Program for internationally trained individuals helps clients prepare for their Canadian job search by offering them the experience of a video-taped mock interview. WIL is often seeking experienced volunteers to conduct mock interviews with clients. Conducting these mock interviews serves as an opportunity to enhance your cross-cultural interviewing techniques and develop greater awareness of the qualifications of this hidden talent pool. If you have experience in conducting employment interviews and are interested in participating, please call 519-663-0774 or visit [www.WIL.ca](http://www.WIL.ca) for more information.

## **9. Connect existing staff with enhanced, specialized and occupation-specific language training**

Did you know that many internationally trained applicants already have the language skills essential to performing well on the job? A multilingual workforce can boost your competitive advantage by helping your business strengthen relationships with suppliers and customers in global markets, and expand into domestic ethno-cultural markets. However, if you have an employee or prospective hire that does need language upgrading, several area organizations are now delivering specialized, enhanced or occupation-specific language training. In particular, the Thames Valley District School Board can partner with your company in offering customized business language training at the worksite for a small fee. Contact Beverley Payne for more information at [b.payne@tvdsb.on.ca](mailto:b.payne@tvdsb.on.ca) or 519-452-2000 x69718.

## **10. Join the employer-driven London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council (LMIEC)**

For more information about these and additional opportunities to recruit and retain international talent, join the London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council today. The LMIEC engages regional business champions as Employer Leaders within their companies, business networks and sector industries. By proactively sharing their promising practices with colleagues from London Region's broader business community, these Employer Leaders are working with business to *Source Locally* and *Hire Globally*. Contact [info@LMIEC.ca](mailto:info@LMIEC.ca) or 519-663-0774, x228 or visit us at [www.LMIEC.ca](http://www.LMIEC.ca).

**London-Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council**  
**SOURCE LOCALLY. HIRE GLOBALLY.**  
[www.LMIEC.ca](http://www.LMIEC.ca)

## Glossary

**Business immigrants:** Permanent residents in the economic immigrant category selected on the basis of their ability to establish themselves economically in Canada through entrepreneurial activity, self-employment or direct investment. Business immigrants include entrepreneurs, self-employed people and investors. The spouse or common-law partner and the dependent children of the business immigrant are also included in this category.

**Economic immigrants:** Permanent residents selected for their skills and ability to contribute to Canada's economy. The economic immigrant category includes skilled workers, business immigrants, provincial or territorial nominees and live-in caregivers

**Immigrant:** Refers to a person who is or has ever been a landed immigrant/permanent resident. This person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently. Some immigrants are Canadian citizens, while others are not. Most immigrants are born outside Canada, but a small number are born in Canada. In the 2011 National Household Survey, 'Immigrants' includes immigrants who landed in Canada prior to May 10, 2011.

**Immigration Class:** The immigration class is a further breakdown of the landing category. For example, the economic category consists of entrepreneurs, self-employed, skilled workers, etc. Based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, immigrants are processed under specific classes that are related to –CIC- *selection objectives* (skilled workers, spouses, government assisted refugees, etc.)

**Landing category:** Landing category is a term that describes the four main groups of permanent residents - family class, economic immigrants, refugees, as well as “other” immigrants who do not qualify in any of the first three categories. On an exceptional basis, the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) gives Citizenship and Immigration Canada the authority to grant permanent resident status to individuals and families who would not otherwise qualify in any category - for example, in cases where there are strong humanitarian and compassionate considerations. In reference to labour market characteristics, the economic immigrant category is further divided into two subgroups: principal applicants, and spouses and dependants.

**Non-immigrant:** Refers to a person who is a Canadian citizen by birth.

**Non-Official Languages Spoken:** Refers to whether the person can conduct a conversation in a language other than English or French. For a child who has not yet learned to speak, this includes languages that the child is learning to speak at home.

**Participation Rate:** Refers to the labour force in the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2011, expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over. (For the purposes of the National Household Survey, 2011). The participation rate for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographic area, etc.) is the total labour force in that group, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that group.

**Permanent Residents:** People who have been granted permanent resident status in Canada. Permanent residents must live in Canada for at least 730 days (two years) within a five-year

period or risk losing their status. Permanent residents have all the rights guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

**Recent Immigrants:** Refers to an immigrant who has arrived in the 5 years. For the purposes of the National Household Survey, 2011 recent immigrants arrived in the 5 years prior to May 10, 2011.

**Refugee Claimants:** Temporary residents in the humanitarian population who request refugee protection upon or after arrival in Canada. A refugee claimant receives Canada's protection when he or she is found to be a Convention refugee as defined by the United Nations 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 protocol, or when found to be a person needing protection based on risk to life, risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, or danger of torture as defined in the Convention Against Torture. A refugee claimant whose claim is accepted may make an application in Canada for permanent residence. The application may include family members in Canada and abroad.

**Skilled Workers:** Economic immigrants selected for their ability to participate in the labour market and to establish themselves economically in Canada. Skilled workers are assessed on the basis of selection criteria that stress education, language ability and skilled work experience.

**Unemployment rate:** Refers to the unemployed (aged 15 years and over) expressed as a percentage of the labour force in the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2011. (For the purposes of the National Household Survey) The unemployment rate for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographic area, etc.) is the unemployed in that group, expressed as a percentage of the labour force in that group.

**Visible Minority:** Refers to the visible minority group to which the respondent belongs. The *Employment Equity Act* defines visible minorities as 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.' Categories in the National Household Survey 2011 visible minority variable include South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, Japanese, Visible minority, n.i.e. ('n.i.e.' means 'not included elsewhere'), Multiple visible minorities, and Not a visible minority.

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## Selected Internet Resources

Access Centre for Regulated Employment

<http://www.accesscentre.ca/home>

Access Employment

<http://accessemployment.ca>

African Canadian Federation of London and Area

<http://www.acfola.ca/>

College Boreal

<http://www.collegeboreal.ca/home>

Community Data Program Canadian Council on Social Development Community Data Program

<http://communitydata.ca>

Conference Board of Canada

<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/default.aspx>

Cities of Migration

<http://citiesofmigration.ca>

City of London

<https://www.london.ca>

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

<http://www.cic.gc.ca>

Entrepreneurship Connections

<http://triec.ca/>

Hire Immigrants

<http://www.hireimmigrants.ca>

Immigrant Access Fund

<http://www.iafcanada.org/>

Impact Loan

<http://impactloan.ca/>

Goodwill Industries

<http://www.goodwillindustries.ca/>

HR Council for the Non-profit Sector

<http://www.hrcouncil.ca/>

London and Middlesex Immigrant Employment Council

<http://www.lmiec.ca>

London and Middlesex Immigration Portal  
<http://immigration.london.ca>

London Chamber of Commerce  
<http://www.londonchamber.com/>

London Cross Cultural Learner Centre  
<http://www.lcclc.org>

London Small Business Centre  
<http://sbcentre.ca/>

London Economic Development Corporation  
<http://www.ledc.ca>

London Unemployment Help Centre  
<http://www.lehc.ca/>

LUSO Community Services  
<http://www.lusocentre.org/>

May Tree Foundation  
<http://maytree.com/>

Ottawa Community Loan Fund  
<http://oclf.org/>

Pathways Skill Development  
<http://pathways.on.ca/>

Skills International  
<https://www.skillsinternational.ca/>

South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre  
<http://www.slnc.org/>

Statistics Canada  
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/start-debut-eng.html>

WIL Employment Connections  
<http://www.wil.ca/home>

Western Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations  
<http://www.ssc.uwo.ca/MER/MERcentre/>

Work Trends  
<http://worktrends.ca>