Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO)

Helping rural communities to attract and retain skilled newcomers

Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Ontario

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Foreword

The attraction of human capital is emerging as a primary focus in many Canadian economic development strategy plans. This direction is a result of significant shifts in our national demographic profile, and as such, the need to seek new innovative directions to meet the needs of our Canadian communities. A strategy to enhance human capital through an immigration recruitment initiative is gaining traction and is well supported by the major think tanks of Canada.

This toolkit provides a "road tested" approach to capitalizing on activities associated with new Canadian recruitment. The document identifies sound rationale on this timely requirement for communities to engage in this application in local planning. The document builds on some best practices undertaken by other provinces and territories in Canada with a specific focus on attraction and retention issues associated with rural Canada. It is a first rate guide that will undoubtedly shepherd both our economic and social fabric towards the spirit of cultural diversity.

David C. Paul, Ec.D. (F)
Director of Economic Development,
City of Brockville
President of Economic Development
Association of Canada (EDAC)

The Economic Developers Council of Ontario is pleased to introduce the Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario Toolkit. Following in the footsteps of several other toolkits for economic development professionals, the addition of CIRRO will allow communities across Ontario to effectively deal with the changing face of their workforce.

There is no question that the demographic face of Ontario and Canada continues to change and the issue of human capital covers the Province. EDCO members recognize the challenge of creating an attractive workforce for new investment in their areas whether it is new or expansions of existing businesses. The CIRRO toolkit will take them through the steps to create an effective immigrant attraction program through a variety of community exercises and participation. It is another useful tool for our members resulting in vibrant communities in Ontario.

Heather Lalonde
Executive Director,
Economic Developers Council of Ontario

Human capital, the skills, experience, knowledge and innovation embedded in our workforce, will continue to play an increasingly important role in building our Province's competitiveness on the global economic stage. The ability to attract and retain a skilled workforce will strengthen Ontario's position as a global leader in key and emerging economic sectors, resulting in increased investment and economic performance. Ontario's rural communities that have the vision to build their economic development strategies on the foundation of stable, long-term human capital will prosper. The Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO) toolkit is designed to support rural communities with concrete strategies, tips and best practices to enable them to take advantage of key economic and social opportunities through a community-based and community-led process.

For more information, please connect with us on the internet:
http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/

Martin Bohl, Director
Rural Community Development Branch
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The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Preface

In the knowledge economy, a community's most valuable resource is its people; their skills, knowledge, experience and ability to innovate. This is what drives economic growth, sustains jobs and supports the services that contribute to quality of life.

Economists call this resource 'human capital,' and it's the fuel that allows companies like Waterloo-based Research In Motion to invent globally competitive products like the BlackBerry™, become a world leader in wireless communications and create thousands of jobs in Ontario.

And it's not just high tech companies that are concerned about their human capital. Today, even traditional industries (farming, forestry, mining, construction) have become much more knowledge intensive, and that intensity grows year by year with the evolution of different technologies, materials and competitive forces.

The newcomer opportunity

Many rural communities across Ontario are facing a number of challenges related to their changing human capital needs. Fertility rates are below replacement levels, the population is aging and young people are leaving to find opportunities.

These shortages in human capital could hamper the economic growth or even the viability of some communities. There may not be the people and the know-how to retain and grow existing businesses, especially small- and medium-sized businesses that have a limited staff.

Attracting motivated and entrepreneurial workers and business people from around the world can help communities meet changing human capital requirements and create win/win opportunities for new immigrants, local business owners, their employees and the entire community.

As a result, the attraction and retention of skilled immigrants has increasingly become a recognized and essential component in economic development planning. Some communities are working aggressively to attract and retain newcomers as a key component of their economic development strategy.

Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario

The Community Immigrant Retention in Rural Ontario (CIRRO) initiative was developed to bring attention to the demographic forces at play in rural communities. CIRRO helps to better understand and articulate the process of developing community newcomer attraction and retention strategies for economic development purposes. The initiative was spearheaded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in partnership with the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

CIRRO staff worked collaboratively with three Ontario communities through a process of experimentation, information sharing and the adoption of best practices to develop the community's capacity to attract and retain skilled immigrants and business investors. The three case study communities, which are all implementing human capital development strategies, are Brockville/Leeds & Grenville, Chatham-Kent and North Bay. This toolkit is one result of that collaborative process.

Who is an immigrant? Who is a newcomer?

For the purpose of this toolkit, "newcomers" are people who come from outside the community and chose to move in order to work and /or live in your community. They could be skilled immigrants who just arrived in Canada, business immigrants or established immigrants who have been living in Canadian urban areas and are aware of Canadian culture, language and environment. Some are already Canadians who are choosing to re-locate for business reasons, career opportunities or to begin a new life.

What is this toolkit?

This toolkit offers strategies and best practices that can help rural communities to attract and retain newcomers.

It approaches newcomer attraction and retention from a community economic development perspective. It does not fully address other aspects of attracting and retaining newcomers, such as social inclusion or employer awareness, though these are also important elements in successful human capital strategies. A number of resources are available and referenced throughout this toolkit that can help your community plan these other components of attracting and retaining newcomers.

Who is the toolkit for?

This toolkit is designed for economic development officers, municipal officers, community planners, community developers and anyone involved in community economic development.

How is the toolkit organized?

It is divided into two sections. The first section provides information about immigration, the role of human capital in the knowledge economy, and introduces concepts such as 'welcoming communities' and 'welcoming workplaces.' The second section focuses on practical measures to initiate a plan of action. Examples, insights and recommended practices are highlighted as sidebars throughout both sections.

How to use this toolkit

No two communities are alike. Some are just beginning to think about how to address human capital as an economic development issue, while others already have well-developed strategies in place. The tools and resources presented in this toolkit are designed to raise awareness, stimulate your thinking and provide practical suggestions on how to put newcomer attraction and retention ideas into action.

Some activities will require more resources than others, or will need to be 'scaled' in a way that suits your community's needs and abilities. You may decide, after reviewing this toolkit and assessing the readiness of your community, to only use certain ideas from the toolkit, or to partner with other communities to pool resources. You may decide that a newcomer attraction and retention plan is not a priority at this time. Whatever you decide, the toolkit can provide useful information regarding integrating human capital needs into your economic development strategy.

SECTION I: Immigration and Community Economic Development

**Ministry of Agriculture,
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Ontario

Section I: Immigration and Community Economic Development

1. Introduction

Newcomers help build Ontario communities. They bring skills, energy and the determination to create prosperous new lives.

As previously stated, and for the purpose of this toolkit, newcomers are defined as people who come from outside the community and chose to work and/or live in your community. They could be skilled new immigrants who just landed, business immigrants, established immigrants who have been in Canada and are aware of culture, language and environment, or Canadians who are choosing to re-locate for business, job or a new life.

Canada's changing demographics

The fertility rate in Canada lies at approximately 1.5 births per woman. The fertility rate required to maintain the current population level is 2.1 births per woman. Although the fertility rate has risen slightly, it still remains well below the replacement level.

Statistics Canada (2006) also reports that Canada's population is rapidly aging. This is likely to continue until 2031, at which time seniors will make up between 23% and 25% of the total population. The result is that Canada's natural population will start decreasing by 2050 and Canada will become increasingly reliant on international immigration to sustain its population. As shown in the accompanying chart, the total net growth in Canada's population will come from immigration by 2026.

Immigration is an increasingly important component of population growth.
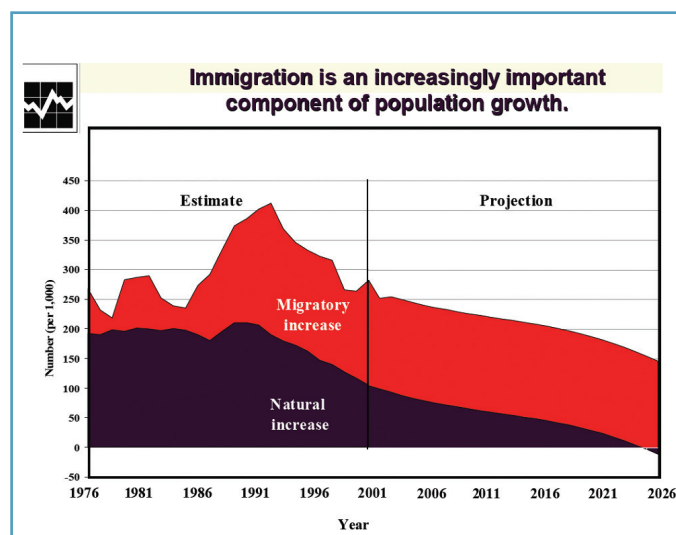
Source: Statistics Canada, Based on Catalogue Nos. 91-213 and 91-520

Ontario – a magnet for newcomers

With a population of more than 13 million, Ontario is home to more than one-third of all Canadians. Ontario is the first choice for the majority of immigrants who choose Canada. Between 1996 and 2006, Ontario received 52.3% of all of Canada's immigrants.

Statistics Canada's forecast for 2000-2026 estimates that 54.2% of all immigrants to Canada will come to Ontario.

Implications for your community

Demographic trends reveal that many small communities in Ontario will soon be in positions of population decline due to low replacement levels, aging populations and out-migration of youth. Some are already experiencing slower growth. The population in several rural and small towns in Ontario grew by approximately 1% in recent years while Ontario's average was approximately 6%.

This holds several implications for small communities:

- decreased labour pool

- decreased local demand for goods and services

- decreased tax base

- increased centralization or consolidation of core services (e.g. schools and hospitals)

Unless communities take action, a negative spiral can begin. As fewer amenities are available, the community becomes less attractive to working age adults and young families. This results in a smaller labour pool, which makes the community less attractive to employers. With fewer employers, the community becomes less attractive for new residents, and the spiral continues. Ultimately, this negative spiral has the potential to undermine the sustainability of the community.

Immigration reviving some small towns, Conference Board reports

Many smaller communities across Canada are successfully attracting immigrants by promoting the benefits of living and working in small towns, according to a study by the Conference Board of Canada. The report, Immigrant-Friendly Communities: Making Immigration Work for Employers and Other Stakeholders in Small-Town Canada, looks at the value immigrants can bring to small communities and the role that federal, provincial and municipal policies play in attracting immigrants, and offers four case studies of how communities in New Brunswick, Manitoba, Alberta and the North West Territories are attracting and retaining immigrants through a collaborative approach involving employers and many different community stakeholders.

Opportunities and challenges for rural communities

The majority of newcomers arriving in Ontario settle in Toronto. As Canada's largest city, Toronto is often the 'gateway' city for newcomers to Ontario. Of all the people that came to Ontario from 2001-2006, 67% settled in the Greater Toronto Area.

But not all newcomers become long-term, permanent residents of their city of arrival.

The preference to settle in large urban centres like Toronto can be the result of an immigrant's negative perception about small cities and rural areas. For many newcomers, in their home countries, the terms "small city" or "rural" carries negative connotations such as fewer job opportunities, fewer services, fewer amenities and greater social isolation. For Ontario communities, being aware of this and finding ways to address these concerns is a part of the process of attracting more skilled, talented newcomers to your community.

Many people choose to live in rural communities because they *are* smaller centres and possess attributes and assets that are appealing for high quality of life. The challenge for community economic developers in smaller centres is often how to get the human capital needed to maintain the standard of living without losing the small town feel. This requires a very different approach than the one taken by larger centres. A much greater emphasis needs to be placed on developing a vision of what the community wants to become and defining the resources it needs to get there.

Many smaller centres also lack the resources to attract new residents directly from other parts of the world. It is often much more efficient to target new arrivals from a gateway city. Opportunities exist to create partnerships with organizations in gateway cities to promote smaller centres and communities.

Economic shifts and newcomer attraction

We have shifted into a knowledge-based economy; an economy that relies on the skills, knowledge and experience of its labour force.

The new knowledge based economy is changing the make-up of Ontario's labour market in both small communities and large urban areas. Attracting immigrants is one way for small communities to meet the demands of the new economy. Overall, Ontario's newcomers are well educated. Between 2001 and 2006, 75% of immigrants to Ontario (age 24-54) had a post-secondary degree.

An increase in skilled, well-educated human capital adds to a community's value for prospective employers and makes it more attractive to a diverse group of businesses. It can lead to increased business investments, more jobs and a stronger community economy.

> **The business case for immigration**
>
> *"One hundred per cent of the growth of Canada's workforce over the next five to ten years will come from immigration. Without immigration, we would have negative growth. (Immigration) is a huge opportunity for the country to take advantage of in order to continue to build our strength and prosperity."*
>
> Gordon Nixon
> CEO, Royal Bank of Canada

2. The Benefits of Attracting Newcomers

Ontario communities have always been vibrant, nimble and resourceful. They have diverse and unique economic, cultural and environmental characteristics. The strength of our communities comes from a combination of productive capital (the economy), social capital (culture and heritage), and natural capital (natural resources). Productive capital is composed of three pillars: technology and innovations, investments, and human capital.

Investing in human capital

Human capital is defined as the knowledge, skills and abilities which allow the people working in your community to be productive. Over the course of our careers we build each of these traits through experience and training.

The human capital in a community is the collective wealth of experience of all people in the community. As people retire, they take more human capital out of the workforce than they originally brought in.

To sustain economic growth and maintain standards of living, a community needs to continually seek qualified people to replace the human capital that is being taken out of the workforce through the retirement of its most skilled and experienced workers. This is becoming more important as larger numbers of baby boomers reach retirement age. Newcomers can help a community meet these demands.

Human Capital Relation to Economy
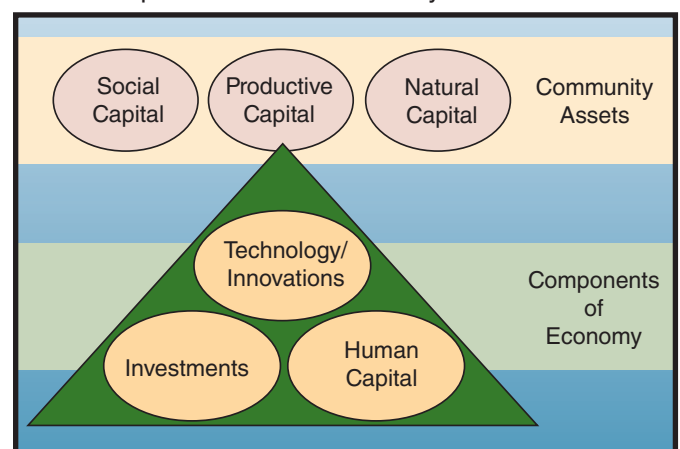
Community sustainability and quality of life is maintained through a balance of social, productive and natural capital. The productive capital (economy) relies on the balance between the three pillars: investment, technology/innovation and human capital.

Economic growth and sustainability

Attracting more people to live and/or work in a community increases local demand for goods and services, helps businesses grow and create local jobs, and contributes to the overall economic health of a local community.

Attracting newcomer entrepreneurs can also help small communities stimulate economic growth. Along with skills and talents, immigrants can bring investment capital of their own. Their entrepreneurial skills enable them to create new businesses and jobs for Canadian-born workers and other immigrants.

Newcomers can also bring international business connections. In today's global market, it is easier than ever to sell products and services from your community in countries around the world. Opening business channels with the home countries of newcomers can help your local economy grow by opening new markets for your existing businesses and developing opportunities for investment.

Just as attracting newcomers can bring more employment and an increased tax base to your community, retaining those newcomers brings long-term sustainability.

Newcomers can help open export markets, says RBC chief

"At a time when the U.S. economy, in particular, remains weak, we need to be looking to expand our trade and cultural relationship even more. Newcomers to Canada bring skills, including language and cultural skills, knowledge and networks that can help us to reach out to emerging economic giants like China and India, as well as emerging immigrant markets at home."

Gordon Nixon
CEO, Royal Bank of Canada
quoted in the Globe & Mail, September 10, 2009

Resource Tip: Opportunities Ontario Provincial Nominee Program

Opportunities Ontario helps employers who are having difficulty finding the skilled workers they need by assisting with the immigration of qualified foreign workers and international students.

www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/pnp/index.htm

Social Capital

Communities that successfully address human capital as part of their economic development strategies also promote inclusion and an increased sense of cohesiveness and belonging within the community. The result is a growth in the community's stock of social capital, with greater civic participation and more diverse involvement within the community.

Engagement and participation of community members in attraction and retention strategies is also beneficial on a broader basis. These activities increase the resiliency of the community by improving community dynamics and increasing the capacity to collaborate and by identifying and meeting common goals.

Attracting and retaining newcomers increases diversity in the community. This yields additional benefits including enhanced social, cultural and business opportunities.

Expert Tip: Turn traditional thinking upside down

"If rural communities are to survive, we must turn our traditional notions of economic development on their head. Instead of attracting companies to sustain our people, we should be attracting people to sustain our economy. We have a lot to learn about encouraging, integrating and retaining immigrants in our communities. And we better start learning soon."

Paul Nichol
Huron Community Futures Development Corporation

3. Ontario: A Place for Newcomers

For many years, Ontario has been the first choice for immigrants who choose to live in Canada. As a result, there is a wealth of information and programs available both online and at community level through immigrant service organizations to help individual newcomers and their families get settled. (see appendix V for additional resources).

Achieving critical mass

The number-one factor in determining where immigrants will first settle is the presence of ethnic and cultural networks in a community. These networks grow as the critical mass of immigrants increases over time.

Larger centres achieve this critical mass by taking in large numbers of immigrants and letting the networks establish themselves informally. Smaller centres have far fewer immigrants and much more limited resources such as settlement services. Smaller communities need to take a much more targeted approach and aim to bring in people who have already gone through the orientation and familiarization process or attract the secondary immigrants from large urban centers. Small communities can also create partnerships with larger urban centers by pooling their resources with other municipalities and tapping into provincial and federal government programs. See Appendix IV for a list of resources.

What is a welcoming community?

The successful integration of newcomers into a community is based on mutual respect, understanding and cooperation. Newcomers are more likely to stay in a location if they can be successful economically and are meaningfully engaged in all aspects of community life.

In larger centres, it is normal for people to move in and move out. There are social systems are in place to help them feel welcome. In smaller centres it is more unusual for new people to move in. Existing residents may feel awkward making introductions or helping the newcomer learn their way around.

A welcoming community does not happen automatically. It is the result of community planning processes that takes into account inclusion and integration.

For a broader discussion of welcoming communities, see Appendix III.

What is a welcoming workplace?

Welcoming workplaces are especially important to the integration and retention of newcomers. This requires conscious effort both to support the new candidate and to educate existing employees.

A number of elements should be considered when welcoming newcomers to the workplace:

- orientation and training

- setting expectations

- accommodating needs

- creating an inclusive work environment.

For a more information about welcoming workplaces, see Appendix III.

Resource Tip: Newcomer Champion Award Recipients

More than 2,000 newcomers arrive in Ontario every week and settle in our communities. Ontario has a wealth of expertise in newcomer settlement, much of it gained through the first-hand experience of community leaders. If you are looking for expert advice, a good place to start is by contacting a recipient of an Ontario Newcomer Champion Award. Presented annually by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the Newcomer Champion Awards recognize Ontarians who promote a greater understanding of Ontario's cultures and who support newcomers in successfully settling and integrating, socially and economically.

www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/citizenship/honours/nca.shtml

SECTION II: Helping Your Community Take Action

**Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs**

Ontario

Section II – Helping Your Community Take Action

During the past few years, many communities across Canada and around the world have recognized the need to develop their human capital resources through attracting and retaining skilled, talented immigrants.

Their experiences have created examples of 'best practices', what works and what doesn't, which have helped to shape the development of this toolkit. The knowledge gained and the information gathered from the CIRRO case study communities of Brockville/Leeds and Grenville, Chatham-Kent and North Bay have been invaluable.

4. Getting Started

Building support and engaging community members right from the beginning is critically important to the successful development and implementation of an effective community immigrant attraction and retention strategy.

The process involves a broad range of players and stakeholders. The municipality plays a vital stewardship role in forming collaborative partnerships and gathering key players. Local champions can help build awareness and inspire support. Community forums provide valuable opportunities to fine-tune plans, launch initiatives and strengthen social networks. Keep in mind that, if successful, it will have far-reaching, long-term positive impacts on your community.

Community engagement

For any community newcomer attraction and retention plan to work, support from community leaders, champions, decision makers and citizens is crucial.

To build support, focus on how success will benefit the community. It is essential to communicate that newcomers are integral to the diversity, economic development and sustainability of the community.

Partnerships, either formal or informal, are key to making progress. These partnerships are most effective when there is a commonly defined vision, which brings together potential institutional and community stakeholders to develop goals and actions.

Throughout the process, keeping the community informed about the need for immigration, the goals of the strategy and the project's progress can reduce misunderstandings and increase the potential for success.

How can you engage the community?

- Start by getting support from key opinion leaders and influential community groups.

- Try to develop mutually beneficial relationships between municipal, provincial institutional and community based organizations.

- Organize public consultations and community forums to prepare, engage and educate your community.

- Make the community aware of existing barriers to growth which can be resolved by immigration such as the fact that there are critical jobs in the community that employers are having trouble filling.

- Provide a range of different types of events and look for opportunities to attract a broad cross-section of the community.

- Involve the media to help build awareness and provide a vehicle for community dialogue.

> **Resource Tip:** Local Immigration Partnerships
>
> Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the City of Toronto, developed the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) concept to facilitate local efforts to help integrate newcomers to their communities.
>
> LIPs aim to strengthen the role of local and regional communities in serving, integrating, and retaining immigrants through local immigration initiatives.
>
> LIPs seek to help communities put immigration on their overall planning agenda in order for communities to benefit from the successful social and economic integration of new immigrants.

Municipal Stewardship

Municipal staff and councillors can play a leadership role in helping to define the issues and build momentum and support within the community.

Municipalities generally take a leadership role in economic development planning and building human capital is an important element of the process. In addition, municipalities:

- are well positioned to foster relationships within the community, as well as with other levels of government and other communities.

- understand local issues and are politically accountable to residents.

- are also involved in policy development that will have lasting impacts on the community.

- are playing an increasing role in supporting newcomer attraction and retention and have access to new tools and resources to support these activities.

- can bring together key players for the purposes of planning and implementing programs effectively.

- are decision makers and have the capacity to communicate expectations to the community, and support actions by allocating resources.

- are supported by staff who are not involved in the political cycle and can help oversee projects that are long term.

- can open up dialogue within the community and provide venues for the community to express their ideas and concerns so that the community feels it is meaningfully engaged in the process.

What role can the municipality play?

Ideally, the municipality can take a leadership role and work with other stakeholders to develop an attraction and retention plan focused on immigration, settlement and integration. The municipality could do this a number of ways, including:

- establishing a steering committee

- forming a citizens advisory group

- hosting community forms and providing an opportunity for community input

- hiring a consultant

- developing policies to support attraction and retention efforts

- working with economic development practitioners at other levels of government to make attraction and retention efforts part of existing broader economic development strategies

- using the municipal website to share information

- dedicating staff resources to support projects and initiatives

Recruiting local champions

In addition to municipal leadership, a community leader should be recruited to champion the initiative. A local champion inspires action, builds momentum and brings necessary stakeholders to the table to promote the community's ideas and strategies.

For example, the local champion:

- leads public education campaigns and promotes the value of newcomer attraction and retention as a catalyst for economic development.

- acts as a liaison between residents and municipalities to ensure clear communication and quality of services.

- promotes ideas to elected representatives and obtains their support for initiatives.

- solicits the participation of stakeholders and promotes voluntarism.

- helps bring necessary stakeholders to the table to identify and develop a coordinated approach to providing the necessary supports such as ESL (English-as-a-second-language) training.

Community Stakeholders

Municipality (STEWARD)
Community Media
Immigrant settlement services
Community Activist/ Volunteers
Cultural Organizations
Youth Clubs/Groups
Resident Immigrant
Chamber of Commerce
Businesses

How to recruit and engage local champions

- Approach local service organizations, chambers of commerce and other influential groups to help identify potential candidates.

- Advertise on volunteer engagement websites.

- Identify people within the community who either have experience bringing newcomers into the community or would benefit by having more newcomers in the community.

- Recruit champions personally to gain their interest.

- Formalize the program by offering training sessions and clearly lay out responsibilities.

- Provide champions with all the resources and tools required (e.g. t-shirts, pamphlets, contacts).

- Continually engage community leaders through regular meetings and potentially rewards programs.

- Recognize and reward leaders.

Establishing a steering committee

Getting started will require a steering committee to be responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of the initiative. It should be inclusive enough to credibly represent the major stakeholders but not so large as to be unwieldy and ineffective.

You will need to develop a Terms of Reference for the committee. This should cover subjects such as:

- committee mandate

- committee scope (i.e. advisory versus operational and implementing actions)

- roles of members

- reporting relationships

- authority and accountability

- membership composition and selection criteria

- meeting schedule

- committee resources and administrative support

Resource Tip: Municipal Immigration Information Online (MIIO)

The MIIO program supports municipal engagement in the attraction, settlement and integration of newcomers and potential immigrants and promotes Ontario municipalities as attractive destinations for investment.

The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and Citizenship and Immigration Canada provide funding to municipal governments to build community immigration portals under the Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement.

The MIIO program is a partnership between federal, provincial and municipal governments and has been a successful way for communities to coordinate their attraction and integration efforts, while also benefiting from collaboration with other municipalities involved with the program.

Currently, there are 21 municipal immigration portals that support over 90% of the Ontario landscape.

For a list of existing MIIO websites, go to
http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/living/OI_HOW_LIVE_CITIES.html

Organizing community forums

A community forum is an effective way to learn more about an issue, raise awareness in the community and get people involved. It is also an opportunity to invite and engage stakeholders as well as to form partnerships and recruit community members to become members of local committees, networks or working groups.

If the community is already thinking about the issue of attracting newcomers, the forum can be very specific and focus on the "how to" aspects. If newcomer attraction is not on the community's radar, it may be better to have a "Planning for the Future" theme where newcomers are discussed as one of several options. In this case a follow-up forum on the "How-To" details may be necessary.

The following four steps incorporate a number of helpful tips on how to make your forum a success.

1. Begin planning

Establish a working group to organize the community forum. Working group members can help:

- secure a venue

- encourage the attendance of municipal leaders, business, settlement organizations, etc.

- publicize the forum through their communication networks

- help secure donations for some activities such as posters, travel costs for speakers, door prizes, etc.

- identify and invite speakers

- identify and invite target audience

Working group members could include:

- municipal representatives

- representatives from local businesses

- economic development practitioners

- service organizations

- settlement organizations

- recently settled community members or successful newcomers

2. Develop an agenda

A good forum agenda, distributed ahead of time, can help all stakeholders:

- understand the issues

- build consensus on the need to address the issue(s)

- brainstorm strategies

- identify people to take specific tasks

- wrap-up the event and plan next-steps

At the end of the agenda, make sure you build in an opportunity for a speaker or moderator to summarize the discussion and encourage participants' on-going involvement.

3. Target your audience and promote the event

Think about who are the key stakeholders in your community, including everyone who is involved with, will be affected by or is interested in newcomer attraction and retention. Consider inviting:

- representatives of organizations interested in immigration, employment, welcoming newcomers

- representatives of diverse sectors (e.g. business and labour, health and health care, community activists, large and small employers, educators, and faith leaders)

- community leaders (e.g. decision makers, influential community members, representatives from influential organizations in the community)

- media representatives

- people who reflect the composition of the community (e.g. ethnicity, age, geographic home, type of employment)

- self-identified concerned citizens

To promote the forum, consider using some of the following tactics:

- Ask interested organizations, faith communities, businesses and others to promote the meeting via their newsletters or websites.

- Post or distribute flyers at well-traveled locations, including stores, houses of worship and public libraries.

- Assign a member of the working group to welcome attendees and collect contact information to be used for follow-up (e.g. name, address, telephone number, e-mail).

- Plan for an audience about one-third larger than the size of the meeting room so that you have a full house.

Expert Tip: Welcoming means more than a smile and settlement services

"South Western Ontario, Canada is a region with abundant fresh water, rich agricultural land, and relatively little short-term direct impact from increasing climate change. Combined with our culture of welcoming newcomers – set in place centuries ago by the First Nations peoples - we will continue to attract citizens of the world. We are examining closely what is necessary, what is fair, and what is workable to more fully engage the skills and talents of our newcomers respectfully with our native born. Leaders in colleges, municipal government, businesses, and service agencies are learning global cultural skills to build communities where everyone is one of 'us.' Welcoming is more than a smile and settlement services. It is a systematic, conscious, and deliberate effort to encourage people and sustainable business to come to and stay in Chatham-Kent. Working together across all sectors of the economy is not just something that is 'nice to do', it is imperative for our viability. Together, we are co-creating a world all of us can love".

Maureen Geddes
CANGRAM International Inc.
Founding and past president Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent

2008 Recipient, Newcomer Champion Award, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

4. Follow-Up

Immediately following the community forum, make sure you take advantage of the momentum generated by the forum to move your plan ahead.

- Follow up with interested organizations about meeting outcomes and other activities being planned.

- Follow up with meeting participants and notify them about other meetings or activities.

- Follow-up on any action items established during the community forum (e.g. committees to be organized, working groups).

5. Building Knowledge

To decide what initiatives might be needed to improve newcomer attraction and retention, it is important to understand the current state of your community.

Developing an information base

Begin by collecting basic statistics. For example:

- What is the current demographic make-up of the community (e.g. age profile, ethnicity)?

- What is the employment landscape (e.g. what is the unemployment rate)?

- What sectors or industries exist in your community?

- What kind of skills are employers looking for?

- What is the education level of community residents?

- What does the current economic market look like? Where are the opportunities either for employment or business growth?

- What types of housing are available in your community?

In addition to this core data, it would be very helpful to understand other aspects of community life that are important considerations for attraction and retention efforts.

Some examples are:

- What are the attitudes towards newcomers in your community?

- How successful is your community at addressing diversity and inclusion?

- What kinds of services are available to newcomers and who delivers them?

- Has there been awareness training for current employers regarding hiring newcomers?

- What kind of outreach or marketing effort has your community made to support economic development?

- What have been the experiences of newcomers who have settled in your community?

- What kinds of projects, if any, have already been tried and what were the outcomes?

The information you gather through this process will not only help shape your attraction and retention plan, but will also provide you with a 'baseline' of information that you can measure against in the future (see: Measuring Success).

Research sources, tools and techniques

There are several methods for gathering the information necessary to develop a sound action plan. You should consider your information needs, what information is available, and what kind of resources you have available to gather and analyze the information (e.g. budget, human resources, expertise).

Some possible tools you could use include:

- analysis of existing statistical data and information (e.g. from Statistics Canada)

- consultation with other stakeholders to determine their most pressing issues in responding to your community's needs

- an analysis tool that identifies the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in your community

- asset-mapping

- Community Economic Assessment Tools

- surveys and focus groups

- review of existing research

- analysis of past community project outcomes

However you choose to gather information, the process should be developed and used in a way that:

- promotes planning based on what is working, what is missing and what needs improvement

- encourages ongoing reflection, dialogue and feedback and tracks performance

- assists in the development of clear goals, objectives and action items

Assessing community needs and readiness

Identifying your community's competitive advantages or disadvantages is important for workforce development and developing strategic plans to attract newcomers.

Determining trends and opportunities and identifying skill gaps in the labour force will help create a targeted attraction and retention strategy.

Workforce development is largely dependent on identifying:

- potential growth sectors in your community

- the necessary skills needed to support this growth

- to what extent your community's current workforce can support these growth sectors

Key questions to consider:

- How have local industries grown or declined in employment?

- Which industries are highly concentrated in your community?

- Which local industries have potential for employment growth and decline?

- Can your community's current labour force support these changes?

- What additional skills are needed to support these changes?

- Is there any educational institution in the community that can attract international students?

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis tips

The SWOT analysis technique is a useful tool for understanding and decision-making.

SWOT analysis provides a good framework for prioritizing ideas or reviewing a strategy. Ideas can be assigned priority rankings to ensure the most pressing issues are dealt with first. It is a good activity for workshop or brainstorming sessions. Asking what may seem like basic questions can sometimes spark new ideas and build consensus among stakeholders.

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
• What does your community do well? • What unique resources are available? • What do others see as strengths in the community?	• What could the community improve? • Where are there fewer resources than others? • What are others likely to see as weaknesses in the community?
Opportunities:	Threats:
• What good opportunities are open to your community? • What trends could the community take advantage of? • How can the community turn strengths into opportunities?	• What political, economic or technological trends could harm the community? • What threats are facing other communities? • What threats do the community's weaknesses expose it to?

SWOT at Ontario community workshops

North Bay, Chatham-Kent and Brockville, Leeds/Grenville each held kick off workshops to launch the immigrant attraction and retention initiative in their communities. A SWOT analysis was a component of each event.

The workshop's objectives were to:

- inform community stakeholders on demographic challenges in rural communities

- underline the rural immigration challenges and opportunities

- present best practices from other provinces

- provide brainstorming opportunities

- catalyze action planning for immigrant attraction and retention

Roundtable discussions were held around three different themes. Each discussion was designed as an exercise intended to engage an average of six or seven community participants. One of the following questions had been randomly distributed to each group:

- How can the community attract more immigrants?

- What can be done to retain immigrants?

- How can immigrants be better integrated into the community?

The SWOT analysis findings from North Bay, Chatham-Kent and Brockville, Leeds/Grenville were similar in many aspects. These could be seen as common findings for many small urban centers and rural communities. For example:

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
• Special location in proximity to major centres • Post-secondary education and training institutions • Quality of life/low cost of living	• Language barriers • Lack of cooperation between service providers • Lack of public awareness
Opportunities: • Small population allows for cross-networking • College campus can be used for training purposes	**Threats:** • Uncertain economic environment • Limited employment opportunities

Resource Tip: The Rural Economic Development Data and Intelligence (REDDI)

REDDI contains Community Economic Analysis (CEA) Tools that help rural leaders to identify local priorities and carry out strategies to achieve community goals. Labour market analysis, commuting range analysis and competitive advantage analysis could help communities to make better informed decision on skill gaps and business needs.

www.reddi.gov.on.ca

Situational analysis tips

Situational analysis is central to many forms of program or project planning. It's a technique that can help find solutions to issues by mapping out the links between cause and effect.

It offers several advantages:

- The issue can be broken down into manageable and definable chunks. This enables a clearer prioritization of factors and helps focus objectives.

- It increases the participants' understanding of the problem and its often interconnected or even contradictory causes. This is often the first step in finding win-win solutions.

- It identifies the constituent issues and arguments, and can help establish who and what the players and processes are at each stage.

- It can help establish whether further information or resources are needed to make a strong case, or build a convincing solution.

- Current issues can be identified and dealt with.

- The process often helps build a shared sense of understanding, purpose and action among the participants.

Situational analysis is best carried out in a small focus group of about six to eight people using flip charts or an electronic projector. As the conversation progresses, new factors can be added easily.

The first step is to identify and agree on the issue to be analysed. The issue is written in the centre of the flip chart and becomes the 'trunk' of the tree. This becomes the 'focal problem'. The wording does not need to be exact as the roots and branches will further define it, but it should describe an actual issue that everyone feels passionately about.

Next, the group identifies the causes of the focal problem - these become the roots - and then identifies the consequences, which become the branches. These causes and consequences can be created on post-it notes or cards, perhaps individually or in pairs, so that they can be arranged to show a cause-and-effect relationship.

The heart of the exercise is the discussion, debate and dialogue that is generated as factors are arranged and re-arranged. Take time to allow people to explain their feelings and reasoning, and record related ideas and points that come up on separate flip charts under titles such as solutions, concerns and decisions.

Discussion questions might include:

- Does this represent the reality? Are the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions to the problem considered?

- Which causes and consequences are getting better, which are getting worse and which are staying the same?

- What are the most serious consequences? Which are of most concern? What criteria are important to us in thinking about a way forward?

- Which causes are easiest/most difficult to address? What possible solutions or options might there be? Where could a policy change help address a cause or consequence, or create a solution?

- What decisions have we made, and on what actions have we agreed?

Mapping an issue - an example:
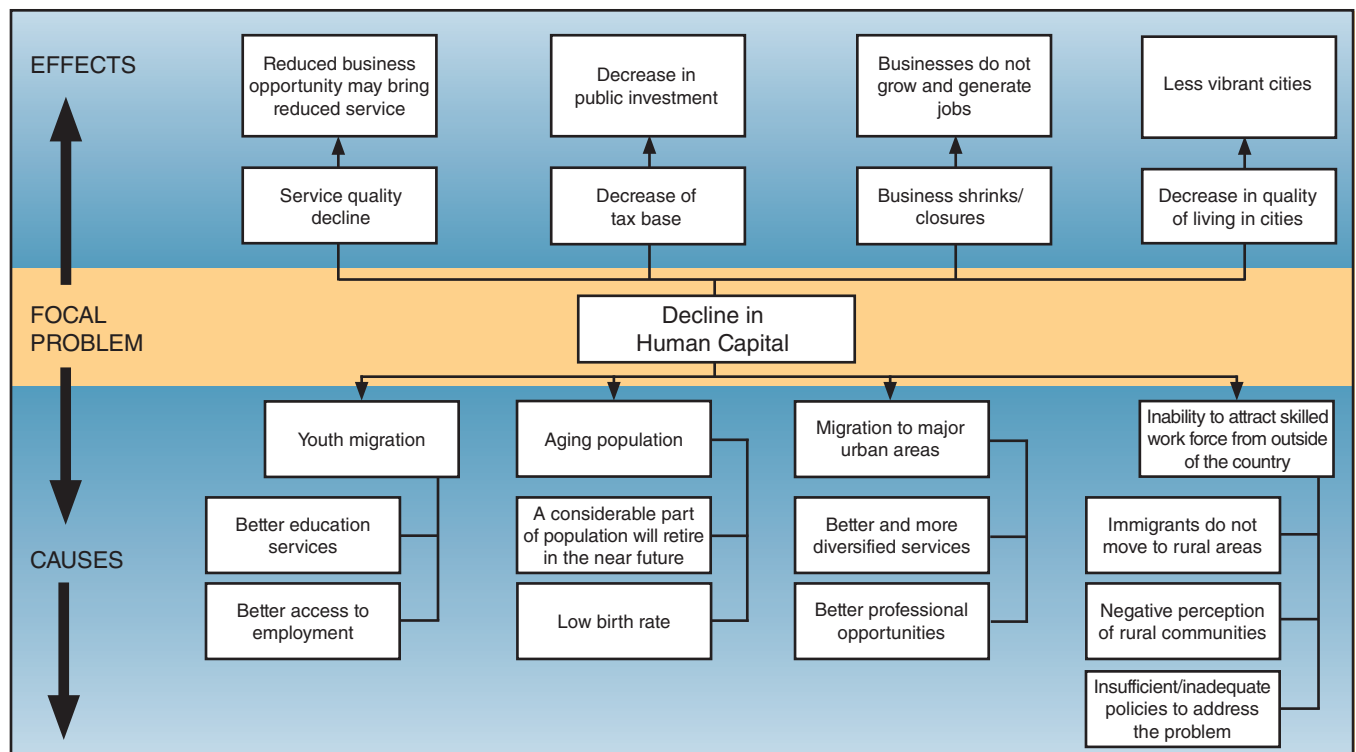
First Impressions Community Exchange is a structured process that reveals the feeling a community conveys to outsiders, including tourists, potential investors and retirees. Volunteer "visiting teams" from two exchange communities do "incognito" visits, record their observations and give constructive feedback to their exchange community. A First Impressions questionnaire can be used to provide the community with an outsider opinion about how attractive the community could be for people to visit, to move in or to work.

Below is one of the relevant questions in FICE survey:

What is your general impression of this community's capacity to welcome, attract, integrate and retain newcomers?
- Employment or job placement services
- Translation services
- Services or businesses operated by newcomers
- Legal services
- Ethnic diverse population downtown
- Immigration services
- Housing information
- Community or youth centres

For more information visit: http://www.reddi.gov.on.ca/firstimpressions.htm

Identifying resources

Without adequate resources, an attraction and retention strategy cannot succeed. The challenge is to identify the scale and type of resource needed (information, people, funding), then find sources to fill those needs.

Resources can be identified at the local level (libraries, educational institutions, service providers, community organizations, etc) or external (provincial or federal funding and support programs). While some resources are stable, others fluctuate and vary depending on specific criteria for funding. It is important to consider short and long term funding opportunities as they relate to strategic activities and projects.

Approaches include:

- establishing a resource list of organizations and their capacities to initiate and maintain the strategy.

- identifying resource gaps and needs.

- identifying potential sources of funding that support settlement (e.g. federal, provincial programs) and understanding the eligibility criteria and understanding the eligibility criteria.

- finding people with skills and knowledge to prepare funding applications.

6. Planning and Taking Action

Establishing the vision, goals, objectives and activities

A vision is sometimes called a picture of your community in the future, but it's so much more than that.

Your vision statement is your inspiration, the framework for all your strategic planning. It may apply to the entire strategic planning or to a specific segment. The vision statement answers the question, "Where do we want to go?" The vision statement should be short, clear, passionate and inspire community action.

Goals and objectives provide a framework for action at two hierarchical levels. After you set your broad important goals, you move to more specifics by setting objectives which could be considered sub-goals.

Objectives are also more than just activities. They provide the specific targets that will determine the success of the plan, outcome validation and evaluation. Ask yourself this: to achieve your goals, which conditions should you create? Which resources should you collect? Which skills should you develop? What knowledge should you acquire? Is there anything significant you should achieve before you can reach your goals? Formulate the answers to these questions as your objectives.

Activities are actions and tasks that contribute to achieving the objectives. To make sure that activities are aligned with the objectives, your objectives should have measurable qualitative and quantitative indicators. Indicators for success should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timed (SMART).

Specific	Does the objective specify results to be achieved? Is the objective clear? Does it mean the same thing to everyone?
Measurable	Is the objective measurable? (quantitative or qualitative)
Attainable	Can the planned outcome be achieved using the time and resources?
Realistic	Is the objective achievable given the local environment, resources and attitudes?
Timed	Does the objective indicate a clearly defined time limit within which it will be achieved?

Goals can establish a general direction for the plan. Goals do not in all cases need to be measurable or achievable literally. Instead, they can be more general and involve no timeframes. Goals can also be used as a way to build consensus and community support. A suggested schematic planning cycle is provided at the end of this section.

Objectives can establish more specific expectations of what the plan attempts to accomplish.

Activities detail tasks to be carried out. Each objective can be broken down into specific tasks that must be completed to achieve the objective.

Goal	Objectives	Activities
To attract and retain newcomers to the community by building a welcoming community.	1. By 20XX, work with three employers to identify labour shortages and assist them to recruit foreign trained individuals from other provincial centres.	1.1 Identify three employers to work with 1.2 Develop an employer's resource/information guide 1.3 Organize information sessions

Implementing your plan

Ontario communities are very diverse. Every community has a unique economic, social, and cultural profile. There is a wide variation in community size, capacity and resources. As a result, there is no cookie cutter approach for community planning for human capital attraction and retention. However, some possible approaches might be:

- a holistic approach that involves integration of newcomers into economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of the community.

- building on existing practices through incremental improvements.

- a piece-by-piece focus on the key areas identified for strategic action that systematically tackles one issue at a time e.g. a Community Awareness Kit, Employer Awareness Kit.

- incorporating attraction and retention objectives into specific local planning processes such as the municipal sustainability plan, the local area revitalization plan, the economic development plan, the community development plan or others.

- a regional approach that coordinates the efforts of a number of communities with shared interests.

In general, the best approach is to evaluate the local circumstances and what response is possible and necessary in these circumstances. You should consider what tools and resources are available and what buy-in is required to implement your plan successfully.

Addressing community concerns

Stakeholders and community members may express concerns or negative feedback regarding newcomer attraction and retention. Every concern is legitimate and can help flag issues in a community. They are often based on perception, but it is important to address all concerns using clear and factual information. The ability to address concerns and resistance to change is important to the success of your plan because it increases community buy-in and support.

Above all, it's important to listen to community concerns and respond as quickly as circumstances allow.

Expert Tip: Communities respond to negative perceptions about newcomers

Attracting newcomers to a small community can sometimes cause negative perceptions about immigrants to rise to the surface. There are a number of tools available that can help respond to these issues.

In North Bay, the Mayor has an online blog which allows for a direct response to opinions and comments and provides a forum to discuss the rationale behind newcomer initiatives. There is also an online multicultural radio show (www.northbayradio.ca/multicultural) that the North Bay and District Multicultural Centre uses to create public awareness.

In Brockville, the local newspaper publishes business immigrants' success stories and the opportunities these newcomers have brought to the community.

Addressing newcomer concerns

Newcomer attraction and retention is a two-way process that also involves responding to the needs, concerns and negative perceptions of potential immigrants.

Competition for skilled, well-educated people is increasing and this includes both potential newcomers, as well as people who are already in the talent pool. For immigrants, choosing which community to settle in is a big decision that will have a lasting impact on their career and the future of their family. Understandably, they want to make the right choice. The more effectively you can address their concerns, the more likely it is that the 'best and brightest' immigrants will choose your community.

Perception	Opportunities
Lack of job opportunities	Convey the opportunities that exist • Promote the job opportunities that exist in the community. • Address language concerns and provide information about the recognition of foreign credentials. • Identify workplace integration programs that address the issues.
Isolation	Communicate reasons to live in rural settings • Communicate your community's strengths. • Rural places are often distinguished by their amenities – usually in the form of natural resources such as, lakes, rivers, parks, beaches. • List the available local facilities and highlight the public access to them. • Additional amenities include the availability of land and low cost of living. • Encourage visits to your communities by prospective immigrants to allow for first-hand knowledge and a personal response to that area.
Lack of services	Communicate the range of organizations and services your community offers • Identify regional organizations that provide settlement services and ESL training and serve your community. • Identify organizations and/or individuals in your community that provide settlement services and ESL training. • This is also an opportunity to utilize volunteer services to meet settlement needs.

Expert Tip: How one community built their program

The process that Chatham Kent followed to build consensus within their community for a new Immigrant Attraction and Retention strategy could serve as a road map for other communities with the same destination in mind.

Getting Started
- used Appreciative Inquiry approach to identify an entry point for immigrant attraction
- used tools such as Competitive Advantage Analysis to identify sectors requiring skilled immigrants
- Developed "Welcoming Communities: Winning Communities" video series using in focus group discussions to identify concerns related to newcomers, from the perspective of newcomers, health care practitioners and employers.
- identified opportunities to integrate immigrant attraction and retention activities into existing strategic plans of the key organization including the municipality, education institutions, health alliances, hospitals and multinational companies
- identified immigrant skill sets required in terms of academic qualification, knowledge and work experience
- engaged stakeholders and formed a committee to standardize immigrant attraction strategies based on results
- engaged settlement agencies in building a network and referral system to attract skilled immigrants
- developed a newcomer web portal for easy access to information about community and its services
- provided a fact sheet highlighting the economic benefits of skilled immigrants in terms of dollars earned and spent in the community

Retention Strategy
- build a technological solution to support immigrant professional networking including easy access to internet, professional groups, interpreter services and online courses for professional growth and development
- build on services for spousal participation into economic activity
- develop transportation solutions to make nearby towns and cities more accessible for recreation, ethnic food shopping
- promote diversity on important boards and planning committees
- engage settlement service agencies in building a network and referral system to attract skilled immigrants

Newcomer success a shared responsibility

"There are five key phases of primary and second migration into any community: (i) attracting, (ii) welcoming, (iii) settling, (iv) integrating and (v) retaining. While four of the phases (attracting, welcoming, settling and retaining) are the responsibility of the agencies serving immigrants in any community, newcomers and immigrants have always been successful in any community based on how the newcomer/immigrant have proactively and effectively integrated themselves and members of their families into the community. In other words, integration into any community is the sole responsibility of newcomer/immigrant. My humble advice for newcomers, based on personal experience having lived in United Kingdom, the United States and now Canada, is to ensure that they get involved within the community, be visible and network with members of the community. Getting involved in your community provides great value, benefits and returns not just to the community but also with helping newcomers advance their careers which will help retain them in that community".

Mark Egbedevi-Emmanuel, P.Eng, RGDP, CC, CL
Manager, Construction & Growth
Union Gas Ltd

7. Measuring Success

Measuring results is an essential component of your community's attraction and retention strategy.

Why measure results?

Measuring and analysing the impact of your activities is a key tool for effective decision-making. It can help tell you:

- what is working or not working

- whether goals are being met

- whether specific activities are having the expected or desired results

- what impact the plan has had

- what changes might improve the impact of the plan

Measuring results can also have broader impacts because it:

- helps maintain focus

- helps you respond effectively to unexpected developments

- supports transparent reporting on achievements, lessons learned and next steps

- enables you to recognize and report on success to stakeholders and the community

- enables you to share information with other communities who are just beginning an attraction and retention strategy

Collecting key data

Incorporating ways to measure success into the plan from the beginning makes it easier to systematically collect and analyze the information you need as it comes in.

Thinking about how to measure success as the strategy is being developed might also help you to clarify and refine goals and objectives, and might help people involved in the strategy to feel more engaged and accountable for its outcome.

Results indicators should help you measure the anticipated changes and/or outcomes of your attraction and retention strategy. They should be linked to the strategy's goals and objectives and help you answer the question 'were the goals met?'

They should also be related to the information you collected at the beginning of the planning process, since the original data established a baseline or benchmark. This will allow you to see what kind of change has occurred over time.

It is important to keep in mind that success indicators do not need to be set in stone. Goals and objectives may change over time.

Just as with your plan's objectives, good success indicators should SMART. They should:

- measure a result (e.g. increase in number of newcomers within certain employment sectors)

- involve a comparison (e.g. over time)

- be valid (directly related to a project activity or the work done and not attributable to other factors)

- be as reliable as possible

- be useful (e.g. tell you something that gives you relevant information)

- be agreed upon

Examples of useful success indicators would include the following measures.

Goal (what are you trying to achieve)?	What are you trying to measure (what is the indicator)?	How will you measure it (data sources)?	What is the success (the outcome)?
Better community collaboration	# of participating organizations in community planning	Count the # of organizations attending meetings	More organizations came together to exchange ideas
More community awareness	# of newspaper articles # of people attending public forums	Count the # of editorial comments in the local paper Count the # of people attending and expressing opinions at forums	
Increase employment of immigrants	Number of immigrants employed in the period of interest	Count the number of immigrants hired in the public and private sector	Attracted skilled workers in the community labour market
Increase investments by immigrants in the community	Number of businesses opened and $ invested	Count the number of newly registered businesses and the amount of $ invested	
Attract international students	Number of international students enrolled in the educational institutions	Count the number of enrolled students	Attracted international students who may decide to settle in the community

Newcomers bring passion to building community richness

"As I look back on the early days of our organization's transformation from traditional fundraiser to community builder, I am reminded of the words of Julie White, former Executive Director of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, spoken to a group of United Way colleagues in 1997. Julie noted that strong, vibrant communities are the result of strong connections with the outside world and a willingness and capacity to welcome and integrate newcomers. As newcomers arrive from other countries and make Chatham-Kent their new home, they bring with them – in addition to unique talents and skills – a passion for co-creating a community rich in cultural diversity."

Karen Kirkwood Whyte
Executive Director
United Way of Chatham-Kent

No cookie cutter approaches: Every community is unique

"We expanded the North Bay Newcomer Network to 28 institutions, agencies and government departments. We worked on English language training, we developed welcoming community initiatives and we became proactive with the media, using it to tell the immigrant story. We developed a working structure for the network, but at first we focused on quick results. Only later, with the aid of a Local Immigration Partnership grant from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, did we develop a vision, mission and values."

Don Curry
Executive Director
North Bay & District Multicultural Centre

APPENDICES

Appendices

I. Glossary

Adaptation: When newcomers gain more in-depth and specific knowledge about their new environment, reassess personal goals, develop social networks and become more independent.

Business Immigrant: A successful business person from another country who is seeking new opportunities and challenges in Canada. Business immigrants can be investors, entrepreneurs or self-employed. Business immigrants are expected to make a C$400,000 investment or to own and manage businesses in Canada.

Canadian Experience Class: A program for people who have recent Canadian work experience or have graduated and recently worked in Canada.

Human Capital: The stock of competencies, knowledge and skills embodied in people to contribute to the process of production and /or produce economic value. It is the attributes generated by investments in education, training and experience.

Integration: When newcomers have developed a sense of "connectedness" with their new community. They have attained a stable means of livelihood and are contributing members of society.

Knowledge-based Economy: An economy that largely relies on the skills, experience and knowledge of its workforce.

Local Immigration Partnership (LIP): As part of the Canada Ontario Immigration Agreement, the program provides a collaborative framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable local and regional solutions for the purpose of successfully integrating immigrants in Ontario.

Opportunities Ontario: An immigration program through which Ontario nominates individuals and their families for permanent resident status based on a pre-approved job offer in the province.

Primary Immigration: Immigration in which immigrants move to another city and area to settle directly from their country of origin.

Rural: Defining rural is complex. Agencies and organizations use statistical data or qualitative information to define rural in many different ways, depending on the purpose and focus of their initiative. In the broadest sense it includes everything in Ontario outside of the major urban areas (Ottawa, Hamilton, London, Kitchener/Waterloo, Windsor and the GTA).

Secondary Immigration: Immigration in which immigrants originally settle in one area and then move to another city or area to settle.

Skilled Immigrant: An immigrant who qualified and/or gained skills and experience in a trade or profession in their country of origin.

II.   Community Profiles

Three Ontario communities, each of which is responding to the issues of newcomer attraction and retention, provided invaluable input and examples for this toolkit.

Brockville/Leeds & Grenville

The city of Brockville is centrally located between Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto and is within minutes of two international bridges to northern New York State.

Based on the 2006 census, the municipality of Brockville has a population of 24,029. The population growth from 2001-2006 was 1.7% which is far below Ontario average of 6.6% and below the natural replacement rate of 2.1%. To respond to the decline in human capital, the municipality fosters a welcoming climate for immigration as a first step towards an aggressive immigration attraction and recruitment strategy.

Brockville's prime location provides businesses with excellent access to all services. The service sector represents 73% of total employment. The city also supports a diverse range of manufacturing industries and maintains two large industrial parks. Brockville's educational facilities are known for their high standards in a variety of subjects.
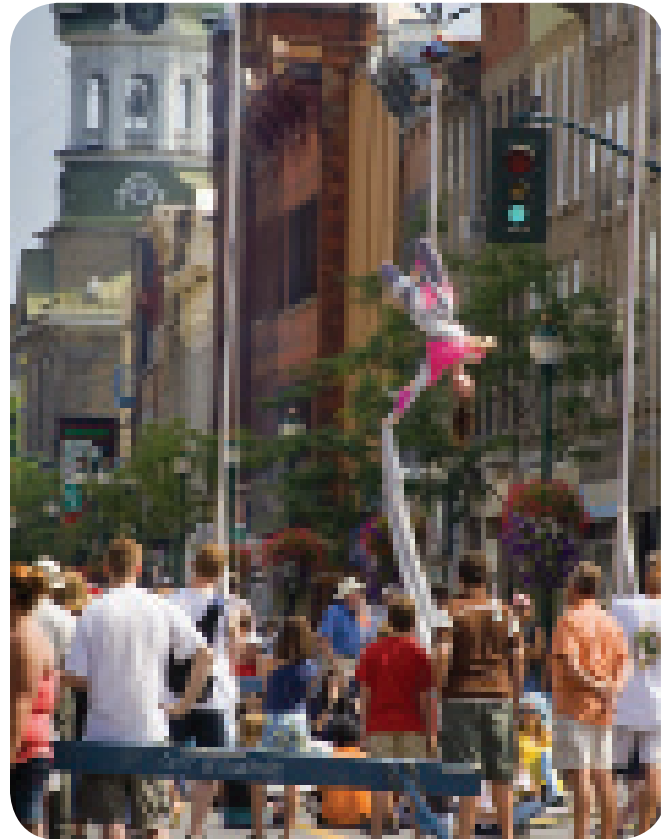
The City of Brockville and its outlying regions have shown an incredible growth in creative economy jobs. According to the Martin Prosperity Institute, Brockville and region has the second highest percentage of creative class workers and one of the highest percentages of creative occupations in the province. Rural areas in the region boast the highest percentage of creative industry/establishments.

Located on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, Brockville is situated within a designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and is known as the Gateway to the 1000 Islands. It is a World Health Organization-designated Safe Community and, as Ontario's oldest incorporated municipality, is also a heritage community.

For more information about Brockville, Leeds/Grenville visit, www.brockville.com

Chatham-Kent

Chatham-Kent is located in the heart of Southwestern Ontario with Lake Erie on the south and Lake St. Clair on the west. There are three major U.S. border crossings within an hour's drive.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has a population of 108,177. There are 950,000 Canadians living within a one-hour drive of the municipality. Population growth in Chatham-Kent has been stagnating in recent years, with a growth of 0.8% between 2001 and 2006.

The top five industries by employed population in Chatham-Kent are manufacturing (11,785), retail trade (6,625), health care and social assistance (5,355), accommodation and food services (3,535) and educational services (2,880). The emerging bio-economy and renewable energy generation facilities have potential to diversify the local economy.

Chatham-Kent has traditionally attracted immigrants who contributed to its agriculture economy and automotive industries. For example, 10,830 immigrants arrived between 1960 and 2006, with the highest number arriving in 1961.

Opportunities for newcomer attraction and retention exist within Chatham-Kent. Efforts have been made in the agriculture sector and in established immigrant communities. The strategic directions of some organizations include growing human capital in the community.

Chatham-Kent's rich agricultural and automotive ties provide tourism experiences like nowhere else. Classic car attractions give visitors a rare opportunity to view luxury and exclusivity. Chatham-Kent has a recreational resort for golfers, scuba divers and fans of extreme water sports, and is world-renowned with anglers and birders. The municipality is home to three historic Underground Railroads site and many festivals and events.

For more information about Chatham-Kent, visit www.chatham-kent.ca

North Bay

North Bay is located approximately 330 kilometres north of Toronto, and is situated between other major centres such as Ottawa, Timmins, and Sudbury.

The diversified economy includes manufacturing, public administration, trade and commerce, transportation, communication and service industries. Educational opportunities, from technical training to professional programs, are provided by a wide range of diploma courses at Canadore College and degree programs at Nipissing University.

With a current population of 53,966, North Bay experienced modest population growth of 2.3% from 2001 to 2006. In comparison with other northern Ontario communities of similar size, North Bay's population growth was slightly above average. However, it was significantly lower than the population growth for Ontario (6.6%).

There has been an 18% increase in immigrants residing in the city of North Bay since 2001. New immigrants, those who have moved to Canada since 2001, make up 0.5% of the entire North Bay population.

The City of North Bay places a great deal of importance on the attraction and retention of immigrants and has endeavoured to continue taking a leadership role by encouraging partnerships, maintaining its focus and seeking feedback from newcomers in the community.

North Bay is a welcoming community of energetic, high-spirited people. Festivals, parades and a wide range of special occasion activities blend with the natural attractions of the area: lush forests, spring-fed water and fresh clean air.

For more information about North Bay, visit www.city.north-bay.on.ca

III. Welcoming Newcomers

You may see your community as friendly and think that you are welcoming people by default, but building a welcoming community or a welcoming workplace requires proactive, contribution – not just niceness.

Welcoming communities

A number of 'best practices' have emerged related to attracting and retaining immigrants as an economic development strategy.

In Ontario, several communities are involved with the Welcoming Communities initiative (www.welcomingcommunities.ca), a collaborative multidisciplinary alliance of university and community partners designed to develop, test, and implement strategies to attract and include immigrants and minorities in small- and medium-sized cities across Ontario.

Findings have shown that the key characteristics of a welcoming community are:

- Respect for diversity: A community becomes more accepting as its population becomes more diverse. With concerted effort, the process can be accelerated.

- Public services: A community's public services – police, hospitals, recreational facilities – are able to address newcomers' needs. This may include making provision for people who speak neither English nor French.

- Education: Educational services and facilities – elementary, secondary, post-secondary and adult continuing education – are available and ready to accommodate the special needs of recent newcomers.

- Health and wellness: Newcomers need to feel confident that your community can provide adequate resources to keep them well and deal with illness and emergencies.

Inviting	Services	Employment
• Cultural diversity training for community, schools and workplaces. • Cultural competency policies for schools and the workplace • Resources, tools and information to assist the community	• Settlement information • Resources and services • Language training (for newcomers and the community) • Daycare and healthcare	• Access to employment and business information • Hiring policies that encourage equitable access to opportunities • Training to Canadian work standards

Achieving community objectives is often the cumulative result of thousands of individual actions. Consider encouraging people in your community to get involved personally with making newcomers welcome.

Inviting	Services	Employment
• Host a welcoming event • Volunteer to be a "newcomer host" in your community • Host a "block party" and invite a newcomer family	• Volunteer as an English-As-A-Second Language Tutor • Learn a new language • Donate money to or volunteer at an immigrant settlement agency • Offer your time as a Settlement Volunteer	• Support a local small business run by an Immigrant • Attend and/or host a Diversity workshop or a training on Inter-Cultural Awareness

Welcoming workplaces

Workplaces that welcome newcomers have a higher rate of new-hire retention, which leads to a number of direct benefits to the employer:

- lower recruitment costs for replacements

- lower training costs for replacements

- higher efficiencies and productivity in the workplace as a result of having trained, experienced workers.

Welcoming workplaces incorporate good HR practices.

Orientation and training

It is important to remember that not only are recent immigrants relatively new to living in Canada, they are new to the Canadian workplace and its culture.

Consider:

- Offering specific information and training that addresses cross-cultural differences in business norms. Provide examples of differences in punctuality and meeting customs, addressing authority figures and salutations.

- Developing an internal mentoring program, perhaps with a member of the newcomer's own culture. This can help accelerate the newcomer's orientation and also is a good way for existing staff to gain cross-cultural competencies.

- Referring to the Mentoring Partnership (www.thementoringpartnership.com) for additional resources regarding mentoring programs.

Setting expectations

A new work environment requires some getting used to, regardless of where the individual is from. Setting expectations is a good way to help newcomers become familiar with job responsibilities, duties, office culture and performance monitoring.

Accommodating needs

Accommodation can enhance employee satisfaction, success on the job and ultimately success for the organization as a whole.

Tips to enhance accommodation:

- *Dietary:* Provide alternatives for individuals whose religion or other imperative restricts them from eating specific foods.

- *Religious:* Designate a private place at the workplace for personal activities, such as prayer.

- *Training:* Organize cross cultural training opportunities either formally through seminars and workshops or more informally through culturally focused social events.

- *Networking:* Host a diversity networking event to provide an opportunity for sharing of personal experiences, challenges and successes.

Creating an inclusive work environment

- Value cultural diversity through posters, social events and newsletters.

- Create a diversity calendar and recognize multi-faith and multi-cultural dates.

- Reward behaviour that promotes diversity.

Tips for employers

The workplace is an environment of supervision, collaboration and evaluation. Peoples' expectations in these situations are shaped by their culture. Being mindful of these cultural differences can help minimize misunderstandings and miscommunications.

Consider the following scenarios and note the different expectations based on cultural influences:

Workplace Scenario	Possible Canadian Expectation	Possible Newcomer Expectation
Meetings	A prompt start and agenda-oriented discussion	Many cultures emphasize relationships over tasks. Greetings come first in many cultures. In some cultures it is proper to arrive early and be ready to get down to work at the designated start time. In others, it is proper to arrive at the appointed time, and in other cultures it is only considered proper to arrive after the appointed time.
Group decision-making	Everyone has a say and decisions are made by majority and/or consensus.	In many cultures, authority is not questioned. Input may have to be directly requested.
Team conflict	Conflict is handled by those who are conflicting (egalitarian).	In many cultures, it is customary for supervisors to be asked to intervene (hierarchal).
Supervising and being supervised	Supervisor delegates and expects staff to take initiative.	In many cultures, staff expect clear instructions and directions from supervisors. As managers, some newcomers may be uncomfortable delegating to staff.
Performance evaluation	Managers often provide a combination of positive and negative feedback and staff are expected to provide feedback as well.	In many cultures, it is considered inappropriate to challenge authority. Critical feedback from staff may need to be encouraged.
Promotions	Staff may let managers know when they are working toward a promotion and demonstrate abilities.	In many cultures, self- promotion may be considered inappropriate. Good work is expected to be sufficient in demonstrating intent for a promotion.

Bridging cultural gaps

Culture shapes the way individuals communicate and view the world.

Cultural competency is the ability to work effectively across cultures. For individuals, it is an approach to learning, communicating and working respectfully with people different from themselves. Consider the following ways culture may influence approaches and ideas.

Communication styles	Language usage: Across cultures, some words and phrases are used in different ways. For example, even in countries that share the English language, the meaning of "yes" varies from "maybe, I'll consider it" to "definitely so," with many shades in between. Non-verbal communication: Body language varies greatly from person to person and often results in miscommunication. Non- verbal communication varies greatly between cultures and countries.
Attitudes toward conflict	Some cultures view conflict as a positive thing, while others view it as something to be avoided.
Approaches to completing tasks	When it comes to working together, cultures differ with respect to the importance placed on establishing relationships early on in the collaboration. Some value developing relationships at the beginning, while others focus on the task at hand and let relationships develop as they work.
Decision making	The roles individuals play in decision-making vary widely from culture to culture. Some cultures prefer consensus, while others prefer majority.
Attitudes toward disclosure	In some cultures, it is not appropriate to be frank about emotions, about the reasons behind a conflict or a misunderstanding, or about personal information.

IV. Relevant Community Economic Assessment Tools

Ontario

R E D D I

Rural Economic Development Data & Intelligence
Données et renseignements sur le développement économique rural

English   Français

Ontario
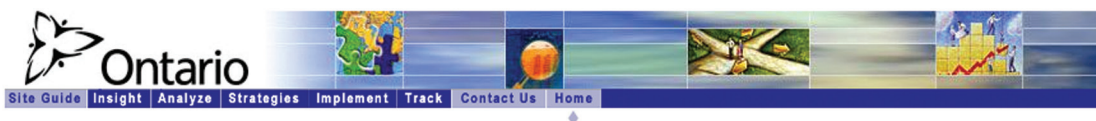This site is maintained by the Government of Ontario, Canada.
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Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E)

BR+E

Newcomer Recruitment Questionnaire for Business

This is a workforce development tool that can help companies begin thinking about immigrant recruitment as part of their human resource strategy.

It has been drawn from the award-winning Ontario Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Program. BR+E works to improve the competitiveness of local businesses by identifying and addressing their needs and concerns and building on business development opportunities. For more information, go to: www.reddi.gov.on.ca/bre.htm

B R + E

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

Questions:

1. Rank the following statement on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means you strongly disagree and 5 means you strongly agree with the statement:

Issues related to human resources are a major challenge for my company.

   1   2   3   4   5

2. On a scale of 1-5, rank the skill profile of your company's workforce, where 1 indicates that the majority of the jobs are relatively low skilled, requiring very little in the way of specialized training or credentials, and 5 means that the majority of the jobs are highly skilled, requiring significant specialized training and credentials.

   1   2   3   4   5

3. Does your organization have a formal succession plan in place for skilled/key positions?

   a.   Yes
   b.   No
   c.   N/A

4. How do you currently recruit new employees? Check all that apply.

   a.   Online job posting
   b.   Through your personal network
   c.   Local media advertising
   d.   Referrals from your current employees
   e.   Through a professional recruitment firm
   f.   Cold calls from prospective employees
   g.   Other…please specify_____

5. What percentage of your work force would you consider to be recent newcomers to your community (recent = within three years)?

   a. Zero…go to Question 8
   b. Less than 10%
   c. 10-25%
   d. 25-50%
   e. More than 50%

6. What percentage of your workforce would you consider to be recent immigrants (recent = within three years) to Canada? Note that these individuals might well have lived and/or worked in other Canadian centres prior to becoming an employee with your firm.

   a. Zero…go to Question 8
   b. Less than 10%
   c. 10-25%
   d. 25-50%
   e. More than 50%

7. How did the recent immigrants find out about employment opportunities with your company? (Skip this question if the answer to Q6 is zero)

   a. Online job posting
   b. Through your personal network
   c. Local media advertising
   d. Referrals from your current employees
   e. Through a professional recruitment firm
   f. Cold calls from prospective employees
   g. Other…please specify

8. Do you offer new employees from outside the area any assistance with relocation or integration into the community?

   a. Often
   b. Sometime
   c. Rarely
   d. N/A

9. Are you aware of immigrant settlement services in your region?

   a. Yes
   b. No

10. Would you be interested in hiring people with foreign credentials, if suitable candidates were available?

   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Uncertain

11. Can you identify any obstacles/challenges to hiring immigrants in your community?

12. If you are having difficulties in finding (or retaining) skilled work force what can the municipality do to assist you?

13. What advantages, if any, might you expect in hiring immigrants?

14. Do you use interns as a component of your human resource strategy? (An intern would be identified as an employee whose wage/allowance is subsidized by some form of provincial or federal program for specific terms and duration. Typically, an intern would be a youth (under the age of 30) or a new internationally trained professional.

    a.   Yes
    b.   No

15. How familiar are you with the financial incentives from organizations that are available to engage interns?

    a.   Very familiar
    b.   Somewhat familiar
    c.   Not at all familiar
    d.   Not applicable

16. Would you be interested in hiring internationally trained interns in your business? (Internationally Trained interns are new highly educated immigrants who have international work experience outside Canada)

    a.   Yes
    b.   Need more information
    c.   No

17. On a scale of 1-5, where 1 means poorly and 5 means ideally, how well positioned is your community to attract immigrant investors? Note that immigrant investors are individuals who are committed to making significant financial investments in Canada as part of their requirements to attain Landed Immigrant Status. These individuals typically invest in existing businesses, purchase businesses, or start new ventures.

    1   2   3   4   5

18. What are the most significant challenges an immigrant investor would face in investing in your community?

V. Additional Resources

FEDERAL RESOURCES

Website of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- www.cic.gc.ca
- www.workingincanada.gc.ca

Direction Canada offers information and services for non-Canadians and newcomers
- www.directioncanada.gc.ca

Newcomer Services in Your Area provides information regarding community services for newcomers (e.g. language training, help with everyday tasks, finding a job, helping newcomers adjust to life in Canada) and government services (e.g. driver's license)
- servicesfornewcomers.cic.gc.ca

Community Profile is a Statistics Canada data base that provides information based on census data analysis. Data includes demographics, labour force, education and other several indicators at the CD and CSD.
- www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E

The Community Information Database (CID) is a free internet-based resource developed to provide communities, researchers, and governments with access to consistent and reliable socio-economic and demographic data and information for all communities across Canada
- www.cid-bdc.ca/

Cultural Profiles is a Federal project that provides funding to recruit Canadian volunteer hosts and match them with new immigrants to Canada.
- www.cp-pc.ca

Integration-Net is a communications, information and research tool to support the work of the Canadian settlement community
- integration-net.ca/english/index.cfm

Hire Immigrants is a website that assists hiring decision makers and business leaders to source, select, develop and welcome skilled immigrants as creative contributors to your workforce.
- www.hireimmigrants.ca

Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance
- www.cissa-acsei.ca

Metropolis Project provides information on best practices and cutting edge research in promoting diversity; periodically organize workshops and conferences
- International Metropolis: international.metropolis.net
- National Metropolis: canada.metropolis.net

PROVINCIAL RESOURCES

Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
- www.citizenship.gov.on.ca

Ontario Immigration Portal is a gateway of links to other websites which provide information and resources for newcomers to Ontario.
- www.ontarioimmigration.ca
- www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/living/OI_HOW_LIVE_CITIES.html
- www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/working/OI_WORK_EMPLOYERS.html
- www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/pnp/index.htm

Career Bridge is an organization that provides an opportunity for employers to gain access to quality, diverse talent through three paid internship programs and International Trained Individuals to build Canadian experience
- www.careerbridge.ca

Settlement.org provides information for immigrants to help them settle in Ontario
- www.Settlement.org

Starting a Farm in Ontario provides Business Information for New Farmers
- www.ontario.ca/NewFarmer

The Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition (OHCC) has developed a tool kit to assist community organizations in becoming more equitable and diverse
- www.healthycommunties.on.ca/projects/diversityandinclusion

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- www.ocasi.org

Leeds and Grenville Immigration Portal
- www.newcomersinfo.ca

Chatham-Kent Immigration Portal
- http://portal.chatham-kent.ca/newcomers

North Bay Immigration Portal
- www.northbayimmigration.ca

Northwestern Ontario Immigration Portal
- www.immigrationnorthwesternontario.ca