ST. THOMAS • ELGIN

Local Immigration Partnership

Building Welcoming, Caring, and Inclusive Communities

Settlement Strategy

WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD WELCOMING, CARING, AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES IN ST. THOMAS AND ELGIN

Funded by: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Financé par : Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

Acknowledgement

The St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership Council (ST-ELIP) acknowledges the vision of the governments of Canada and Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, for the creation of the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) across Ontario.

In 2005, Ontario signed the first Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) and as a recognition that municipalities have a crucial role to play in offering newcomers the necessary support and services to successfully integrate, the Municipal Immigration Committee (MIC) was established under COIA to explore municipal interest in immigration. The first Local Immigration Partnerships were established in 2008. The LIPs present an opportunity to connect with each other, build an understanding that raises our awareness, promotes innovation in human, social, political and economic development in our community. LIPs are also instrumental in our collective and proactive plan to offer a welcoming, caring and inclusive community to those who choose to join our beautiful County.

We also recognize the social capital behind the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Strategy, which comes from a large number of participants from different walks of life, cultural backgrounds, and professions from multiple sectors in our community. These include more than 250 participants from different levels of governments, namely federal, provincial and municipal, newcomers, faith leaders, fire chiefs, employers, and service providers in the settlement, social, health and education fields.

We are grateful to individual participants and organizations who offered their commitment, time, and expertise that enriched the ST-ELIP consultations and planning meetings. Your contribution became tangible with the creation of the County-wide, innovative Settlement Strategy that is described in this report.

This acknowledgement piece would not be complete, without the gratefulness we want to extend to our colleagues of other LIPs throughout Ontario, especially the LIP members of the South Western Ontario Local Immigration Partnership network (SWOLIP) who offered support and shared practical ideas with us as well as the Welcoming Communities Initiatives, which has been a valuable source of resources and information.

Finally, the ST-ELIP Council appreciates the generous financial contribution of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which made this project possible.

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The St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership Settlement Strategy was funded by:

The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada

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Elgin Business Resource Centre

Elgin County Economic Development

Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board

Employment Services Elgin

Fanshawe College

Mennonite Community Services

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union

St. Thomas and District Chamber of Commerce

St. Thomas Economic Development

The City of St. Thomas

The Township of Malahide

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin

Preface

Dear St. Thomas and Elgin County community member,

The St. Thomas–Elgin Local Immigration Partnership (ST-ELIP) began this project in February 28, 2011 to achieve the following: (1) establish a multi-sectoral council of stakeholders to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers to St. Thomas and the County of Elgin, (2) enhance understanding of non-settlement service providers and the community at large of newcomer's challenges, needs and services, (3) facilitate a community consultation and a planning process that would produce a practical and achievable Local Immigration Strategy to improve St. Thomas and Elgin's capacity to attract, settle and successfully integrate immigrants into our community and promote their social, economic, cultural, and civic engagement.

Our partnership Council comprised of 15 members who represent a wide spectrum of sectors feel very proud to have achieved thus far the following deliverables:

- Establish terms of reference
- Develop a Settlement Strategy
- Develop an annual action plan to implement Settlement Strategy

Now, on behalf of all ST-ELIP Council partners, we are pleased to present the fruits of our labour of the past 12 months. This is the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Strategy. We have made extraordinary attempts to include as much feedback as we received from so many different sources, and made sure to have the vision and the guiding principles in mind at all times. We also present the community planning process of the first phase that guided this project from inception to completion. We want to emphasize the importance of collaborative leadership that will sustain its successful implementation.

In looking for new directions and innovative approaches that would feed the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Settlement Strategy, participants from very different backgrounds welcomed the unique opportunity to meet and discuss issues related to the immigration experience for the first time in their lives. In some cases, participants who had never had an opportunity to meet and talk to each other found themselves journeying from indifference, hesitation and fear to excitement and a desire to continue talking even after the time the consultation meeting had ended.

The St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Settlement Strategy has been enriched by participants who worked together to incorporate the diverse perspectives of individual immigrants, service providers from the settlement, social, health, and education sectors, employers, government officials, and civic groups.

Their voices were instrumental in the creation of the Settlement Strategy. The sharing of their stories led to the development of what we hope are meaningful priorities that when implemented will contribute to build welcoming, caring and inclusive communities where everyone matters.

In section 1.0.0 of the Settlement Strategy we provide a snapshot of the region, putting emphasis on the socioeconomic indicators, such as education, employment and housing; demographic trends such as population aging, out migration of youth and low birth rate. We also provide a profile of the immigrants and newcomers in St. Thomas and Elgin and the support services offered.

The goal of the ST-ELIP is to build on the existing experiences and wisdom reflected in so many examples of community collaboration. Please refer to Appendix A to read a news clip about initiative. (St. Thomas Elgin March 3, 2010 "Developing a Local Work Force"). As acknowledged in the Settlement Strategy, St. Thomas-Elgin has a long tradition to develop partnerships to respond to community needs. Although we highlight the existing capacity for collaboration in the region, the exciting challenge then, was to bring the issue of the immigrant experience to be part of these discussions.

In section 2.0.0 we present a subsection on the origins, vision and principles of ST-ELIP as well as the purpose of the project, the framework we used to carry out our work has always been guided by the principles, of inclusivity, collaboration, empowerment and sustainability.

It was these principles that guided the work of the STELIP Council during the planning phase, the coming together and building a common understanding described in section 2.2.0 of the Settlement Strategy.
In section 3.0.0 we describe in more detail the information gathering process, the methodology, the tools used, and the strategies for engaging the community.

In section 5.0.0 we outline the priorities set by the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Settlement Strategy, the challenges they attempt to address and the shared goals that inform them.

We hope that this Settlement Strategy contributes to provide direction for the future, because it builds on the St. Thomas-Elgin's history and has as its foundation the local expertise, unique assets, qualities and strengths in order to address present challenges and needs in an innovative and proactive way.

Sincerely yours,

Marla Champion
Executive Director

Shelley Harris
Manager Education and Employment

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List of Abbreviations

ASPIRE	Arbeit Schule in Rural Elgin
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CMHC	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
COIA	Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement
ELD	English Literacy Development
ELL	English Language Learner
ESL	English ad a Second Language
FARMS	Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services
FESPA	Family Education and Support Project
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
HRDC	Human Resources and Development Canada
LEARN	Literacy Enrichment Academic Readiness for Newcomers
LIP	Local Immigration Partnership
MCI	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
MIC	Municipal Immigration Committee
NOS	National Occupational Standard
OHIP	Ontario Health Insurance Plan
OW	Ontario Works
SJS	Summer Jobs Services
SME	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
SPO	Service Provider Organization
ST-ELIP	St. Thomas Elgin Local Immigration Partnership
SWOLIP	South Western Ontario Local Immigration Partnership
TVDSB	Thames Valley District School Board

Abbreviations for Graphs

Ayl	Aylmer
Bay	Bayham
CA	Canada
C.E.	Central Elgin
DD	Dutton/Dunwich
El/St.T	Elgin including St. Thomas
El/St.T imm	Immigrants in Elgin including St. Thomas
El/St.T imm '01	Immigrants in from 2001 Elgin including St. Thomas
Mal	Malahide
ON	Ontario
St.T	St. Thomas
SW	Southwold
W.E.	West Elgin

Snapshot of Demographics of Elgin County and St. Thomas in 2006/2011

Derived from 2006 Census and Workforce Data

Population

- In 2011 there were 87,461 people living in the region of Elgin County and St. Thomas with 37,905 in St. Thomas
- In 2006 there were 85,351 people living in the region of Elgin County and St. Thomas with 36,110 in St. Thomas
- The population has grown 4.6% in the County and 8.4% in St. Thomas between 2001 and 2006 and 2.5% in the County and 5.0% in St. Thomas between 2006 and 2011
- The age distribution has also changed since 2001. The largest growth was seen in those aged 55 to 64. Declines were seen in the age 5 to 14 and 25 to 44 populations.

Population Characteristics

- 86% of residents in Elgin County and 88% in St. Thomas are Canadian born.
- 2,020 (2%) of people in Elgin County and 1,310 (3%) in St. Thomas are visible minorities.
- 1% of the population of Elgin County has no knowledge of English or French

Labour Force

- 56.7% of all workers in Elgin are employed by Small and Medium sized enterprises.
- Participation rates in 2006: St. Thomas 66.1%, Elgin County 67.9%; however, rates have been decreasing since 2007 and was 67% in Elgin County in 2010.
- Employment rates in 2006: in St. Thomas 61.9%, Elgin County 65.6%, the employment rate dropped to 59.6% in Elgin County in 2010
- Unemployment rates in 2006: St. Thomas 6.3%, Elgin County 5.5%, in 2010 the unemployment rate in Elgin County was 11.1%, an improvement on the 13% in 2009.

Household and Family Characteristics

- There are 24,675 families in Elgin County and 10,450 families in St. Thomas.
- On average there are 3 people per family.

Education and Income

- On average people earned $27,982 in St. Thomas and $27, 182 in Elgin County in 2005.
- 6.2% of people in Elgin County are considered below the low income cut-off compared to 11.1% in Ontario

1.0.0. Elgin County and St. Thomas Community Profile

Elgin County is composed of six Municipalities and Townships, and one city: Bayham, Malahide, The city of Aylmer, Central Elgin, Southwold, Dutton/Dunwich, and West Elgin as seen in the Map of Elgin (Figure 1). St. Thomas is not considered part of Elgin County for this analysis the statistics will be presented together. Elgin County is bordered on the South by Lake Erie with a 120 km coastline. Covering a span of 1880 km^2 with a population of 85,350 (2006 census data), Elgin County is considered a rural community with a population density of 45 persons/km^2 (26.7 persons/km^2, not including St. Thomas).

Figure 1 - Map of Elgin County (Elgin County, 2011)

1.1.0. Socio Economic Indicators

In order to understand the needs of a community it is important to understand the basics of their way of life. Socio Economic indicators are presented to give a general overview of the daily life of an individual who lives in Elgin County and St. Thomas. Most statistics have been obtained from the 2006 Census. The first statistics that will be presented are social statistics which include population and age, education, and housing. Economic statistics will follow with statistics on industry, occupation, labour market, and income. The information that is presented from the census will be used to supplement the information that was gathered through the community engagement activities.

1.1.1. Demographic Trends

Demographic data is used to understand the composition of a population, to understand the ratio between females and males, old and young, dependent and productive. Demographic data can be used to help understand the needs of a community allowing for planning and prevention to occur.

There are more females in the region, at 52% of the population and males comprising 48% of the population. The median age is 39.1, slightly lower than the province average and is reflective of the regional industries.

Age Pyramids

In general the age pyramids of Elgin County (Figure 2) show populations that are decreasing with, birth rates lower in recent years than in previous; this is particularly evident in Dutton/Dunwich (Figure 7), Southwold (Figure 10), Central Elgin (Figure 9) and West Elgin (Figure 8). This is supported with the 2011 Census Statistics as seen in Table 1, Southwold and West Elgin both showed population declines, Central Elgin and Dutton/Dunwich showed minimal growth while Bayham, Malahide, and St. Thomas showed significant Growth. Only Aylmer has an age pyramid with an increasing birthrate, although their birth rates vary greatly from year to year. One important characteristic that can be seen across Elgin, including St. Thomas, is the large out-migration of the population from the mid 20's to mid 30's. The absence of this age group is alarming because of the need to enforce the economically active population. If the population in the age range do not return, and if the next generations reach this age also leave the area, there will be large deficits in the workforce and tax base. Finally, it is also important to mention that Bayham (Figure 8) has a very young population with the oldest member of the community only 91 years of age. This can indicate that the community is just establishing, or that the life expectancy in this region is lower than the other municipalities across the County.

POPULATION CHANGES 2006 - 2011										
Canada	Ontario	Elgin inc. St. Thomas	Bayham	Malahide	Aylmer	Central Elgin	St. Thomas	Southwold	Dutton/ Dunwich	West Elgin
5.9	5.7	2.5	3.9	3.6	1.2	0.2	5	-4.9	1.4	-3.6

Table 1 - Percent Population Change 2006-2011 (Statistics Canada, Census 2011)

Figure 2 - Elgin County Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

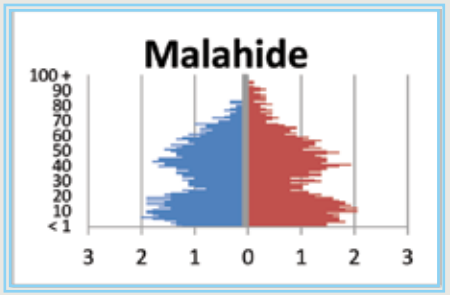

Figure 5 - Malahide Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

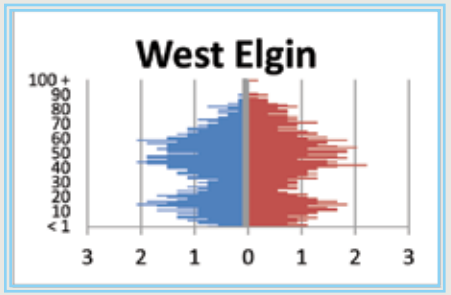

Figure 8 - West Elgin Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

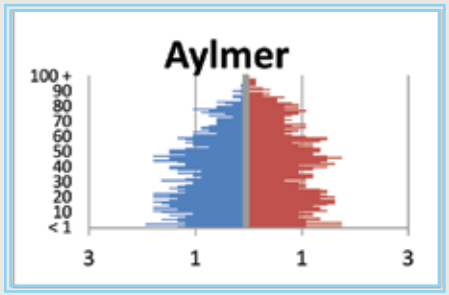

Figure 3 - Aylmer Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

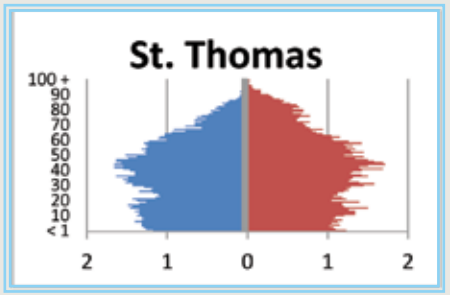

Figure 6 - St. Thomas Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

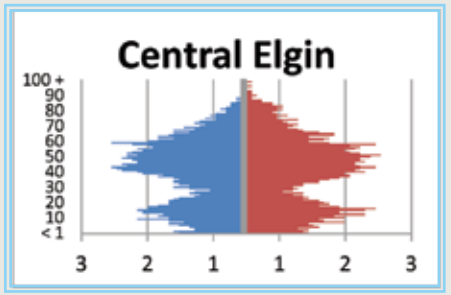

Figure 9 - Central Elgin Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

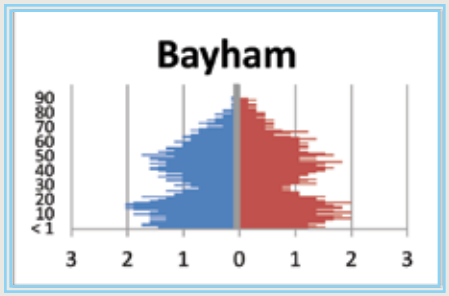

Figure 4 - Bayham Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

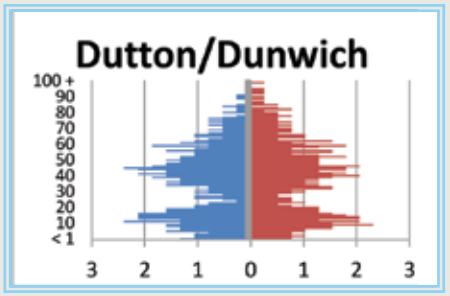

Figure 7 - Dutton/Dunwich Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

Figure 10 - Southwold Age Pyramid
(Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

% Females % Males

Median Age

The median age helps represent the age pyramids in a quick conclusive manner. As median age increases the population is considered to be aging. If there is a low birthrate the median age will be older. Similarly as life expectancy increases so will median age. A young median age is desired because it indicates a young and vital workforce and women at child bearing age, naturally increasing the population. Compared to Canada and Ontario, Elgin County in general is considered young; however, Central Elgin and West Elgin both have higher median ages while Bayham, Malahide, and Aylmer are significantly younger than Canada and Ontario in general (Table 2). The polarity seen between the East and West in terms of median age reveals difference in the compositions of the populations.

MEDIAN AGE	
Canada	39.5
Ontario	39.0
Elgin inc. St. Thomas	38.1
Bayham	34.7
Malahide	34.1
Aylmer	38.2
Central Elgin	42.5
St. Thomas	38.8
Southwold	39.9
Dutton/Dunwich	40.0
West Elgin	42.9

Table 2 - Median Age 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

Life Expectancy

The general health of an area is measured by the life expectancy. This statistics predicts the life span of individuals who are born that year and is calculated based on the health of the population. Based in the Elgin-St. Thomas Health Unit in The Health Profile, October 2011, the life expectancy for St. Thomas-Elgin is 78.9, lower than the Ontario 81 years and the Canadian 80.7 years. This variance indicates that the people living in Elgin County are less healthy than the Canadian population in general.

1.1.2. Education

Education is a social statistic that helps identify the types of industry that can exist and thrive within a community. Currently only Central Elgin (21.3%) has higher levels of education than Canada (23.8%) and Ontario (22.2%), while Bayham (46.6%) has over 20% higher rates of population with no education, with rates in Aylmer (40.1%) and Malahide (39.6%) also very high. The rate of no formal education for newcomers is also very high, with rates of 43.6% both for all immigrants in St. Thomas and Elgin, and

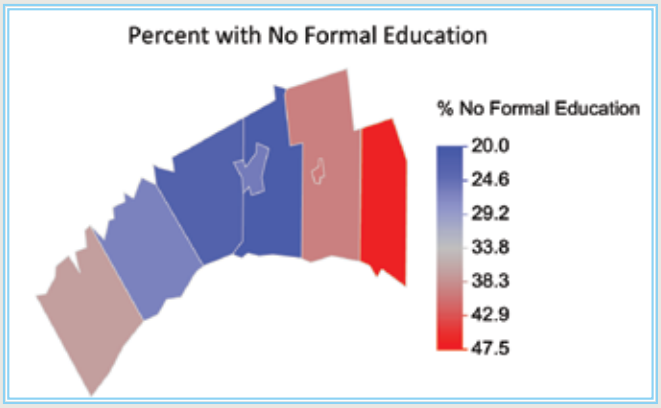

Figure 11 - Map of Population with no Formal Education (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

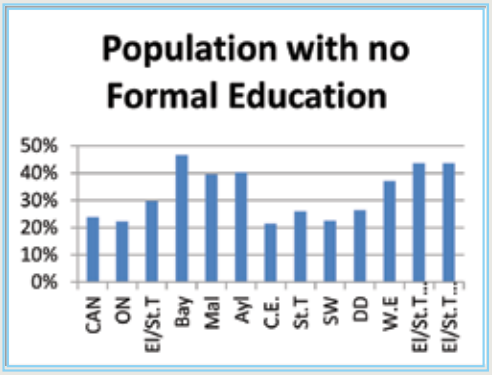

Figure 12 - Population with no Formal Education (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

for the immigrants who came to Canada between 2001-2006 (Figure 12). The geographical differences of educational attainment can be seen in Figure 11. There is a strong tendency to education in the center of the County with lower education rates on the outside municipalities.

Figure 13 shows the types of education the educated population holds, it is important to note that the County on average have 7% higher rates of having only a high school degree at 40.8%, 5% higher rates for obtaining college certificates or apprenticeships at 43.6%, and 15% lower rates of obtaining a university degree at 15.6%. While the total immigrant population is similar to the County as a whole, the population of immigrants who migrated to Elgin between 2001-2006 are much more likely to have University degrees (43.2%) indicating the increase in skills with newer migrants. The education levels of the immigrants suggest that the majority of the immigrants in the county fall into the family or refugee class of immigrants and not in the

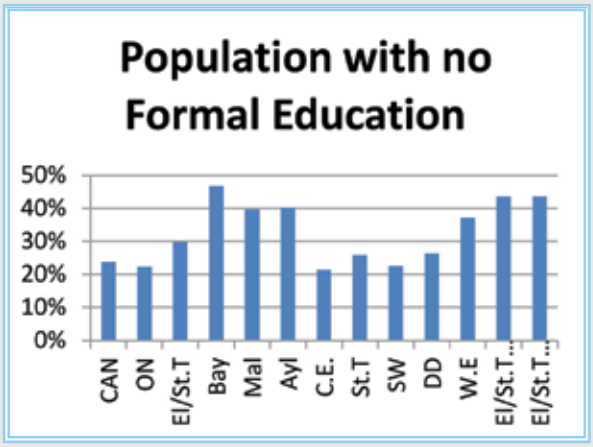

Figure 13 - Education Levels of Educated Population (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.1.3. Housing

When considering housing and housing standard in a region, the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) allocates acceptable housing standards. Acceptable housing is defined as housing that is adequate in condition and does not require major repairs, suitable in size for the occupants and affordable. Housing that does not meet at least one of these standards is not considered acceptable.

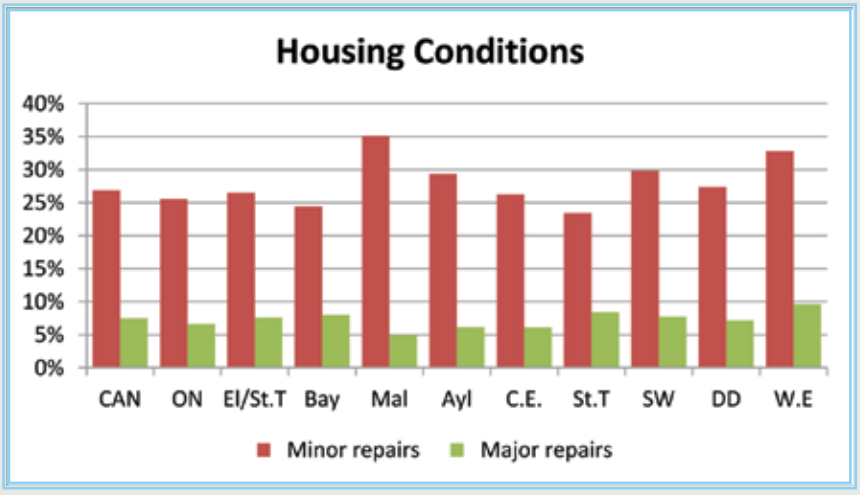

Figure 14 - Housing conditions (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

Adequate Conditions

Housing that requires major repairs inhibits the livelihood of the occupants. Adequate housing is based on the resident's opinion of need for major repairs. The housing repairs in Elgin County is similar to the average in Canada, however it should be mentioned that West Elgin has over 2% more houses that require major repairs, and Malahide is reporting 2.5% lower than the Canadian average (Figure 14).

Suitable Size

Suitable housing is housing that has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements. Enough bedrooms based on NOS requirements means one bedroom for each cohabiting adult couple; unattached household member 18 years of age and over; same-sex pair of children under age 18; and additional boy or girl in the family, unless there are two opposite sex children under 5 years of age, in which case they are expected to share a bedroom. A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e. a unit with no bedroom). In general Elgin County is reporting that there are no occupancy issues, apart from ten instances in which four people are living in a one bedroom dwelling, and three people are living in a one room dwelling.

Housing Affordability

In general the housing across Elgin County can be considered affordable with 78% of the population living in dwellings that cost less than 30% of their before taxable income (Figure 15). West Elgin is the only municipality that has higher prevalence than Canada of housing above the 30% income level; however, this figure is still below the Ontario average. It would be ideal for all housing to fall into the affordable housing level by diversifying the available housing in the region to help accommodate residents across the economic scale. Figure 16 shows the geographical distribution of the percent of housing costing over 30% of income.

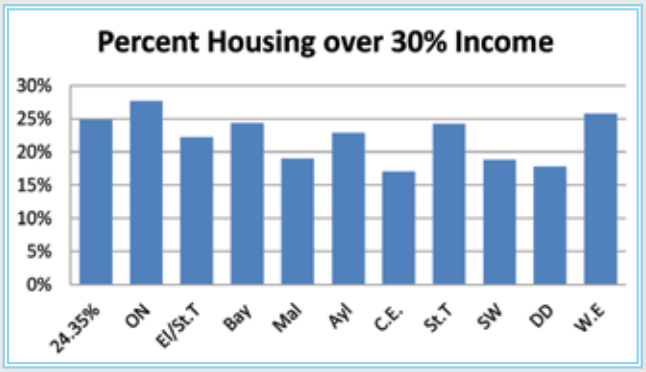

Figure 15 - Percent Housing Costing over 30% Income (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

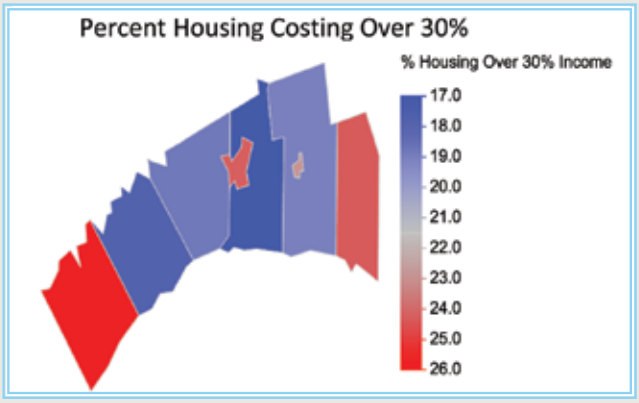

Figure 16 - Map of Percent Housing over 30% Income (Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

Along with understanding the amount of income St. Thomas and Elgin County residents are spending on housing, it is important to understand the distribution of property costs. In the County, average residential prices were $208,076. with varied tax rates across the County. Aylmer has the highest rate of 2.29% and Southwold has the lowest rate 1.13% (Table 3). These rates are important to consider affordability of a home.

RESIDENTIAL TAX RATES 2011

Bayham	Aylmer	Malahide	St. Thomas	Central Elgin	Southwold	Dutton	West Elgin
1.45%	2.29%	1.54%	1.51%	1.62%	1.13%	2.08%	1.46%

Table 3 - Residential Tax Rates 2011

1.1.4. Economic Activity

The center economic driving force of Elgin County is St. Thomas. While the city is politically independent of the County, the city itself is located within the Central Elgin Municipality and is a mere 35 km2. It is, however, home to 42% of the county's population (36,110 people in 2006). Manufacturing is this city's main industry attributing to 32% of the employment. The city's motto Strength through Progress has been embraced by the Economic Development Corporation's Be Revolutionary Campaign. The campaign is working to attract more manufacturing opportunities to the region, boasting the ability to be faster, stronger, better than the competition. The city is the home of a Fanshawe College campus with Mechanical and Electrical Technician programs as well as Welding and CNC courses that will work to strengthen the skilled workforce of the County. However, there will be a need to attract migration into the region to help support the demand of workers. Although St. Thomas experienced an 8.6% growth rate between 2001 and 2006, it grew only by 5% between 2006 and 2011 (Table 1), so there is a need to attract and retain skilled workers in the community.

The region's history is rooted in railway activity and agriculture; the County enjoys one of the longest growing seasons in the nation and as a result continues its tradition of agriculture (8% of industries). Figure 17 shows the industries of Elgin County and St. Thomas with, the manufacturing sector as the main industry of this region, at 24%. During the difficult economic times in Elgin County and St. Thomas many of the large factories have closed in the last few years resulting in a shift in the industries.

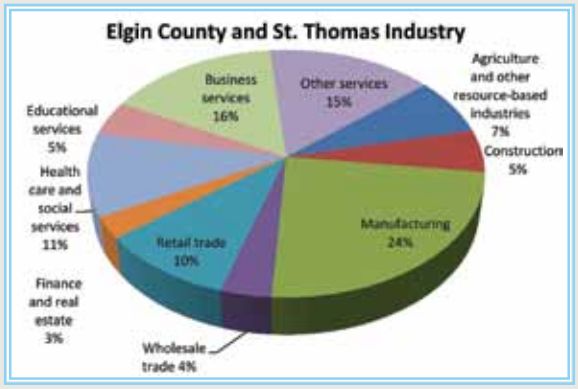

Figure 17 - Industries in Elgin County and St. Thomas (Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

Although Health Care and Social Services is not a main industry in the region, the proportion of people working in this industry is higher than that allocated in Ontario.

In addition to the major industries in Elgin and St. Thomas the majority of the occupations can be seen in Figure 18 sales and services (21%) are the highest, followed by trades (20%), and occupations in processing, manufacturing and utilities (15%). This indicates an emphasis on strong skilled labour force. Although there is a large emphasis on manufacturing

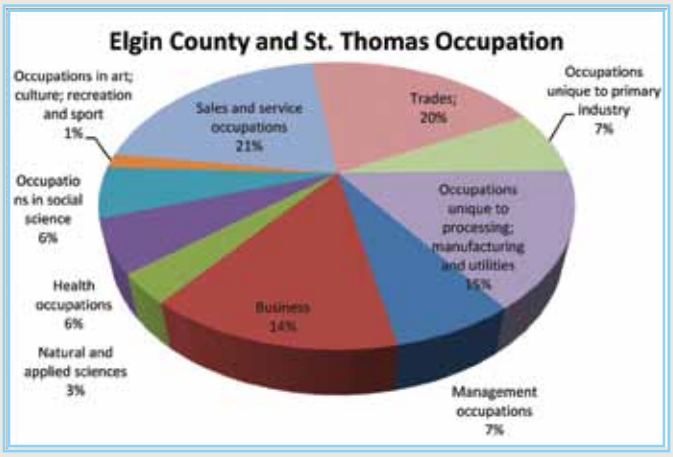

Figure 18 - Occupations in Elgin County and St. Thomas (Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

there is also a large share of Elgin County's workforce employed through Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME). The following chart shows the SME employment in June 2009:

In St. Thomas businesses with up to 99 employees represents approximately 56.7% of workers or 4947 businesses (Table 4). The regions motto Progressive by Nature is embodied in the ever changing climate and its ability to adapt to the times.

ELGIN SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE ENTERPRISES						
Number of Businesses with ...						
0	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 19	20 to 49	50 to 99	Total SMEs
2828	1110	492	271	184	62	4947

Table 4 - Elgin County Small and Medium Size Enterprises (TOP Report, The Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford Local Training Board, 2010)

1.1.5. Labour Market

In 2006 the outlook of St. Thomas and Elgin was very good. Elgin County had participation and employment rates above Ontario, and a much lower unemployment rate. St. Thomas had numbers very similar to the Ontario average as seen in Table 5. However, since the economic crisis, the figures have changed and Elgin, as of November 2011, has an unemployment rate of 11.1%, much higher than Ontario's unemployment rate of 7.4%

LABOUR FORCE ACTIVITY 2006			
	Ontario	Elgin	St Thomas
Participation rate	67.1	67.9	66.1
Employment rate	62.8	64.2	61.9
Unemployment rate	6.4	5.5	6.3

Table 5 - Labour Force Activity 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

While the unemployment rate for St. Thomas and Elgin County is an important measure, the labour force activity can be further investigated.

Individuals who are over the age of 15 can enter the labour force but may not necessarily do so. They are considered "not in the labour force." This can be due to a multitude of factors including, educational attainment, retirement, or stay at home parenting (Figure 19).

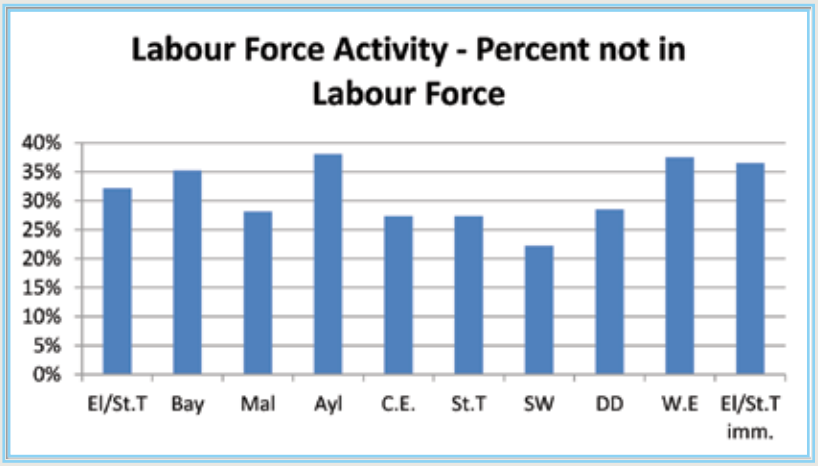

Figure 19 - Percent Population not in Labour Force (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

Elgin County has 32% of the over 15 year old population not in the labour force with a diverse range within the communities. Aylmer (38.0%) had the highest ratio not in the Labour force with West Elgin (37.5%) close, Southwold (22.2%) has the lowest ratio of population not in the labour force indicating a very active population. It is important to note that the immigrants who arrived in St. Thomas and Elgin between 2001-2006 have a high rate of individuals not in the labour force, with a rate of 36.5%, just below the rate in West Elgin. The geographical distribution of the percent in the labour force can be seen in Figure 20.

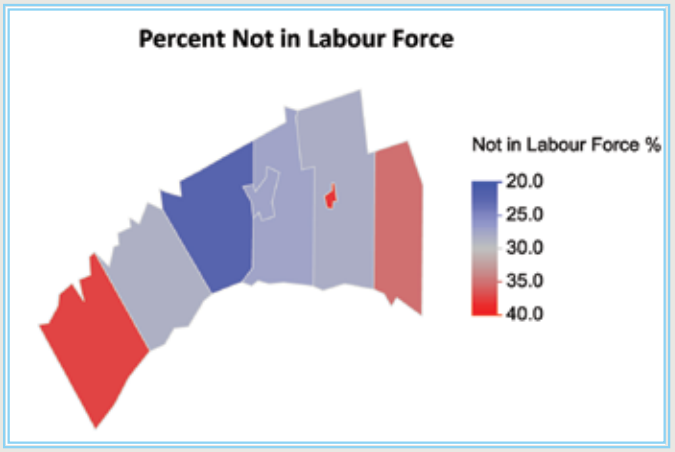

Figure 20 - Map Percent Population not in Labour Force (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

The percent of the labour force (individuals over the age of 15) that are unemployed shows a variance across St. Thomas and the County. As can be seen in Figure 21, the regional average is 3.7% of the population not working, the County ranges around this point with Bayham showing the highest ratio of population not working at 4.6% and Southwold with the largest ratio working at 2.2%. When considering the immigrants who arrived in St. Thomas and Elgin between 2001-2006, there is an exceptionally high unemployment rate at 6.4%. This statistic may be due to the fact that 43% of immigrants in this migration period have not yet obtained their high school degree, making them less employable. The geographic distribution of the percent of unemployment can be seen in Figure 22.

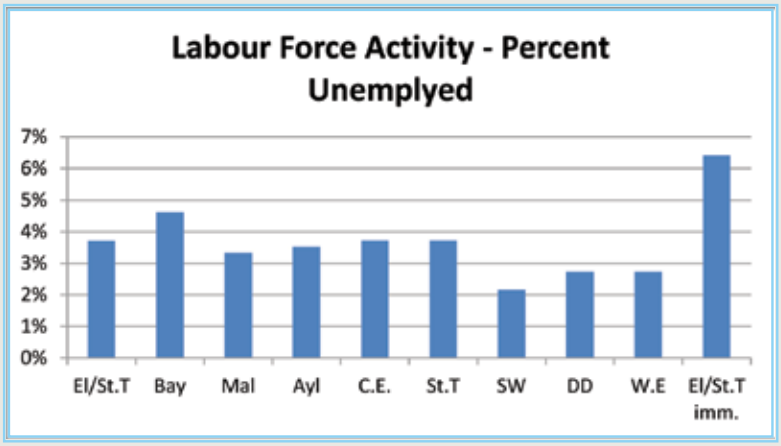

Figure 21 - Percent Unemployment (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

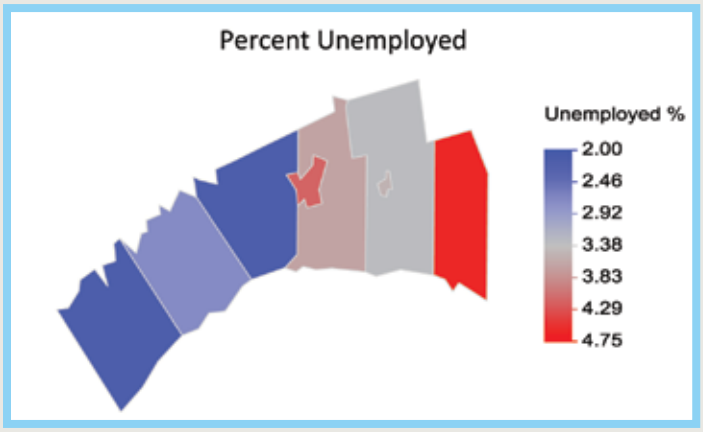

Figure 22 - Map Percent Unemployment (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

Despite the current situation in Elgin County there is a push to maintain their manufacturing history and continue to attract skilled workers and manufacturing companies into the region.

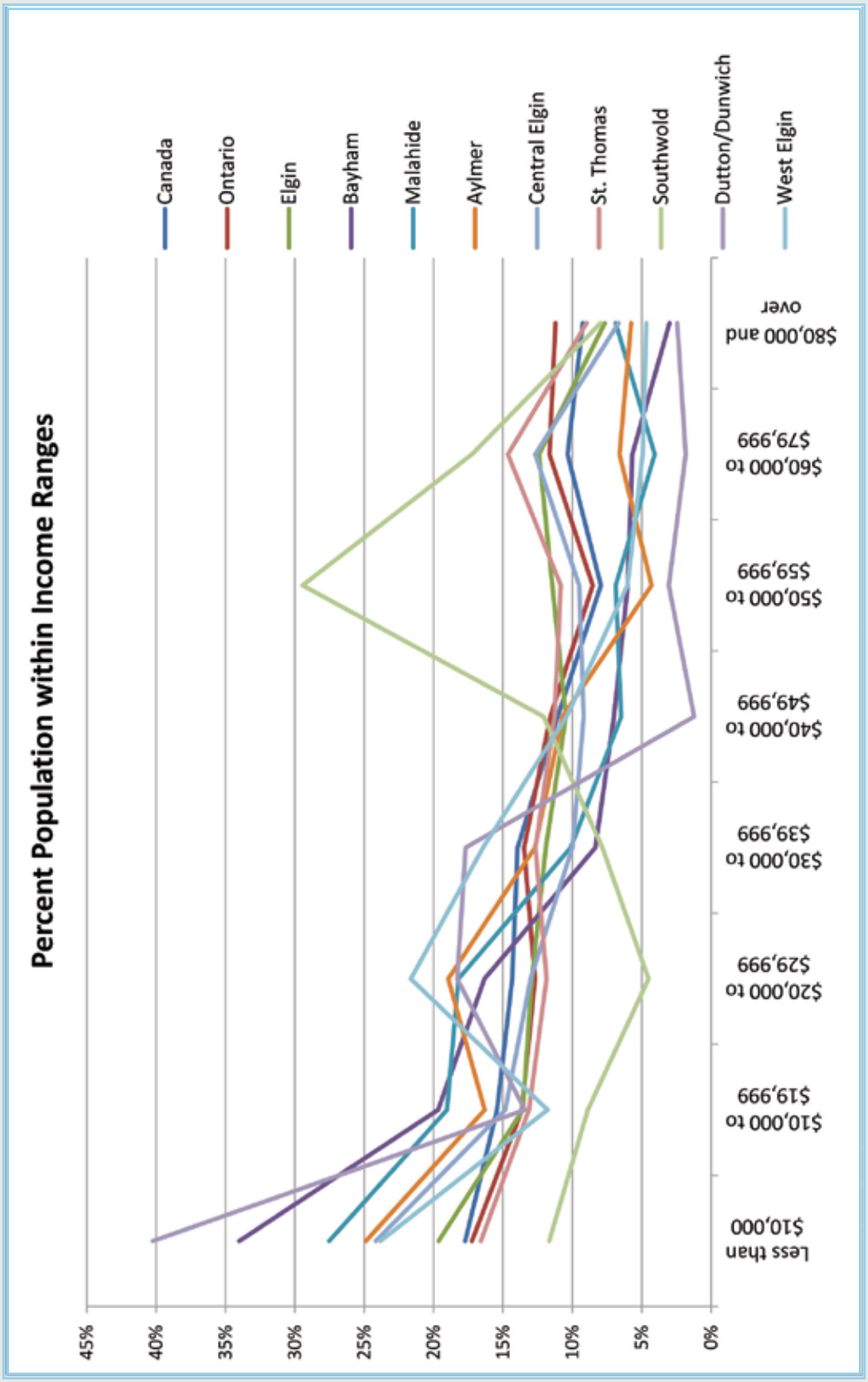

Figure 23 - Percent Population with Income Ranges (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.1.6. Income

Personal income levels can be used to better understand the types of employment opportunities in a community. St. Thomas and Elgin County in general has a much higher percentage of the workforce in the less than $10,000 range. Dutton/Dunwich (40.2%) and Bayham (34%) in particular has a very high percentage of their population in this range seen in Figure 24. This low income can be attributed to part time and seasonal jobs. Southwold (29.4%) has a particularly large workforce in the $50,000-$59,000 range. This figure can be attributed to the large high paying factories that operated in Southwold. However, in the past few years these factories have closed and the income ranges in this community have shifted.

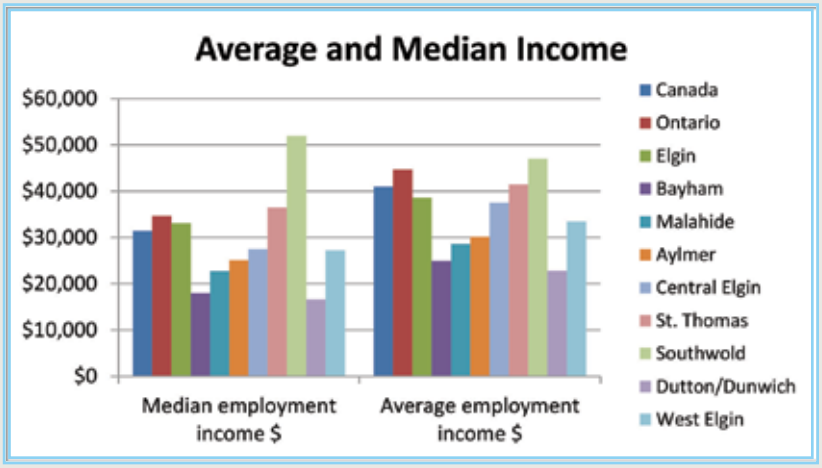

Figure 24 - Average and Median Income (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

Combining the data we get an average and mean income (Figure 25). Only St. Thomas ($36,486, $41,450) and Southwold ($51,911, $46,970) have income above the median and average from Canada ($31,484, $40,953) and Ontario ($34,673, $44,660). Dutton/Dunwich ($16,579, $22,816) and Bayham ($17,878, $24,866) both have averages much lower than the Canadian and Ontario average indicating the presence of jobs with lower skills.

While individual income levels help understand the labour market, the household income is used to understand the economic stability of the households. Family households with lower income will rely on more social supports than households with higher incomes. St. Thomas combined with Elgin County ($66,422) has an average household income lower than Canada ($69,548) and Ontario ($77,967), but a median income ($57,839) between Canada ($53,634) and Ontario's ($60,455). This indicates that Elgin County has slightly more higher paying jobs than in Canada.

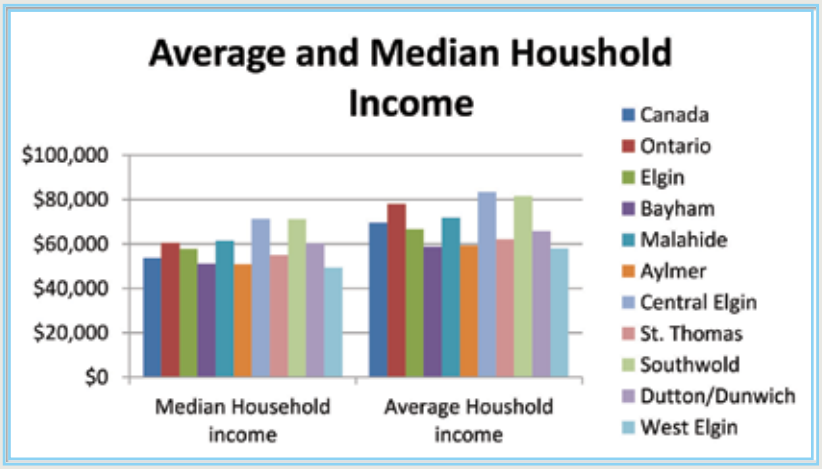

Figure 25 - Average and Median Household Income (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

REGIONAL POVERTY CUT-OFF AND MEDIAN EMPLOYMENT INCOMES									
	Elgin	Bayham	Malahide	Aylmer	Central Elgin	St. Thomas	Southwold	Dutton/ Dunwich	West Elgin
Regional Poverty Cut-off	28,920	25,596	30,765	25,479	35,650	27,438	35,595	30,113	24,708
Median employment income $	33,131	17,878	22,738	25,059	27,456	36,486	51,911	16,579	27,165

Table 6 - Regional Poverty Cut-off and Median Employment Income

Median household income is also used to determine the regional poverty levels, which are taken as one half the median income of the region. Elgin County, Bayham, Malahide, Aylmer, Central Elgin, Dutton/ Dunwich all have median income levels below the poverty cut-off, indicating that the average household cannot stay above the poverty level with one income earner as seen in Table 6.

1.2.0. Immigrants and Newcomers in Elgin County and St. Thomas

While Elgin County historically is a region that was built on immigration, there has been little immigration into the region since the initial settlement of the County. Considering Figure 27, although Elgin County (13.1%) has half the percentage of population considered immigrants than in Ontario (27.9%), it is not far behind the Canadian level (19.6%). In the 2001-2006 Census period Elgin and St. Thomas attracted 1320 immigrants into the area accounting for almost 12% of the immigrant population in the County.

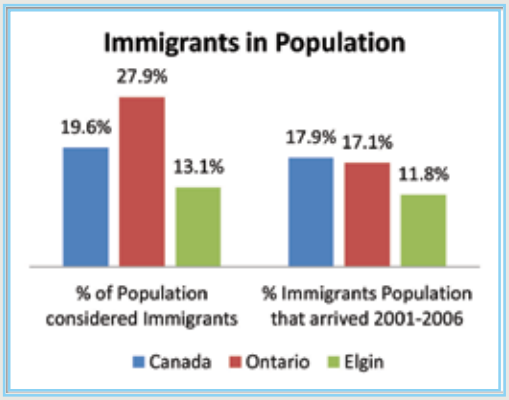

Figure 27 - Percent Immigrants in Population (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

Although this number is below the Canadian (17.9%) and Ontario (17.1%) figures it does show promise for further population growth through immigration.

Understanding the trends in the immigration into the region over the past 45 years also indicates that the 2001-2006 census period showed an large increase in the number of immigrants settling in the region, doubling the immigrants settling in the

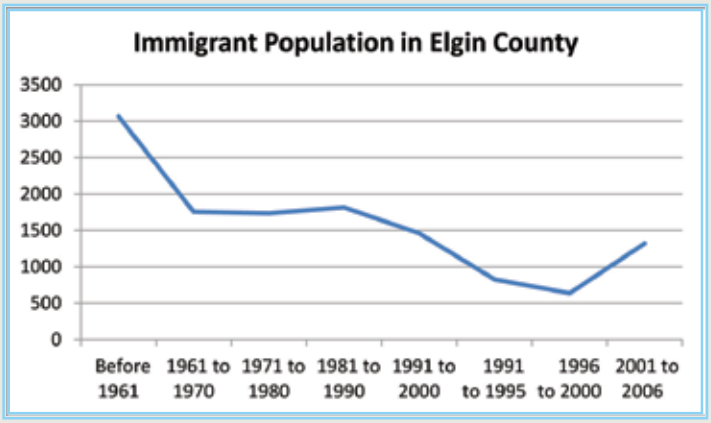

Figure 26 - Immigrant Population Entering in Elgin County (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

previous census period and almost returning to the same levels from 1991-1995 (Figure 26).

It is also important to highlight the class of immigrants who settle in Elgin County. Typically Canada and Ontario see a large number of immigrants from the Skilled Class. Elgin, however, attracts more of the Family class as can be seen in Table 7. This discrepancy from the Canadian norm can be seen in the types of jobs that are offered in St. Thomas-Elgin, there is not a large drive for the skilled immigrant classes. Also, a large proportion of the immigrants are settling in the East of the County attracted to reunify with their Low German roots. The Low German population are often reclaiming a citizenship and therefore it is the youngest of the family who immigrates into Canada, and this is done under the Family class.

IMMIGRANTS 2008-2010									
	Elgin	Bayham	Aylmer	Malahide	Central Elgin	St. Thomas	Southwold	Dutton/ Dunwich	West Elgin
Family Class	140	0	50	5	10	55	10	5	5
Economic immigrants	95	5	10	10	5	50	10	5	0
Refugees	10	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0
Other	85	20	40	0	5	15	0	0	5
Total	330	25	100	15	20	130	20	10	10

Table 7 - Number of Immigrants Entering Elgin by class (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010)

The lower number of immigrants entering under the skilled class also explains the lower levels of education in the immigrants in the County.

1.2.1. Profile of Immigrants and Newcomers in St. Thomas – Elgin

Low German Population

It is estimated that there are between 12,000 and 15,000 Mennonites residing in East Elgin at any given time (Mennonite Central Services interview, 2012). The first settlement of the Low German population into Elgin County was in 1954 with the largest proportions arriving between the late 1970's and early 1980's with migration continuing into today. In 2001, 100 new families accessed services in Aylmer at the Mennonite Central Services (MCS), with numbers decreasing to 51 for the past 9 months. The Mennonite population from Mexico, which makes up the majority of the Mennonite population in Elgin County, speaks Low German - a primarily oral language (Coleman, 2000). According to results from the 1996 Census, over 5,000 people in Elgin County reported speaking German as their first language which could be as a result of not having the Low German option available on the statistical form and the Low German population not understanding the differences between the language themselves.

Traditionally the Low German family would be large with an average of 12 children. While family sizes of this size have become less common, the average size is now 5-6 children, which is significantly higher than the general population. The larger family sizes can, in part, be attributed to the tendency for marriage to take place at young ages, 18-19 allowing for a longer period of fertility.

A unique aspect of this population is that many of the members already have a claim to citizenship because their parents or grandparents lived in Canada before they relocated to Mexico and South America and are returning to Canadian communities after a generation of being away. This simple fact makes the delivery of services to this population so unique and challenging. At face value the Low German newcomers have major similarities with the Canadian immigrant; they are not familiar with the Canadian social system, they do not speak the language and they experience all the same barriers to employment. However, there are two major differences between the Low German newcomers and immigrants. First, the Low Germans come from a system with no formal schooling and as a result have high levels of illiteracy amplifying the barriers in everyday life. Second, since they are reclaiming their citizenship they do not qualify for services offered through CIC and rely heavily on services and therefore need to seek out services elsewhere.

Despite the challenges the Low German population has faced, this community has created and developed many Small and Medium Enterprises in the East of the County. The majority of the businesses are in labour intensive sectors including a variety of construction, manufacturing, and agriculture. The nature of the businesses also has been instrumental in facilitating further immigration of this population to this area.

Often families from Mexico will come to the County to work for the summer in the agricultural sector, building their capital and moving to Canada once they have financial stability.

The Low German newcomers present a very unique situation for the County, one that is strewn with cultural and religious intricacies. The health and prosperity of the Mennonite population that have migrated from Mexico and Central America to Elgin County is at risk for several reasons including very low levels of education, illiteracy, poverty, and cultural isolation.[1]

Migrant Worker Population

Since Elgin County is predominantly agricultural, this region is the destination of many seasonal workers who each year participate in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program. Migrant workers from Jamaica, Barbados, Mexico, and other countries participate in this program to respond to the labour shortage in the Canadian agricultural sector. The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program is authorized by the federal government through the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and administered in Ontario and Nova Scotia by the Foreign Agricultural Resource Management. Although seasonal migrant agricultural workers return to their country of origin at the end of the harvest, many of them keep returning year after year, even generation after generation. There are some cases in which the agricultural worker has been returning for over twenty years. There are some who started working as a seasonal worker when they were young, and now, their children are hired to participate in this program. The FARMS program has been facilitating the entry of migrant workers in Elgin County as seen in Figure 28 the number of migrant workers has more than doubled from 2007 from under 200 workers to almost 500 workers in 2010.

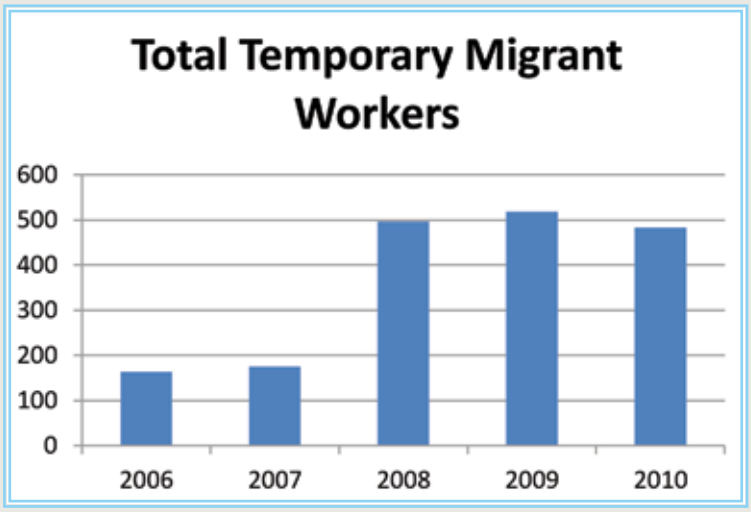

Figure 28 - Total Temporary Migrant Workers

Even though there are success stories about the participation of seasonal agricultural workers, in Elgin County communities, migrant workers face an array of issues that need to be addressed. First of all, migrant workers are separated from their families and communities to make a living. They are often isolated in rural communities where life revolves solely around the farm. In an effort to earn as much as

[1]Armstrong, D., Coleman, B., The healthcare needs of Mennonite women, Elgin St. Thomas Health Unit, 2001

possible and in the shortest time possible, migrant workers work long hours. Other issues such as language barriers, poor housing conditions, mobility problems, and cultural differences are factors which augment social exclusion and vulnerability.

Farm owners who hire migrant workers may also benefit from support which may be provided by settlement agencies to provide orientation about rights and responsibilities of migrant workers, raise awareness about cultural differences and the many contributions migrants workers make to the host community.

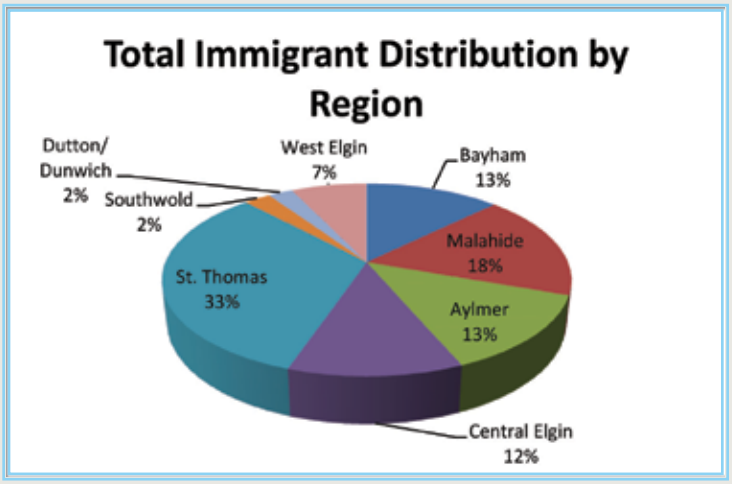

Figure 29 - Total Immigrant Distribution by Region (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

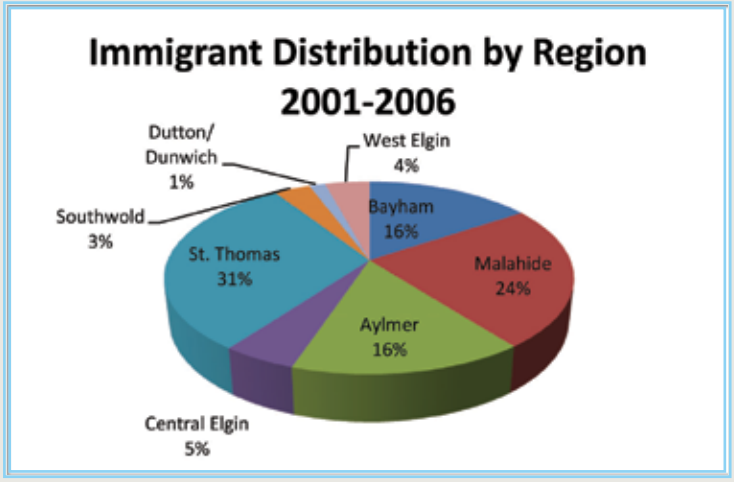

Figure 30 - Immigrant Distributioin by Region (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.2.2. Geographical Settlement

The 2006 Census indicates that 12,610 immigrants live in and around St. Thomas and Elgin County. Of these immigrants, only one third have settled in St. Thomas, the largest city in the County. The largest majority of newcomers have settled in the East of the County, accounting for 45% of the newcomers and 10% settling in the West and the remaining 15% in the Central region (Figure 29). Although the flow of immigrants into the region has been steady, the location that they have been settling has been changing. Historically, the immigrant population has mainly settled in the Central and Eastern regions of the County including St. Thomas. However, looking at the most recent immigration period, the proportion of immigrants settling in St. Thomas (from 33% to 31%) has remained relatively steady, Central Elgin (from 12% to 5%) has significantly decreased, and the East of the County has seen significant increases (from 45% to 56%) (Figure 30). This shift in geography in settlement demonstrates the changing need for Settlement Services in St. Thomas and the County with a new focus on the East.

	TIME OF IMMIGRATION								
	Before 1961	1961 to 1970	1971 to 1980	1981 to 1990	1991 to 2000	1991 to 1995	1996 to 2000	2001 to 2006	Total
Elgin-St. Thomas	3065	1755	1735	1815	1460	825	635	1320	12610
Bayham	125	150	185	290	320	245	80	205	1600
Malahide	320	200	350	365	340	210	125	315	2225
Aylmer	370	185	210	370	160	95	60	205	1655
Central Elgin	480	290	280	160	95	55	40	65	1465
St. Thomas	1195	670	515	450	445	160	285	405	4125
Southwold	125	95	25	25	0	0	0	45	315
Dutton/Dunwich	100	50	25	30	30	25	10	20	290
West Elgin	345	115	150	115	60	40	20	55	900

Table 8 - Immigration into each Region over Time (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.2.3. Time of Immigration

The shift in the regional distribution of immigrant settlement can be further seen by understanding the shift over time of the settlement. Table 8 shows that before 1961, 25% of the immigrants settled in the County. Despite claims of low immigration into the region the immigrant population tripled from 1961 to 2000 at which time the immigration into the region slowed down. Although Elgin County is not experiencing high rates of immigration as seen in Toronto, immigration levels has been steady. What is important to note is the changes in immigration seen in the West of the County. Southwold did not receive immigrants over a 10 year period and Dutton/Dunwich and West Elgin decreased to half of the immigration in 2000s from that seen in the 1960s.

1.2.4. Region of Origin

Most immigrants into St. Thomas Elgin have been historically British Isles (39%), North American (21%), and Western European (20%). These three regions represent 80% of all immigrants in the County. However, looking only at first generation immigrants, the large representation from the British Isles (19%) and North America (6%) decreases and the Western European (40%), South European (9%), East European (15%) influence is increased to represent the majority of

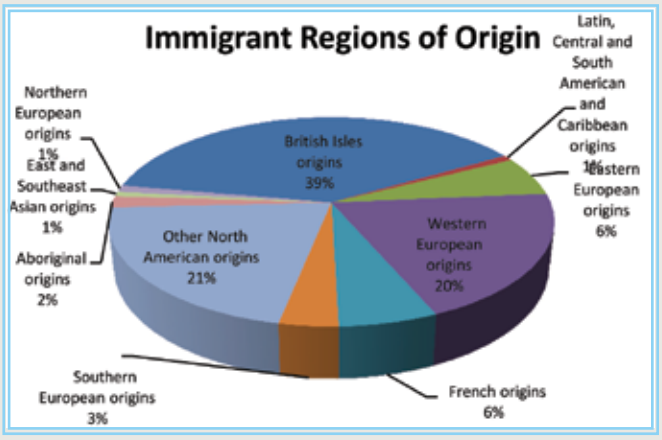

Figure 31 - Immigrants in Elgin by Region of Origin (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

the population (Figure 31). The top three ethnicities of origin for first generation immigrants in Elgin County are German (3,230), Dutch (2,395), and Russian (835) (Figure 32). This shift in the origin of the population helps identify the immigrant groups who have started to settle in the region.

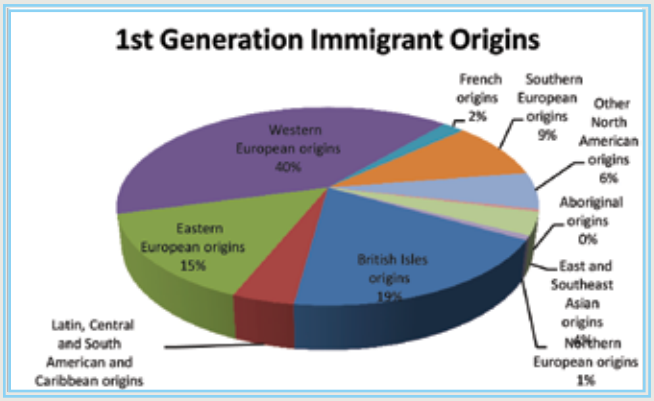

Figure 32 - 1st Generation Immigrant Origins (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.2.5. Ages

In general the age of immigrants in Elgin County is rather old. This is partially because a large portion of immigrants are not recent immigrants into the County. Relative to the population, immigrants have a smaller proportion of population under the age of 21 and a larger proportion above the age of 55. This indicates that the majority of the immigrants (60%) are not within the workforce in the County. However, it is also important to note that in St. Thomas there is a smaller amount of immigrants under the age of 24 than in Elgin (Table 9).

AGE GROUP	ELGIN COUNTY				ST. THOMAS			
	Total Population		Immigrant Population		Total Population		Immigrant Population	
Total	85350	100.0%	11145	100.0%	37765	100.0%	3660	100.0%
Under 15	16925	19.8%	790	6.7%	6725	17.8%	130	3.6%
15 to 24	11340	13.3%	790	7.1%	6955	18.4%	120	3.3%
25 to 34	9720	11.4%	1250	11.2%	4805	12.7%	355	9.7%
35 to 44	12655	14.8%	1555	14.0%	5370	14.2%	500	13.7%
45 to 54	12610	14.8%	1605	14.4%	5145	13.6%	595	16.3%
55 to 64	10160	11.9%	2240	20.1%	4180	11.1%	755	20.6%
65 to 74	6240	7.3%	1790	16.1%	2635	7.0%	685	18.7%
75 and over	5700	6.7%	1165	10.5%	1950	5.2%	520	14.2%

Table 9 - Age Distribution of Population in Elgin County (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.2.6. Language

A very important area of consideration for immigrant integration is the prevalence of languages and, to note that many languages with few number speakers in an area can lead to isolation. Table 10 shows the top three languages spoken in Elgin County are predominantly residents of the rural areas, with a very large number of German speakers. It should also be noted that the Portuguese speakers in the County are all settled in the west. The large amount of German speakers in the County are often actually Low German speakers who do not understand the German language. The misrepresentation of the languages in the census makes it difficult to provide the appropriate services across the County.

LANGUAGE SPOKEN MOST OFTEN AT HOME	ELGIN INCLUDING ST. THOMAS	ST. THOMAS
German	2070	65
Polish	175	95
Dutch	150	15
Croatian	135	115
Portuguese	130	0
Spanish	100	55
Khmer (Cambodian)	85	70
Panjabi and Gujarati	85	80
Korean	70	60
Vietnamese	55	40
Italian	50	40
Chinese	50	30
Hungarian	40	0
Arabic	30	10
Maltese	25	25

Table 10 - Languages Spoken in Elgin County (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.2.7. Visible Minorities

Elgin County in general has a very low number of visible minorities. This is supported by the fact that the majority of the immigrants into the region were coming from European decent. With the County having a very low level of visible minorities it is more difficult to understand the scope of migration into the region. It is important to note that in the two municipalities of the highest migration Bayham and Malahide, there is also among the lowest amount of visible minorities with visible minorities comprising of 1.5% and 0.4% of the population and 6.3% and 1.6% of immigrants themselves as seen in Table 11.

VISIBLE MINORITIES AND IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS									
	Elgin County	Bayham	Malahide	Aylmer	Central Elgin	St. Thomas	Southwold	Dutton/ Dunwich	West Elgin
Total Population	84260	6720	8705	7000	12605	35525	4635	3750	5315
Total Visible Minority	1990	100	35	145	200	1310	115	45	50
% Visible Minority	2.4%	1.5%	0.4%	2.1%	1.6%	3.7%	2.5%	1.2%	0.9%
Total Immigrants	12610	1600	2225	1655	1435	4125	315	290	900
% Immigrants	15.0%	23.8%	25.6%	23.6%	11.4%	11.6%	6.8%	7.7%	16.9%
% Visible Minority of Immigrants	15.8%	6.3%	1.6%	8.8%	13.9%	31.8%	36.5%	15.5%	5.6%

Table 11 - Visible Minorities and Immigrant Populations Elgin County (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

The regional distribution of the immigrant population and the visible minorities can be seen in Figure 34 and Figure 33.

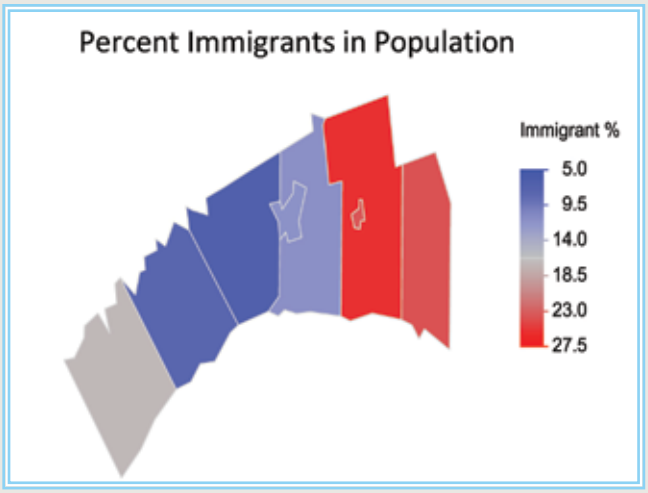

Figure 34 - Map of Percent Immigrants in Population (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

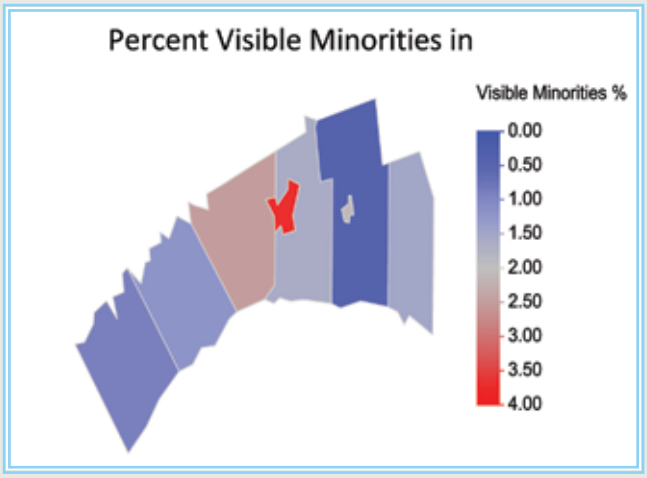

Figure 33 - Map of Percent Visible Minorities in Elgin County (Statistics Canada, 2006 Census)

1.3.0. Supports and Services for Immigrants

St. Thomas and Elgin County currently have two main agencies that provide services specifically for immigrants: Mennonite Community Services and YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin.

Mennonite Community Services offers a variety of program services such as newcomer settlement, employment, transportation, interpretation, family education, a Low German radio station, and a thrift shop.

The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin offer services that range from Adult Education, transitional housing for women and youth, community programming, and settlement services to support newcomers settling in the County. These settlement services include information and orientation, referrals, English language classes, individual settlement counselling, and group information sessions to help newcomers adjust to a new life in St. Thomas and Elgin.

Other agencies also serve immigrants and newcomers as part of their overall service delivery.

Employment Services Elgin delivers Employment Services to assist people to find employment through employment counselling, employment workshops, and job placements; an Information and Referral Service (IRS) for the partnership of Employment Services Elgin which provides reception services, referral to internal and external resources; and, coaching IRS users accessing resources and technology available in the Resource Centre, and delivers Summer Jobs Services (SJS) year round and during the summer, and in partnership with the HRDC Student Services, provides assistance to students seeking summer employment.

The Aylmer Community Services is a partnership that delivers employment services, job counselling, job development, and information services to the Aylmer community with the availability of Low-German speaking staff.

Two libraries systems exist in Elgin County, one specifically for St. Thomas and a second that serves eight communities across the county. Of the nine libraries, three indicated that they do not serve an immigrant clientele, but the rest identified a collaboration that exists. In order to provide their community programs, partnerships have been made between the libraries, the municipalities, community groups (Lion's and Lioness's, Optimists and Rotary clubs), and Settlement Service agencies in the County. Although the libraries do not have specific programming for immigrants, books are available at the branches in various languages, including: Dutch, French, Low German, German, Polish, Spanish, and Hungarian, as determined by community need.

Education in St. Thomas-Elgin is provided by several systems such as private schools, the Catholic School Board (London District School Catholic School Board) and the Public Board (Thames Valley District School Board).

The Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) identifies the needs of the English Language Learners (ELL) in the County and assigns English as a Second Language (ESL)/ English Literacy Development (ELD) teachers where available. ELL in the County are divided into ESL students and ELD students. One of the challenges experienced by high school students in the County is the fact that ESL/ELD courses and supports are only available at East Elgin Secondary School in Aylmer which required students to be transported from across the County. Another program that is being developed specifically targets the low enrolment numbers of the Low German population and is called Arbeit Schule in Rural Elgin (ASPIRE). This program is an alternative school that is associated with the Adult and Alternative Education and focuses on more correspondence learning rather than in class.

1.4.0. Community Capacity in St. Thomas and Elgin County

The community of St. Thomas and Elgin County has a long standing tradition of making humble efforts to address the needs of all residents, including the needs of immigrants. Since there is a recognition that members of the local leadership are the best placed to address issues and find solutions for local issues, it makes complete sense that the goal of an initiative such as the Local Immigration Partnership is to build on the existing expertise and history of our community. Some key examples include, but are not limited to:

The Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board
An independent not-for-profit organization led by volunteer Board Members who have demonstrated an interest in employment and training issues in communities of three different counties and include representatives of business, labour, educators/trainers, francophone, people with disabilities and visible minorities. The Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board has collaborated with different organizations, including settlement services organization, to promote inclusiveness.

The St. Thomas and District Chamber of Commerce
The St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce has a very dynamic presence in the community. It works to create and retain jobs within Central Elgin County and has an impressive membership. Through the Global Experience at Work initiative, the St. Thomas and District Chamber of Commerce partnered with the St. Thomas-Elgin LIP to help integrate foreign trained professionals into the labour force by connecting workers and potential employers in Elgin.

The United Way

In 2005 and 2006, United Way engaged residents in different communities across Elgin County in Community Consultations to find out what people viewed as Assets or Resources, Needs or Gaps, possible Solutions and what they rated as highest Priorities. Participants ranked their highest three priorities emerging across the board which were: Youth, Medical and Mental Health Issues, Poverty and Employment.

1.4.1. Partnerships Identified at the Roundtables

As previously discussed, Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas pride themselves on being very well connected. Agencies have always partnered on a wide array of projects that have greatly benefited the community. They understand the importance of utilizing skills and sharing the limited resources of the partners. Most agencies and management have been in positions of leadership for many years and have the ability and dedication to make change.

Here are a few examples of organizations or committees that are committed and have a history of partnering within the County:

For Immigrants/Newcomers:

- Family Education Support Programs Aylmer (FESPA) at the Aylmer Evangelical Missionary Church, YWCA English Language classes, and Thames Valley District School Board
- Community Churches, East Elgin Ministerial
- Refugee Committee & YWCA
- Mennonite Community Services and St. Thomas Housing Board

For Business integration:

- Aylmer Chamber of Commerce, Business after 5
- St. Thomas and District Chamber of Commerce Business after 5
- West Elgin Chamber of Commerce
- Dutton/Dunwich Chamber of Commerce
- Otter Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Elgin Business Resource Center
- Elgin Ambassadors
- West Elgin Support Services
- Social
- Central Elgin and Southwold provides capital for infrastructure ie. Arenas
- Dutton/Dunwich Fair Board
- Rosy Rhubarb Festival

Health

- Central Community Health Center
- Elder Care Strategy
- Elgin Health Network

Social Services

- Ministerial Groups Interfaith
- Port Stanley Community Food Bank
- Christmas Baskets for shut-ins
- Elgin Transit Group
- Service clubs work together
- Daffodil Society and Church Groups meet needs so welfare is not needed
- Elgin Council of Adult Education and Training
- Employment Services Elgin
- Community Services Network
- Elgin Workforce Development Committee
- Salvation Army with Food bank, Alternative School, YWCA, Health Unit

Children and Youth

- Focus Fairview
- Active Elgin Coalition
- Safe Communities School Coalition
- Community Council of Children and Youth Elgin
- Elgin Childcare Network
- Elgin Childcare Advisory Committee
- West Elgin Recreation Community
- Talbot Teen Center

At each Roundtable discussion, community members felt there was a great deal of collaboration with the resources available. There may be limited resources but there was certainly an understanding that those in a position of leadership were committed to working with the community to fill the unique needs.

2.0.0. Origins of the ST-ELIP

The St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership is one of the most recent additions to a growing number of Local Immigration Partnerships being established across Ontario.

While several Local Immigration Partnerships were being established across Ontario since 2008, in St. Thomas and Elgin County, collective efforts to look into the attraction of newcomers had already started in 2009. The Elgin & St. Thomas Labour Force through its 2010 Development Strategy identified the attraction of new Canadians as one of the priorities.

The need to take concrete actions to understand the needs and quality of life of newcomers was also recognized. As a logical step, a commitment to take action regarding the removal of barriers to employment opportunities was taken by Employment Services, Ontario Works, and YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin in 2010.

In January 2011, under the recommendation of many of the community partners, the YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin entered into an agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to lead the Local Immigration Partnership in St. Thomas and Elgin County. The St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership (ST-ELIP) began its work on February 28, 2011.

The ST-ELIP is a collaborative community initiative to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers to St. Thomas and the County of Elgin. In order to accomplish its objectives in the first year, the ST-ELIP was provided the mandate:

- Establish a Local Immigration Partnership Council
- Enhance understanding of non-settlement service providers and the community at large of newcomer's challenges
- Needs and services, strengthen awareness and capacity to integrate newcomers
- Develop a local settlement strategy and an annual action plan that addresses local priorities identified in the consultation process

A Partnership Council comprises fourteen members who represent a wide spectrum of sectors and are themselves long-time key leaders in the communities was established to achieve the following deliverables:

- Establish terms of reference
- Develop a Settlement Strategy
- Develop an annual action plan to implement Settlement Strategy

The community engagement and research aspects of the initiative were designed taking into account the importance of the principle of inclusivity. These outreach and research activities included as many sectors as possible, as well as all regions of the County and different methods to gather information. Surveys for immigrants, businesses, service providers, faith communities, and civic clubs helped us gather information from different stakeholders and were to identify existing services, innovative ways to build capacity to enhance service delivery to a diverse population and ways to establish interagency collaboration. In addition, eight roundtable discussions were offered across Elgin County. This consultation process benefitted from the participation of more than 250 key leaders and community members who provided insightful feedback.

The ST-ELIP looks forward to the next tasks ahead, which involves the development of sustainable solutions through the implementation of the Settlement Strategy for the region.

2.1.0. Vision

St. Thomas and Elgin County communities will be a culturally diverse, welcoming, caring and inclusive community that will retain current residents, welcome newcomers and will provide them the opportunity to successfully integrate, contribute to, and benefit from social, cultural and economic inclusion.

2.2.0. Guiding Principles

To ensure that the work of those associated with the initiative promotes inclusivity, the following principles have been adopted:

Inclusivity – The work of the Council, members of working committees will be inclusive of all immigrants in the St. Thomas-Elgin community regardless of their immigration status, citizenship, age, gender, health status, sexual orientation, and number of years in the community. The Council shall work towards equal participation while promoting social justice.

Collaboration – A working relationship will be developed between the host community and the immigrant community to build a welcoming and caring environment.

Empowerment – Our work will restore new immigrant's capacity to live their lives with the ability to be economically stable, live in adequate housing, and provide for themselves and their family through their own means and their own decisions.

Sustainability – A plan shall be developed to ensure that the work of the Council will continue to make improvements to immigrant's experiences and the community as a whole beyond the one-year duration.

2.3.0. The Planning Process

2.3.1. The Planning Phase

Since the development of a Settlement Strategy does not have any precedent in the entire county, and many of the residents have never had the opportunity to reflect as a community about the importance of immigration, it was important to think about ways that would both raise awareness about the challenges immigrants face and encourage participants to offer meaningful feedback to inform the development of the Settlement Strategy. Canada and our communities are facing demographic challenges, as a result of the aging of the population, declining birth rates, and out migration of youth who leave their communities to pursue education and employment opportunities. As communities we need to look at ways to address these challenges.

At the initial stage, then we developed a strategy and tools that addressed this particular situation. We created a power point presentation that informed about these demographic challenges and introduced the project at the same time. We presented the idea of the need to think about ways to create a community that welcomes, cares and includes everyone. We made sure we interfaced with key individuals and organizations across the county and became part of their dream to build better communities for all.

Once the ST-ELIP Council was established, six face to face meetings took place. In addition many hours of work provided guidance to the ST-ELIP project team. It also included thirteen roundtable discussions and consultation across the county. Thorough the entire process, the ST-ELIP kept in mind the guiding principles that provided the direction of our path.

2.3.2. The Coming Together

In light of the history of this County, the establishment of the ST-ELIP Council itself is a highlight. Within the history of the communities that are part of Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas, there has been no Council representing diversity, needs, and vision.

Every time a roundtable discussion ended, the response was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Participants wanted to become involved, community representatives expressed their gratefulness for such an opportunity, government officials spent long hours listening to participants and offering their support to the initiative, social service agencies were well represented and also expressed their gratitude for having the opportunity to present an important aspect of information that was needed.

2.3.3. Building a Shared Understanding

Building a shared understanding does not necessarily mean that we all need to believe the same. Sharing an understanding may also mean that while we may believe and share a similar perception about immigrants and their experience, we also welcome the fact that this shared understanding also includes diversity of opinion which deserves respect. It is the belief that we are all situated in different points in the continuum of cultural awareness, and that we all are ready to take the next steps grounded on that understanding. A shared understanding is not a destination, it is an ongoing process, it is lifelong journey.

2.3.4. Developing Terms of Reference

Developing the terms of reference was a way to build a shared understanding. We needed to incorporate principles that would serve as the four pillars that would sustain our work: Inclusion, collaboration, empowerment, and sustainability.

3.0.0. Information Gathering Process

3.1.0. Community Consultation and Engagement

In order to ensure success in the information gathering stage and to help the project become sustainable, community engagement was used as a literal approach. Communities across Elgin County were visited and community members within all sectors were engaged throughout the process. This strategy was adapted as a way to gain the trust of the community and uphold an environment where community members could feel comfortable discussing immigration, a topic that had not been discussed in many of the communities.

3.1.1. Roundtable Discussion

After initial contacts were made, community members were invited to roundtable discussions in each municipality. Although the Roundtables were powerful information gathering tools, they also helped enforce the relationships that had been previously established.

3.1.2. Presentations

In some cases, when an invitation was made, presentations were made to specific audiences. This method allowed for the project to be exposed to different community members. In total these presentations were made to six different groups and attracted 100 participants for the following groups:

- St. Thomas Lion's Club
- Elgin County Fire Services
- Elgin Business Women's Network
- Dutton/Dunwich Chamber of Commerce
- Otter Valley Chamber of Commerce
- St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce Global Experience @ Work

In addition to making presentations to specific groups the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership was featured in the local newspapers three times and appeared on the local television show once.

3.2.0. Gathering Information

The data gathering process included three distinct strategies: analyzing statistical information from CIC and Statistics Canada, engaging in community round tables, and online surveys. This strategy allowed for qualitative and quantitative data to be gathered helping describe the situation in Elgin County and St. Thomas.

3.2.1. Statistical Information

The information gathered from the community was paired with the information taken from the 2006 Canadian Census. Since the project was started in the same year as a census, the data available was five years old and proved to have restrictions on the validity in describing the current situation in Elgin County. Particularly considering economic statistics, between the census dates Canada experienced an economic recession significantly altering the economic activity in the County. In areas where there is particular concern the discrepancies are noted.

3.2.2. Regional Roundtable Discussions

It was important to understand the climate of the communities and the immigrant integration in the rural towns across the County. The focus of the discussions was to identify the supports and needs for newcomers in every region. Roundtable Discussions were held in each municipality, in St. Thomas, and in a Literacy and Basic Skills class in Aylmer. The events were open to the public and attracted 131 participants from a variety of backgrounds including: Municipal, Provincial, and Federal Government, Public Health, Realty, Library Services, Emergency Fire Services, Community Groups Settlement Service providers, Service Provider Organizations, Employment Services, Economic Development, Businesses and Newcomers to the community.

3.2.3. Surveys

Surveys were designed to obtain information from different stakeholders and members of the community. Surveys were developed for Newcomers and Immigrants, Employers and Businesses, and for various Service Providers with over 80 surveys were completed throughout the consultation process.

The **Newcomer and Immigrant survey** was created to understand the services that were accessed by newcomers as well as the level of satisfaction newcomers had with the services.

Employer surveys were designed to understand the number of immigrants in the workforce, as well as identify ways to support businesses in hiring newcomers and ways that would help newcomers be more employable within the industry.

Service Provider surveys were directed to all service providers in the County and were slightly varied to accommodate for different types of service providers. Formal and informal Service Providers were included in the intended audience.

The survey for ***Service Provider Organizations*** was used as a method to gather information on the types of services that were provided by a SPO. Information on immigrant and newcomer access was also collected to understand if the newcomer population had an understanding of the services available in the County.

Emergency Fire Services survey was used to understand the services that were offered by the Emergency Fire in the County. This survey also collected employee numbers to understand the number of newcomers that are employed in this field.

Surveys for the ***Libraries*** across the county were distributed to understand the amount of information that can be accessed through the library pertaining specifically to culture and religion, and the amount of literature available in different language was also tracked.

The informal sectors are a very important group in Elgin County. In order to understand the activities and supports they provide within the community a survey was created for the ***Civic Groups***.

Similar to the Civic Groups, the ***Churches and Faith Organizations*** are very active in Elgin County. A survey was created to understand what events, and services are provided from these institutions.

4.0.0. The Findings

This section analyses the data that was collected from the surveys and the roundtable discussions and community consultations. The findings provide the foundation for the strategies of the project and will help determine the action plans for each region of the County.

It is important to note that while feedback collected from surveys, roundtables discussions and personal interviews was mostly indicative of a strong interest in the topic of immigration and the immigrant experience, there were other opinions that were strongly expressed which indicated anti-immigration sentiments.

4.1.0. St. Thomas

Two roundtables were held in St. Thomas; these were unique in the sense that many of the centralized services for Elgin County can be found in or near St. Thomas. This location attracted the local MP and MPP as well as participants who presented ideas on St. Thomas and the County in general. The general perception of St. Thomas, as indicated by the roundtable participants, was one of a safe, clean, helpful community. There was a discussion of the perception of the Blue collar working class that composes a large population of the community. From an economic standpoint, the St. Thomas blue collar class is attractive for factories that are looking for a highly skilled workforce. There was some discussion around the negative perception of the blue collar class which could deter sectors and potentially people from coming to St. Thomas.

The services that are offered in St. Thomas are well received by the community; however there is a lack of awareness of what is offered. Additionally, there are the basic services, such as renewal for Provincial identification and certification; however, if the service required is more detailed or there is a special case, there is a need to travel to London. Potential methods that could be used to address the needs of the community members of Elgin County would be to establish mobile offices for some key services that could travel around Elgin once a week to increase access.

Two important service gaps were identified specifically for this region. First, children in need of language or literacy skills have limited access for English Language Learners (ELL) support. The allocation of English teachers is done by assigning teachers based on numbers in the County. It necessitates that students have to travel great distances to access these programs, especially at the high school level. Second, the high number of migrant workers in the area often experience isolation and difficulty in accessing services in the area. Children and migrant workers are two groups that have a smaller opportunity to voice their concerns in the integration process. It is important to include their needs in the Strategies.

Potential community engagement strategies that were proposed by the participants of the St. Thomas Roundtables included engaging the local media to promote the positive stories and effects of newcomers in the community. Also, including more cultural diversity and celebration on multi-culturalism at events like Canada Day, local festivals, and using foods as a means to break barriers and integrate.

The priorities identified by the roundtables participants in St. Thomas are:

St. Thomas Roundtable 1

1. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
2. Language and ESL
3. Employment/Financial Stability
4. Housing
5. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health
6. Education/Training
7. Transportation

St. Thomas Roundtable 2

1. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
2. Housing
3. Language and ESL
3. Medical Care Mental Health, and Health
3. Employment/Financial Stability
6. Transportation
7. Education/Training

The participants of the two St. Thomas roundtables found a clear connection with newcomer integration and settlement services. This realization in part is due to the fact the St. Thomas has an active Refugee Committee that works to sponsor and help settle refugees into the County. This direct relationship has fostered an understanding of the needs of people in initial settlement. For this group it is important to consider the simple things that are often overlooked by individuals who have been living in a community and within a social context for so long, including basics like where to buy groceries, medicine, and general supplies.

Another priority identified is the need for employment opportunities and easier access to employment. The current economic situation has made securing a job difficult for many Canadians and even more difficult for newcomers and immigrants with no Canadian experience. Similarly, immigrants will come into Canada with many years of experience in their field, but their credentials do not transfer to the Canadian system. This reality has three potential outcomes, first that newcomers are forced to go to school to learn a profession they have been doing for many years, second, newcomers are changing their career altogether to fields that require less education, or no education at all, and third newcomers have to enter into volunteer positions where they provide their expertise at no cost. For the newcomer these situations are less than ideal, and often do not match the prior conceptions that they had before they are arrived in Canada.

The barriers to employment go beyond credential recognition. Often a newcomer will have English language knowledge but no technical language skills. The barrier can be transportation, where newcomers have years of driving experience, but cannot afford the inflated insurance prices to drive. Barriers also exist when there are other options for credential recognition, they are often expensive and newcomers cannot afford all the tests required. The barriers to employment for newcomers are numerous, however the limited amount of jobs and tight networks that exists in the communities in a rural context, the barriers are exacerbated.

4.2.0. Central Elgin

Two roundtables were held in central Elgin, in the Municipality of Central Elgin and Southwold. The perception of Central Elgin by the participants of the roundtables when asked to describe the area was a description based heavily on the physical and productive attributes of the municipality. The participants in Central Elgin focused on the natural richness of the area and mentioned the rural and agricultural elements as well. The participants in Southwold focused primarily on the agricultural and rural aspects of the municipality, focusing on the farming lifestyle there. The tone of the conversation changed when asked to describe the current services offered. The general consensus was that the services that existed were well accessed and focused for an older population (50+), but there was a lack of services for youth in the area. Two areas of attention were the lack of transportation and the lack of diverse housing options. The central Elgin region had a focus on the volunteerism of the community; since many services that are offered in larger centers are not economically viable in the smaller rural towns the community has grown accustomed to working together to achieve the same goals. However the community is noticing that the volunteer core is aging and there are not many younger individuals joining the groups.

The definition of who a newcomer is was discussed to a great extent in Southwold. For some, it is defined as anyone who was not born in Southwold and therefore, immigrants who settled in the community over 30 years ago may still be considered newcomers. As they are perceived as newcomers by some of the Canadian born old-time residents, there seems to be little interaction between them. This illustrates the kind of dynamic experienced by newcomers, especially if they came from a cultural background different from the dominant cultures. These perceptions are developed as a result of little exposed to cultural diversity.

The priorities identified by the roundtable participants in Central Elgin are:

Central Elgin

1. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
2. Language and ESL
3. Housing
4. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health
5. Transportation
6. Employment/Financial Stability
7. Education/Training

Southwold

1. Housing
2. Language and ESL
3. Transportation
4. Employment/Financial Stability
5. Education/Training
6. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
7. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health

The identified priorities were strongly influenced by personal experiences. It is important to note that half of the participants from the municipality of Central Eglin had immigrated to Elgin and the others work with the immigrant population. The Employment and Financial Stability and Education and Training categories are at the bottom of the list because the participants immigrated to Canada at an older age and were financially stable, also there was an understanding that the validation of training occurs at the provincial level and cannot be addressed municipally. The issues that were addressed in the Southwold roundtable were more general community priorities because there is not a large presence of newcomers in the region.

4.3.0. West Elgin

Two roundtables were held in the west Elgin region, in Dutton/Dunwich and in the Municipality of West Elgin. When asked about the community, the participants of the roundtable in West Elgin focused on making a list of the services and amenities while participants of Dutton/Dunwich focused more on the physical attributes of the land and general conceptions like safety and self sufficiency of the area. The participants said the services in this area were very good, but there is a need to expand services and grow the region through innovation. Both municipalities also highlighted the number of services for the elderly population and the need to increase services for youth. Both communities saw a need to consider ways to maintain the population and jobs in their communities to make them viable. Currently the communities are referred to as "bedroom" communities which can function on minimal services and a lack of retail choices. Finally, in order to increase the access to the services there is a need to educate and promote the services already available. The west Elgin region, like many rural regions, has a large emphasis on community involvement.

The main aspects of collaboration in the community is done through being part of community civic groups. These groups work together to plan events and provide services for the community. It is also important to note that both West Elgin and Dutton/Dunwich each have a Chamber of Commerce; these two Chambers often collaborate on larger events in the west Elgin Region connecting the businesses across the municipalities.

The priorities identified at the West Elgin roundtable were:

West Elgin

1. Employment/Financial Stability
2. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
3. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health
4. Housing
5. Transportation
6. Education/Training
7. Language and ESL

Dutton/Dunwich

1. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
2. Language and ESL
3. Education/Training
4. Employment/Financial Stability
5. Housing
6. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health
7. Transportation

The profile of immigrants in this region of County indicates that the immigrants are fairly well established, but the immigrants who are currently entering this region are experiencing isolation due to lack of services specifically targeted to help their settlement and integration. The participants of these two roundtables held very active places in the community, or were themselves newcomers to the area. The balance between community members and newcomers helped educate both sides in that newcomers learned of services, while the service providers and community members were able to understand some of the difficulties faced by newcomers and the disconnect in the information promotion.

4.4.0. East Elgin

Three roundtables were held in East Elgin; in Bayham, Aylmer, and in a Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) class in Aylmer. East Elgin is the region that has seen the highest amount of newcomers in the last census period and indicted the highest need for immediate attention. The majority of the economic activity in Aylmer is done through SMEs with many agricultural businesses. With the current economy, community members are losing the jobs that were obtained without a grade twelve education and are having difficulties re-entering the workforce. With the large agricultural base of the economy there are many seasonal employment opportunities; however, there is difficulty in obtaining work for the full year.

To some of the participants, East Elgin is considered a retirement community for the rural population, and as such, there is a limited amount of programming for youth. Furthermore, the communities within Bayham have a lack of basic amenities and travel to Tillsonburg or Aylmer for groceries, bank services and other basic services. It is important to note that this community continues to attract Low Germans to the area because of the strong connections that exist with the Low German colonies in Latin America. This has made East Elgin the youngest community in the County (Figure 3, Figure 4, Figure 5), with the highest number of newcomers (Table 7). This demographic reality means that there could be a gap in the services that are required by the younger population.

The priorities identified by the participants of the roundtable in East Elgin are:

Aylmer

1. Housing
2. Employment/Financial Stability
3. Education/Training
4. Language and ESL
5. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
6. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health
7. Transportation

Aylmer LBS

1. Employment/Financial Stability
2. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health
3. Language and ESL
4. Housing
5. Education/Training
6. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
7. Transportation

Bayham

1. Language and ESL
2. Employment/Financial Stability
3. Medical Care, Mental Health, and Health
4. Housing
5. Initial Orientation/Information and Social Supports
6. Transportation
7. Education/Training

4.5.0. Specific to Low German Newcomers

A unique aspect of Elgin County is the large settlement of Low Germans in the area. Specifically the Low German population has settled in the East of the County. Although many of the strategies that are important in Aylmer are based on the large numbers of Low German population, it is also important to focus on some needs that can be addressed through the already established networks in this community. As such, needs that are specific to this group include initial orientation to the Canadian system with a focus on housing, financial literacy, health care orientation, language and literacy training.

Culturally and historically there has been little emphasis on formal education for the Low German community. This has translated to literacy issues in the community and presently difficulties in finding employment. The historical attitudes of formal education has translated to a large number of Low Germans homeschooling their children or enrolling them in private religious education. However, there is no system in place to ensure that the parents who chose homeschooling get the appropriate support to ensure that their children are attaining Ontario academic standards. The generation that is experiencing the difficulties of not having adequate levels of education is advocating for the need for education and literacy in order to obtain employment and reduce isolation in the Canadian context.

With the language barriers that exist, especially for the older generations, often families will turn to children as interpreters. Children are used to interpret for medical situations, financial cases, housing negotiations, school information, and many other cases. The use of children as translators has potentially large social implications that shift family dynamics by giving power to children while leaving parents isolated. There is a need to address the implications and the cautions of the practice of using children as translators in cases of important household information and decisions.

Reported barriers to Health Care, Mental Health, and Health include:

- Not having a family health care provider (physician or nurse practitioner);
- Language (no physicians or nurse practitioners who speak Low-German);
- Lack of understanding of the health care "system":
  - How to access health care (for example how to get an OHIP card),
  - What many of the medical procedures are for (for example, mammography),
  - The need to make appointments;
  - The need to go back to their provider for a repeat on prescriptions or check-ups;

- Lack of information and education about health issues (want it in simple English);
- Financial barriers (for prescriptions, dental care, eye glasses, etc.);
- No word for Mental Health in Low German, there is no concept for what this is;

The housing needs of the Low German community are unique in that typical Low Germans households can be 12 people or more. The household size appears to be decreasing to 6-8 people, yet there is still a need for larger houses. Reported barriers to Housing include:

- Landlords are unwilling to rent to large families;
- There are not very many options for large families, smaller houses are more common
- When a property is being rented, families are afraid to voice issues due to the fact that they may not find another place to live.

The Low German community also underlined the difficulty in disseminating knowledge into their community. The community is very reliant on the networks that have been formed and there is often mistrust for individuals in power who try to provide information. Often the advice of a misguided friend will be accepted over the advice of a trained professional. The difficulty in providing information is often exacerbated with the limitations to access of technology. Some of the Old Colony Mennonites will not be permitted to have a television or radio, and there are high rates of illiteracy in the community so printed texts also are not useful as a method to provide information. The need to use the established networks in the Low German community presents a struggle.

The Low German population has also been victim to much discrimination based on the population misunderstanding their history and way of life. The Low German population has had difficulties in integrating with the population because they are coming from a very different social context. In the East of the County there is a large need for education, first to help the Low Germans learn the Canadian system, as well as to teach the Canadians and community members about the culture of Low Germans. This will help foster a better understanding.

4.6.0 Specific to Seasonal Agricultural Workers

As a community that cares and takes inclusion seriously, there is a need to look at ways to provide support to Seasonal Agricultural Workers. Migrant workers typically come to Canada for the agricultural season and leave in the winter months, often returning year after year. When the Seasonal Agricultural Workers arrive in Canada they go straight to the farm where they will be working and typically their only mode of transportation is provided by the farm at a specific day and time. The lack of access to transportation combined with the fact that they live in the agricultural areas of the County means that there are large issues of isolation and difficulties in obtaining assistance when the need arises.

Research suggests that the inclusion of Seasonal Agricultural Workers in their communities where they return to work and live year after year is poor[2]. Therefore in order to improve the inclusivity there may be a need to work to eliminate the barriers to essential services due to language and location. Specifically, there is also a need to make basic ESL training available to the Seasonal Agricultural Workers that considers the transportation issues that they face. Additionally there was a need identified to provide support contact with outside agencies such as doctors, dentists, hospitals, banks, etc. This can be achieved through expanding the network for migrant workers and increase either access to towns and cities, or working with social services to provide services in the remote areas of the County. It is also important for the migrant workers to understand the services that they have the rights to have as migrant workers, this can be done by providing information including information about workplace safety and procedures. Beyond social support there is a need to foster social activities for the migrant workers including, but not limited to, facilitating communication between migrant workers and their families, and increasing their social activities by organizing special events – a movie night, sporting event, travel to tourist sites to increase the connection the migrant workers feel with the community.

Addressing the needs of the migrant workers is a difficult task because of two very different reasons. First the migrant workers are often grateful for the positions that they have obtained and fear that voicing concerns will result in them losing their employment and result in them being repatriated. Similarly, their rights are not always completely understood and in some instances they do not understand that they are being mistreated. Second, the community in which they work in do not understand why local jobs are being offered and filled by migrant workers. The misconception of the needs of the agricultural employment leads to hostility in the program. There is a need, especially in difficult economic times, to educate the public on the work that is done by the agricultural workers so to avoid some of the hostility towards them.

[2]IRPP Study No 26, 2012

4.7.0 Businesses and Employers

The business survey was completed by 25 businesses across Elgin County. The survey was completed by a range of business sizes, with 88% of the respondents being SMEs in a wide range of industries as can be seen in the graph. In some cases the respondent provided multiple industries Figure 35. The Other category includes responses of Not for Profit, HR and Recruitment Specialists, and Transportation.

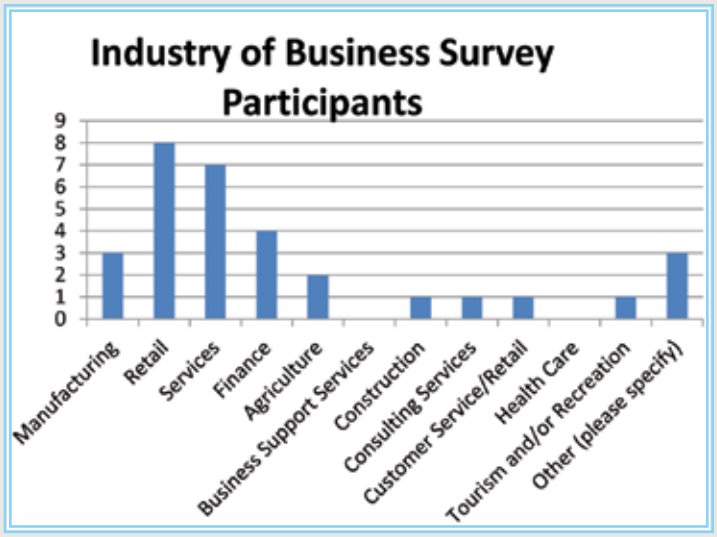

Figure 35 - Industry of Business Survey Participants

When asked what percentage of immigrants on their workforce were immigrants, more than 50% of the respondents had no immigrants on their workforce while two businesses indicated that 100% of their workforce was immigrants. Of the respondents with no immigrants in their workforce the main reasons given for no representation of newcomers was the lack of immigrant applicants. The businesses that responded having no immigrants were all SMEs with 9 of the 13 responses having fewer than 10 employees, the lack of immigrants in the workforce is largely due to the fact that the company is not large enough to hire in general.

The survey asked about future programs that could help employers hire as well as programs that could help attract and retain employees to the industry. Programs that could be put in place to assist the employer in hiring workers includes: an easier process to evaluate foreign qualifications, acceleration for accreditation, interview training for newcomers, and wage subsidies. In order to attract and retain newcomers, programs that interested the survey participants were mentorship, occupation specific language training, job matching and retention programs, and diversity training. The most important factor for the success of any programs that are instilled for the business community is the support provided by the businesses themselves. The community as a whole needs to understand the value of incorporating immigrants and newcomers into the workforce, and this will provide much needed awareness.

4.8.0 Service Providers

The service provider surveys targeted a variety of different Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) in order to better understand what types of programs are currently available and whether immigrants and newcomers are accessing them. In total 16 SPOs responded to the survey. From the participants, 15 of 16 SPOs indicated that they provide services for newcomers, but only 38% consider themselves as an immigrant service provider. This variance means that the needs of immigrants are not considered when designing their programs.

There is a wide variety of programs offered; the 16 SPOs identified 50 programs that are currently being offered as can be seen in Table 12. While there is a wide range of services offered throughout the County, the main gap identified by the service providers is the lack of community awareness of the services being provided (Figure 36). The SPOs showed concerns for the availability of funds to support the programming; this includes core funds, staff wages, and lack of funding for support programs like childcare.

The Emergency Fire Services had a consultation to voice their concerns with

PROGRAM TYPE	# SPOS OFFERING
Access to Internet and other learning materials	1
Advocacy Services	4
Arts and Culture Services	1
Community Connections Services	4
Cross Cultural Sensitivity Training and Anti-Racism Training	2
Education Services	6
Employment and Training Services	3
General Assistance	1
Health Services	3
Housing Services	2
Income Securities	1
Language Training	3
Needs Assessment and Referrals	6
Organizational Supports	1
Public Transportation	1
Radio	1
Recreation	2
Social Planning	1
Social Support Services	5
Thrift Store	1
Workforce Planning	1

Table 12- Program Type of Service Provider Survey Responses

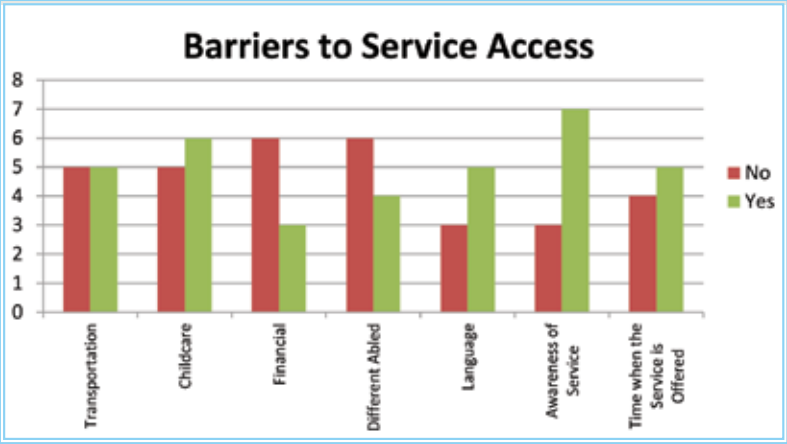

Figure 36- Barriers to Services as Identified in Service Provider Survey

addressing the immigrant and newcomer populations. The main concerns for this group was the variety of immigrants in the community and the lack of resources to specifically contact every group. While the services in Elgin can be considered successful in addressing the needs of the community at large, there is a need to find ways to make the services more accessible to the immigrant and newcomer populations.

4.9.0. Immigrants and Newcomers

The survey that was completed by 26 newcomers and immigrants looked specifically at the services that were accesses, and how the service was perceived. The survey considered newcomers from different countries who settled in Elgin County at different times and at different stages of their life. The people who completed the survey came from various backgrounds. The current ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 64 which show a diverse participation, with varying needs in settling into Canadian life (Figure 38). It is also important to understand the majority of the survey participants had family class as their initial landing status (Figure 37). Some newcomers did come to Canada reclaiming their citizenship from previous generations who lived here; this group is special in that the members do not qualify for services offered to immigrants, but only services offered to newcomers.

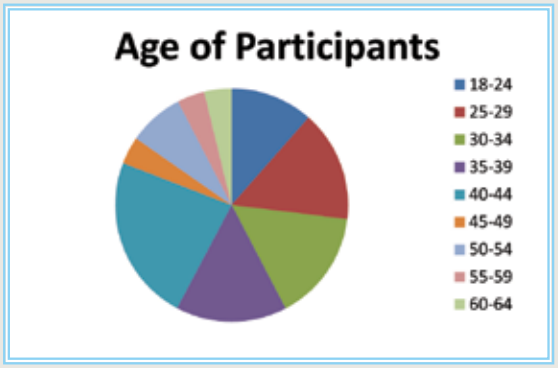

Figure 38 - Age of Newcomer and Immigrant Surveys

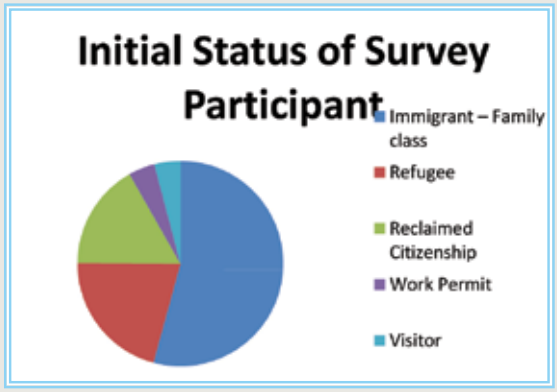

Figure 37 - Initial Status of Immigrant and Newcomer Survey Participants

Also, there were some participants who came to Canada as refugees. This group has special supports in place from the government (if they are government assisted refugees), but also come to Canada with increasingly high needs for supports. Although there is diversity in the survey participants, no participants came to Canada under the Skilled Class. The newcomer and immigrant survey was designed to identify the amount of participation and satisfaction this population has with services offered to them. In order to understand what services they accessed and required, it is important to understand the motivations and supports they had in choosing Canada, and ultimately Elgin and St. Thomas as their destination. The survey participants indicated that the two main reasons to come to Canada were to improve the future of their family and to move to a peaceful and safe country. It is important to see that the move to Canada was focused on general life quality (Figure 39). While Employment and business opportunities came shortly after, these aspects are considered means at achieving their ultimate goal and not the only reason, as would typically be seen in the Skilled Class Immigrants.

Although employment is not a motivation to migrate to Canada, the main reason to leave St. Thomas-Elgin was indicated to be lack of employment, as stated by 75% of the survey participants, 40% of which were unemployed or underemployed. The main reason the participants felt they were unemployed was due to the fact they needed to upgrade their education; 50% of the participants had not completed their high school degree.

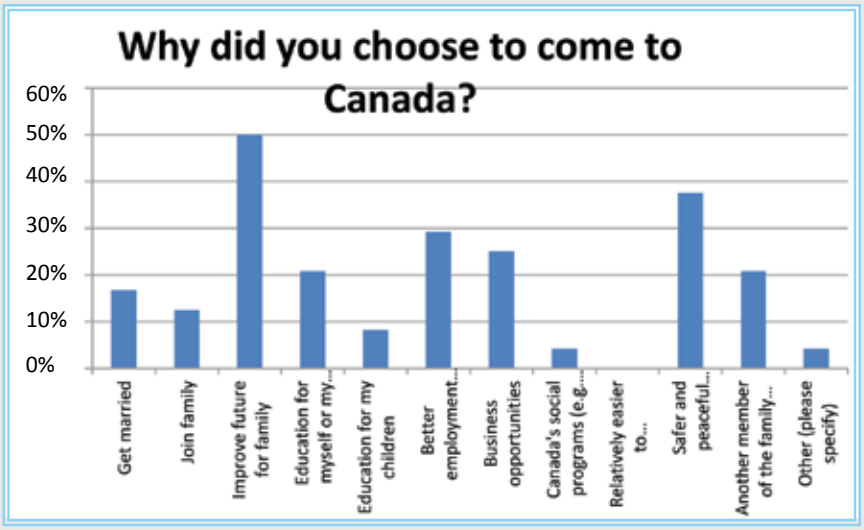

Figure 39 - Why Did you Choose to Come to Canada?

The main barrier to initially settling in St. Thomas was limited language skills, as indicated by 50% of the participants. Housing and employment was also indicated as a barrier, each by 27% of the participants. Language and schooling was still considered the largest problem that the survey participants continue to have after they have settled. The current funding allows for immigrants to access English classes for up to 3 years after they arrive, yet 30% of the participants of the survey accessed language classes 3 years after they arrived. The late entry to the language classes may be a result of newcomers not accessing languages services immediately after they enter Canada. As well 50% of the participants did not utilize Settlement Services and half of the people who accessed services waited at least a year to do so. This means that only 25% of the newcomers coming to Elgin get immediate help in Settlement. Since Settlement Services are not the main source of assistance for newcomers, 60% survey participants reported that they use family as the main source of information to help them settle. To identify the limited participation between newcomers and Settlement Service agencies, the survey identified the barriers to access. The main barriers to accessing Settlement Services included no transportation, services not provided in multiple languages, the services that were required were not offered, and the participants did not know the services were offered. The services that were offered to newcomers from Settlement Service agencies and Language Instructions all had positive feedback; however, there was strong concern for the lack of public knowledge of the services.

5.0.0. The Strategy

5.1.0. Overarching Priorities

The overarching priorities were identified through the feedback provided in consultation meetings, and surveys. These priorities were developed by taking note of participants' and service provider's feedback, and by analyzing the presence of gaps to address these needs.

OVERARCHING PRIORITIES	
Strategy	**Motivation**
Increase funding for Settlement Services providers in the region	Availability of resource s is crucial as settlement service providers will need to respond proactively to an increased participation of immigrants, employers and non-settlement agency representatives in the areas of building interagency supports, collaboration, diversity training and creative, sensitive and responsive services for immigrants.
Inclusion and civic participation	In order to create a sense of belonging, there is a need to create opportunities for immigrants to participate in social, cultural, economic and political activities free from discrimination.
	There is a need to increase outreach to immigrants to offer them the opportunity to volunteer so that they extend their social network and gain work experience.
	In order to promote successful integration of immigrants, we need to look at removing barriers to encourage their participation in leadership positions within boards, working committees or as paid staff to help organizations be exposed to and value diversity.
Advocacy: Systemic Change	Most of the time programs, services and activities have been developed to respond to the needs of those who have lived in St. Thomas and Elgin for a long time. This population is usually the one that have achieved certain stability and are, for the most part, more established than others. If this system is working for a particular group who has benefited from these services, it is difficult to see when change is needed.
	As the conditions of today's society change and new learnings become available, new creativity and imagination is needed to harmoniously co-exist with others who are not from the same background and who also need to be included. Municipalities, workplaces, service organizations, institutions and host community will need to engage in an exciting exercise to build on what already exist. There is a need to remove systemic barriers and examine what are programs, services and activities that would take into account the needs of newcomers to empower immigrants to successfully engage in the affairs of the community.

5.2.0. Priorities

As stated earlier, in 2011 the St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership engaged interested citizens in the community in community consultations across Elgin County.

At these consultations participants were asked to rank priorities according to what they thought their community assets, capacity and needs were. While there are priorities that apply to the entire county across the board, there is a need to preserve the diversity of responses expressed in the different municipalities and townships.

The following are general priorities gathered through the variety of methods. Through the regional approach, we found similar priorities county wide; however, the specific action plans and emphasis will be different for each region.

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR MARKET ACCESS		
Need/Gap	**Strategy**	**Action Step**
Immigrants and Newcomers do not have experience in accessing the Canadian Employment market	Increase networking between employers and newcomers and immigrants	Foster the organization of networking and support groups for newcomers and employers
		Develop partnerships with relevant stakeholders to provide newcomers with orientation regarding workplace culture and workshops to assist newcomers in understanding how to access the labour market
	Provide Employment Agencies specific training to increase awareness about labour market challenges faced by immigrants and newcomers	Develop collaboratively a clear understanding of labour market demands, opportunities and challenges and provide recommendations and actions that facilitate the effective inclusion and integration of skilled newcomers and immigrants in the local economy
		In conjunction with Employment Agencies and Settlement Agencies develop cultural sensitivity training
		Coordinate the provision of cultural sensitivity training to employment agencies
		Facilitate the organization of events to provide employment agencies with accreditation information and referrals to accreditation boards
	Increase employer's awareness of the various programs, services, and web-based resources available to support the hiring, integration, training and retention of skilled immigrants	Promote access to newcomer potential employees through search engines among businesses
		Promote the utilization of skillsinternational.ca to businesses in the area

Immigrants and Newcomers do not have experience in accessing the Canadian Employment market	Provide immigrants and newcomers information and training about obtaining and retaining employment	In conjunction with Employment Agencies and Settlement Agencies develop a training package that emphasizes the importance of hard skills and soft skills in obtaining and retaining employment
		In conjunction with Employment Agencies and Settlement Agencies develop a practical and hands-on job skill training for newcomers
		Promote the utilization of skillsinternational.ca to newcomers
Immigrants and Newcomers lack Canadian Experience	Provide opportunities for newcomers to gain Canadian work experience	In conjunction with Employment Agencies and Settlement Agencies develop mentorship programs
		Research and promote internships for Internationally Trained Professionals
		In conjunction with Employment Agencies and Settlement Agencies develop a volunteer program for newcomers and immigrants
		Research and promote apprentice programs for newcomers and immigrants
Lack of support for employers to hire immigrants	Investigate benefits and incentives to hire newcomers	Research SME's to understand potential benefits of hiring internationally trained professionals
		Research succession planning
		In conjunction with Employment Agencies and Settlement Agencies explore ways to support employers in hiring and retaining newcomers and immigrants
Lack of supports to hire agricultural workers	Investigate the benefits and incentives to hiring newcomers as agricultural workers	In conjunction with Employment Agencies and Settlement Agencies explore ways to support agricultural employers in hiring newcomers as agricultural workers

SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION		
Need/Gap	**Strategy**	**Action Step**
Newcomers and Immigrants are overwhelmed with the Canadian system and often do not know where to start	Disseminate information to newcomers at one access point	In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, develop an information package with useful information about services and suggestions on how to navigate the system
		Facilitate the identification process of a centralized access point in order to increase practicality and efficiency and therefore reducing the potentially overwhelming experiences of newcomers when navigating the Canadian system
		In conjunction with relevant stakeholders (i.e. real state, banks, supermarkets, churches , etc) work with community to promote the centralized access point
Newcomers and Immigrants cannot navigate the Canadian landscape and need assistance with basic life needs	Integrate newcomers into Canadian norms	In conjunction with Settlement Service Agencies, religious institutions, cultural associations, service clubs, etc., work to establish a Host Program
		Coordinate the development of creating Fact Sheets about different aspects of Canadian living
		In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, foster partnerships to re-Establish a program similar to “Welcome Wagons”
Disconnect between the source Country and Canadian life, do not understand Canadian rights and services available	Orient Newcomers and immigrants to the Canadian system	Coordinate efforts to increase awareness of Mental Health to community leaders
		Coordinate efforts to increase understanding of the Canadian Health Care System by facilitating the continued process of bridge-building with mainstream service providers, as well as between the diverse groups within the newcomer community
		In conjunction with local Settlement Service Agencies, Legal Aid Ontario and provincial initiatives (i.e. Connecting Communities-Community Legal Education Ontario, Family Law Education for Women), work to increase awareness of housing rights and responsibilities and about other systems in Canada
		In conjunction with appropriate stakeholders increase awareness of environmental concepts and practices in Canadian life
		In conjunction with appropriate stakeholders, increase awareness and educate newcomers on application process regarding citizenship
		In conjunction with appropriate stakeholders advocate to increase the time and availability of Citizenship classes
Information on the internet is difficult to access, or non-existent	Increase access to settlement and integration information	In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, foster partnerships to develop a newcomer portal to access all information about the county from one interface
		In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, foster partnerships to develop orientation podcasts for newcomers in diverse languages
		In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, work to identify additional actions to address this need

LANGUAGE, ESL, AND COMMUNICATION		
Need/Gap	**Strategy**	**Action Step**
Although language is considered a priority the limited class location, times and lack of child care is an issue	Create more diverse opportunities for language training	In conjunction with Agencies providing ESL and Settlement Agencies explore ways to increase access to ESL (i.e. on-the-job and on-site training for ESL, funding for child minding)
		Collaborate in the investigation to identify technology that increases access of language training to isolated newcomers and immigrants
Often newcomers try to access language classes that are only funded for immigrants	Increase access to classes	In conjunction with relevant local, regional and provincial and stakeholders advocate with government policy to remove barriers of status to access English Language training
		In conjunction with Agencies providing ESL and Settlement Agencies explore ways to provide literacy classes for newcomers
Newcomers are unaware of language training opportunities	Increase awareness of language training	Collaborate with relevant stakeholders in finding ways to promote language classes
		Collaborate with relevant Language Training providers to offer flexible learning opportunities across the County regardless of literacy levels

PUBLIC AWARENESS		
Need/Gap	**Strategy**	**Action Step**
Lack of integration between the immigrants and the established communities, few opportunities for integration exists	Develop public campaign of multiculturalism of County	Work collaboratively with local news sources to include immigrant and newcomer stories and experiences
		In conjunction with appropriate stakeholders identify opportunities to increase cultural presence at community events. ie. fairs, festivals
	Cultural and Diversity awareness to Youth	Work with schools to promote ethnic and cultural diversity training and awareness
Community does not know history, benefits of immigration to the area has been lost within the generations.	Highlight history and potential of diversity	In conjunction with appropriate and interested stakeholders foster the establishment of a community Cultural Diversity Committee
		Work with historical societies to understand the history of immigration in the County

COORDINATION OF SERVICES		
Need/Gap	**Strategy**	**Action Step**
Often newcomers, immigrants and other service providers do not know what is available within a community	Create opportunity for local and regional Service Provides to network and develop referrals	In conjunction with multiple stakeholders, develop Networking opportunity for Service Provider Organizations
	Raise Awareness with businesses, employers, agencies of the Services available	Provide coordination of dissemination of information to agencies, employees and businesses to increase familiarity of services and programs
	Enhance information provision to newcomers and immigrants about existing services and programs (see section Settlement and Integration for more action steps to address access)	Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to identify a process to facilitate the sharing of relevant and up to date information to newcomers and immigrants in the urban and rural areas of the County
		Provide coordination of dissemination of information to newcomers and immigrant to increase familiarity of services and programs

6.0.0. Conclusion

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has highlighted the Local Immigration Partnerships as a best practice for collaboration and information-sharing, and most view the Local Immigration Partnerships as having a role beyond the creation of an immigration plan.

The question is: How do we sustain our work?

It is imperative to emphasize that the Local Immigration Partnership model requires looking at sustainability beyond its much widely used connotation. We need to look at sustainability from the truest sense of the word so that longer term objectives related to collaboration can be realized and developed. Short-term commitment and limited resources are not compatible with meaningful change. The key concept is: Community engagement.

Community engagement provides opportunities for developing a holistic sense of sustainability, where people make decisions using local wisdom, values, information and knowledge.
This sustainability does not only refer to obtaining resources such as funding to continue this process of community engagement and coordination of collaboration, but also to the aspect of governance, the mobilization of key people and resources to implement priorities identified in the Settlement Strategy.
We sincerely hope that the Settlement the Strategy contributes through innovation to the improvement of the human condition, economic development, enhancement of service delivery and coordination, civic participation and bring groups, sectors and institutions closer.

The St. Thomas-Elgin Immigration Settlement Strategy was developed collectively; therefore its successful implementation will require committed and coordinated actions taken by stakeholders from multiple sectors, as well as the collaborative leadership of our institutions.

We hope to count on you! We look forward to working with you as we plan the next steps: to implement the Settlement Strategy. We kindly ask you to continue the journey from ideas to action.

Appendicies

Developing a Local Workforce

Developing the local work force

Elgin adopts a community-driven strategy

After months of intensive work beginning last July, teams from across the job development spectrum have completed the Elgin & St. Thomas Labour Force Development Strategy, unveiled during the Community Links event at the Elgin Mall last Friday.

The strategy identifies several priorities in Elgin County and St. Thomas designed to support workforce needs of business and industry including; entrepreneurship, tourism, transportation, agriculture and logistics.

"This strategy will be a key piece for regional economic development." *Sean Dyke*

The traditional approach has been to focus on the needs and interests of the largest employers. "But when you look at the data, more than half of the businesses in the area have fewer than five employees," notes Deb Mountenay, the Executive Director of the Elgin Middlesex Oxford Local Training Board, a key agency in workforce development. "We're looking at smaller businesses, the ones already here, that want to stay and want to grow."

The work involved a wide

Continued on page 2

The rubber hits the road

Continued from front page

range of economic and workforce agencies including the Elgin Business Resource Centre (EBRC), Elgin Middlesex Oxford Local Training Board, Fanshawe College, St. Thomas - Elgin Ontario Works, YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin, Employment Services Elgin, Mennonite Community Services and staff from both the City and County economic development agencies.

"Since a strong economy is highly dependent on a reliable and well-trained workforce, this strategy will be a key piece for regional economic development." Sean Dyke, Economic Development Officer, St. Thomas Economic Development Corporation.

The report identifies key priorities including: retaining youth in the area, attracting skilled workers especially immigrants; increasing the level of education by promoting lifelong learning; providing greater support to small business; and fostering collaboration among business, government and education.

"...This needs to be driven by the community." *Deb Mountenay*

With this strategy in place, the cross-section of business, government, education and community agencies will move to the next phase of this work to build the operational plans to achieve the priorities and actions contained in the strategy.

"As a contributing partner, the County of Elgin's Economic Development department looks forward to assisting with the implementation of the strategies contained within this plan in order to ensure the region has the workforce it needs to retain and attract business investment, and create jobs in the key economic sectors as identified in the County's economic development strategy." Alan Smith, General Manager, Economic Development, County of Elgin.

On behalf of the team, Deb Mountenay invited participation. "We're encouraging people to come forward, to join the committees, and to help with the effort.

This needs to be driven by the community."

Letters of Support

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Wednesday, February 29, 2012

TO: St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership
RE: Settlement Strategy for St. Thomas and Elgin County
Attn: Alfredo Marroquin

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and acknowledge the excellent work that your group is doing in our community.

I had the opportunity to work with your group in November to discuss the different needs, opportunities and obstacles for new immigrants coming to our community. Your working group brought together many of our community leaders and resources and gave us an opportunity to identify some of the gaps that we currently have. I believe from your findings, we will be able to work together to create a new strategy that will increase and assist our new immigrants to our rural community.

I look forward to the next step of this program and working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Joe Preston

Joe Preston
Member of Parliament
Elgin-Middlesex-London

Letters of Support

February 13, 2012

Alfredo Marroquin
St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership
Project Coordinator
16 Mary St.
St. Thomas, On.
N5P 2S3

Dear Alfredo:

As you launch the St. Thomas Local Immigration Partnership Strategy, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the tremendous effort put forth in developing this important strategy.

Bringing together representatives from community organizations to participate, plan and co-ordinate the delivery of integration services to all immigrants is a daunting task but upon completion will benefit the community at large.

As your Member of Provincial Parliament I am proud of the work our entire riding has done in order to improve the integration of immigrants in our area. Immigration helps to improve the local economy as well as increase our cultural diversity. This strategy will bring together resources and will affirm to the world that St. Thomas Elgin is welcoming to immigrants.

As you bring the St. Thomas Elgin Local Immigration Partnership to fruition I wish you a successful launch and a well deserved celebration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Yurek M.P.P.
Elgin-Middlesex-London

Literature Review

Canada Immigration Summary

A brief summary of the most relevant literature has been compiled for the stakeholders of the Local Immigration Partnership in St. Thomas Elgin County. Although this document is not inclusive of all the issues and topics applicable, it provides an overview to allow for a common understanding.

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1 Introduction

Citizenship and Immigration Canada has taken the initiative to create Local Immigration Partnerships across communities and counties in Ontario. The mandate behind the program is simple: to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers to Ontario that are local and regional in scope. Canada has realized that while the selection and acceptance of immigrants is done at the national level, the crucial steps towards integration of immigrants are done at the regional and community level. The local immigration partnership will establish a partnership council, map and monitor the services provided in the community, identify service gaps, and make recommendations in order to enhance the capacity of service providers to immigrants into Canada.

The fact that the world is entering a demographic crisis is not news. With talks of global warming, overpopulation and food shortages, this concept may seem misleading. Despite all the environmental concerns, the demographic crisis is based on the economic framework of our society. Take for example, pensions in Canada, they are paid to our elderly population (aged 65 and older) and supported by the current working population. As life expectancy increases, the size and span of the elderly dependents is growing, increasing the demand of the working generations (ages 15-64). What more, with low birthrates there have been less people entering the workforce, further increasing the demands on the working population to pay pensions. Immigration is used as a method to reinforce the working population, and continuing the payment of pensions. This is just one implication of the current demographic stagnation, but immigration plays an important role in sustaining the working population and keeping Canada in a healthy economic situation.

This literature review has been composed to familiarize the members of the council and the stakeholders of the project on key terms, ideas, and concepts of immigration into Canada. Migration Theories, Canadian immigration policies, characteristics of the community (rural, agricultural, manufacturing), immigrants barriers (language, access to services, housing, and healthcare), and best practices are discussed with the report. The intention is to assure that all parties involved in the project have a background that will best prepare them to continue working to improve the immigrant experience in Elgin County and St. Thomas.

2 Research Methods

This literature review was composed to contribute to the capacity of St. Thomas Elgin Local Immigration Partnership Council to gain appropriate background in the subject of immigration into Canada.
The work of the council is based on the beliefs that incorporating policies and services into the community will not only attract, but also retain immigrants in the community. The literature review was composed of two elements: Academic/Peer Reviewed articles: Electronic search of academic databases.

Keywords: immigrant, immigration, rural, settlement services.

Grey literature: government reports, municipal websites, Metropolis/CERIS, Maytree websites, settlement.org, OCASI CIC and more.

While the intention for this review was a well-rounded document, it is apparent that providing all the relevant information on the topic of immigrant integration would yield a large document. In lieu of an all-encompassing report, this document covers the key ideas and trends found in Canada.

3 Migration Theories

Although it is not possible to understand why every migrant begins their journey, some general migration theories have been explored. Migration can be loosely defined as "a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence"(Lee 1966, pg. 49). Global migration occurs for a variety of reasons; voluntary or involuntary, individual or familial factors, or for labour markets or social ties. The combination of factors is personalized to every situation. At present there is not one theory that is sufficient to explain all migration, but rather, segmented theories, which can only begin to paint a picture of global migration when considered in unison. Since there is no decipherable way of understanding every individual's motives of migration, scholars create broad theories which allow for flexibility (Massey, Arango et al. 1993,pg 432).
In one system migration will occur on a regional, national, and global level, all must be considered in order to understand what is occurring in that area. For the purpose of analysis, the discussion is limited to: the neoclassical theory, the new economic theory of migration, and the migration system theory – all of which can be useful in explaining the migration occurrences in the rural regions of Ontario.

3.1 Macro Neoclassical Theory of Migration

The macro neoclassical model surmises migration is stimulated through geographical differences in the supply of and demand for labour (Massey, Arango et al. 1993, pg 433). The basic principles of this theory are that immigration is motivated by wage differentials and as migration persists, these differentials will reach a state of equilibrium. Taken from a macro level perspective, individuals in a low wage region will be attracted to regions with relatively higher wages. Countries with a large labour force will have a lower wage level than countries with a limited labour force. (Harris and Todaro 1970, pg 137). Once the labour force in the latter region reaches a sizable labour, supply wages will fall to balance with the sending region, creating an equilibrium balance in both work force size and wages and seizing migration. The push pull factors of the macro neoclassical model are generalized to wages and employment opportunities. The type of opportunity available will affect the scale and migration pattern. Industry specific labour availability will target different types of immigrants. Often well educated migrants will be attracted to developed cities with knowledge intensive industries where migrants with lower education or specific skills will be attracted to labour intensive markets.

3.2 Micro Neoclassical Theory of Migration

The micro model delves deeper into personal choices of migration. This means that an evaluation of push and pull factors is performed resulting in migrants moving to the location where they can expect highest returns. The push and pull factors considered are individual human capital characteristics, migration costs (measured in transportation costs and social conditions), psychological factors, and government policies (Massey, Arango et al. 1993, pg. 436). The theory describes the influence of education, assimilation and previous experience as important factors in a migrant's decision process. If the receiving region has a higher wage differential which outweighs the migration and psychological costs, a move will occur. Including the psychological costs in the decision process introduces a variable that is difficult to measure and can only be generalized to a culture specific set of indicators (such as family networks, access to cultural activities, language). Individuals leaving close family in ancestral homes to areas with vastly different language use will exhibit high levels of psychological costs.

3.3 The New Economic Theory of Migration

With a firm base in the neoclassical models the new economic theory included one important factor: the case of larger units of migrants, such as family units and other social networks. Since many migrants typically move with family members or other related groups, the factors of migration within the group need to be balanced first by individual push and pull factors and second by the balance between the actors in the group. This strategy will optimize the migration for the unit and not the individual (Massey, Arango et al. 1993, pg. 436). "Migration by a family member is then warranted when it facilitates a reduction in total familial risk via a diversification of earning sources"(Katz and Stark 1986, pg136). This model removes the dependence of wage differentials and places an importance on labour diversification. The need for diversification helps to explain why migration does not stagnate when the balance between regional wage and employment opportunities reaches equilibrium, because a higher wage is not necessarily the desired outcome.

3.4 Migration System Theory

Once migration streams have been created, subsequent migrants are expected to follow suit leading to a stable structure of migration flows. Once these systems are established they are characterized by an exchange of goods, capital and people between regions (Massey, Arango et al. 1993, pg. 454). Migration systems are particularly evident within country-internal migration. In this system, government policies do not restrict migration between regions, but rather use regions from the country as a potential labour pool.

4 Policy

Policies are often implemented in order to have an impact on the public, measuring changes in their magnitude offers assurance that effects are being felt.

4.1 Policy and Migration

Some migration and demographic measurements include indicators such as: environmental elements, social networks, education, employment/ unemployment and so forth. Environmental factors can be considered in the psychological costs, or the standard of living changes of the neoclassical micro theory are indeed a potential indicator of migration patterns. Hunter conducted a study to understand the types of effects desirable and undesirable environments had on migration and found that environmental factors, like mines, have an influence on pull factors, but not on push factors (Hunter 1998, pg. 271).

Although employment is a main focus of migration, other non-employment factors can also have an influence. Indicators include: housing problems, change in marital status, intra-urban mobility, family/

relatives networks, change of climate, and school attendance (Roseman 1983, pg 307). Factors often measure the reason to move to an area, with only a small consideration as to why they leave. "Although emigration is obviously of interest to policy makers, it is less susceptible to policy measures than immigration" (Edmonston 2009, pg. 112). This means it is harder to control the motives of emigration through policy formation.

Mata argues that push factors between urban and rural migration are harder to measure. "[S]ocio-economic strain is not a directly observable phenomenon and as such it constitutes a latent variable. Unemployment, earnings and poverty related indicators, which are chosen for this analysis, constitute essential core variables regularly used to identify socio-economic conditions of disadvantage in rural and urban areas" (Mata and Bollman 2007, pg. 197). Mata was able to conclude that while personal dissatisfaction cannot be measured, indicators that would affect personal attitudes can.

4.2 Canada's Immigration Policies

Canada boasts population with foreign origin of about 41% in 2006. What more, the population of foreign born in 2006 was 20% – second only to Australia. The estimated current population of foreign born is between 25-28% (The Daily,March 9, 2010). Canada has a large flow of immigrants (approximately 250,000 per year) based on 3 categories: Economic, Family, and Protected Persons (Refugees). As seen in Figure 1, by and large, the majority of the new immigrants into Canada fall under the economic immigrant category, however this should not discount the importance Canada plays in housing refugees and reunifying immigrants with their families.

Table 1, derived from CIC (CIC 2009), shows the flows of immigrants into Canada by different category from 1985-2009. Looking at the actual number of immigrants into Canada over the years of 2005 to 2009, it is easy to see that Canada has set a goal of total immigrants entering the country at about 250,000, as seen in Table 1, derived from CIC (CIC 2009). To understand immigrant make-up of Canada's population a dissection of the four types of immigrant classes will follow.

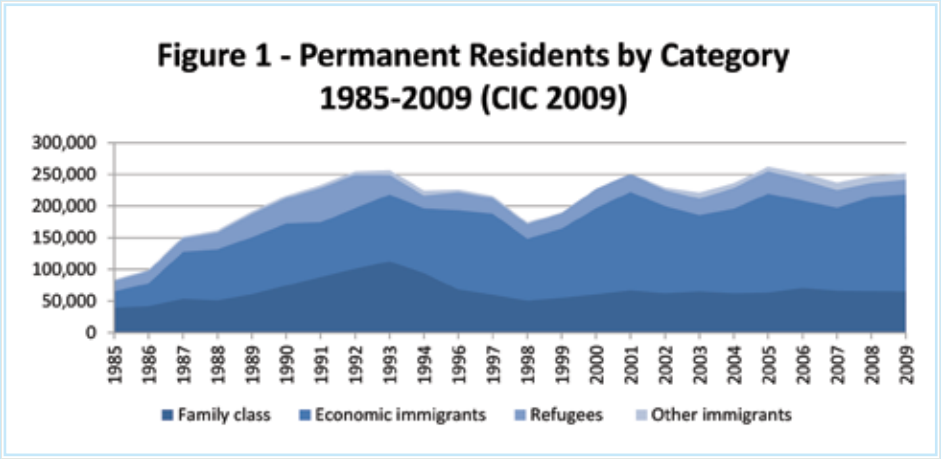


Table 1 - Permanent Residents by Category

2005 – 2009 Count and Percents

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Family class	63,364 24%	70,513 28%	66,241 28%	65,577 27%	65,200 26%
Economic immigrants	156,312 60%	138,251 55%	131,244 55%	149,070 60%	153,498 61%
Refugees	35,775 14%	32,499 13%	27,955 12%	21,860 9%	22,846 9%
Other immigrants	6,787 3%	10,375 4%	11,312 5%	10,737 4%	10,634 4%
Total	262,241	251,642	236,754	247,247	252,179

4.2.1 Family Immigration Class

Family Immigration occurs in the event that a Canadian citizen or permanent resident 18 years or older living in Canada applies to sponsor their parent, grandparents, spouse, common-law partner, sibling, dependent child or child to be adopted. A sponsor must not have any criminal records, not be bankrupt, be on assistance, or have defaulted on support payments. The main focus of this type of immigration is for family reunification, allowing for immigrant networks to grow and in time the potential for an increase in further migration into Canada. While the focus of this group is to help reunify families, the rules that are applied are very strict. This type of migration however supports the network theory of migration, allowing migrants to increase their social ties (CIC 2010).

4.2.2 Economic Immigrants

This group is permitted into Canada with the intention that they will contribute to the economy; the group is comprised of federal skilled workers, business immigrants, provincial nominees, live-in caregivers, persons in Canadian Experience Class, and their dependents. By far, the largest group of immigrants are in the economic category, accounting for over 55% of the migration into Canada as seen in Table 1Error! Reference source not found.(CIC 2009).

Further dividing the economic class into subsections of skilled workers, business immigrants, provincial/ territorial nominees, live-in caregivers helps understand the process that is required in order to gain an economic immigrant status in Canada. The largest class is the skilled worker class which accounts for 83% of economic immigrants in 2005, but drops to 63% in 2009, as seen in Table 2. In 2009 a new program of

Canadian experience class was introduced and the provincial nominee class has been increasing steadily over the 5 year period.

Table 2 - Economic Immigrants
by Class 2005-2009

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Skilled workers	130,238 83%	105,944 77%	97,852 75%	103,734 70%	95,962 63%
Canadian experience	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2,545 2%
Business Immigrants	13,475 9%	12,076 9%	10,181 8%	12,408 8%	12,159 8%
Provincial/ territorial	8,047 5%	13,336 10%	17,094 13%	22,418 15%	30,378 20%
Live-in caregivers	4,552 3%	6,895 5%	6,117 5%	10,511 7%	12,454 8%
Total	262,241	251,642	236,754	247,247	252,179

4.2.2.1 Skilled Worker Class

The skilled worker class is selected based on a points system, weighing in on education, language, experience, age, arranged employment, and adaptability. This method of immigrant selection guarantees a high-skilled immigrant labour force.

In theory these migrants would be model employees, with prior work experience and high levels of education. This program is instituted in order to guarantee that the immigrants into Canada will have the opportunity to positively affect the Canadian workforce. As indicated in Table 3, in 2009 63% of Economic Immigrants, or 95,962 immigrants into Canada, were accepted in this sub-class (CIC 2010).

Table 3 - Federal Skilled Worker Program Point System Summary

	Maximum Points
Education	25
Language	24
Experience	21
Age	10
Arranged	10
Adaptability	10
Total	100

Pass Mark = 67

4.2.2.2 Canadian Experience Class

The Canadian Experience Class is a new addition to the economic immigrant category. Temporary Foreign Workers and Students who graduated with a Canadian educational credential are eligible to apply. This type of class was created to aid immigrants who already have a temporary residence status; they can apply while still in Canada with this status. This class has the highest potential of integrating into the workforce because the applicant has already acquired experience in Canada and will have a high level of language skills, additionally there is a high potential that they will already be participating in the workforce and will simply continue their life in Canada. Although this is a newly created class, comprising of only 2% of economic immigrants as shown in Table 2, it shows high potential for attracting immigration to Canada (CIC 2010).

4.2.2.3 Business Immigrants

Business Class Immigrant Subclass is designed to encourage and facilitate individuals who are already successful business people and are seeking new opportunities and challenges. In the past, applicants were permitted to apply under three classes: investors, entrepreneurs, self-employed persons. The applicants must meet the basic requirement of the CIC of net worth, investment (which varies for each group), and experience before they are evaluated. The point system can be summarized in Table 4. Applicants under the investor group must have a net worth of $1,600,000 and make an investment of $300,000, applicants in the entrepreneur group must have a net worth of $300,000. Self-employed applicants are required to contribute to cultural, athletic or agricultural aspects of Canadian life (CIC 2010).

Table 4 - Business Immigrants Point System Summary

	Maximum Points
Business Experience	35
Age	10
Education	25
Language (English or French)	24
Adaptability	6
Total	100
Pass Mark = 35	

4.2.2.4 Provincial Sponsorship

In order for provinces to establish and fulfill their own needs in employment, the provincial sponsorship program allows the provinces to establish specialized standards and processes. This method allows for immigrant candidates to be chosen that are likely to settle effectively in the economic and social life of the region. This class takes priority in the processing phase as there is a known immediate demand for work positions to be filled. The applications begin with a need arising in the province and the employer

initiates the process. This type of immigration is particularly important in provinces that see lower rates of immigration. This sub-class was initiated in 2000 when 1252 immigrants entered Canada under this sub-class. The sub-class has since grown to 30,378 immigrants, 20% of the economic immigrants in 2009 (CIC 2010).

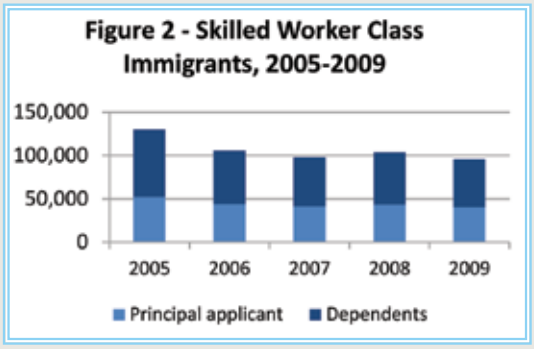
4.2.2.5 Live-in Caregivers

A live-in Caregiver is an individual who has been approved to work as a caregiver for children, seniors, or a disabled employer in Canada. A live-in caregiver must already be living in Canada, have a valid work permit, travel document, completed two years of full-time employment as a live-in caregiver, lived at the employer's home while employed, and able to support themself and their family without social assistance. This class while very specific contributed 8% of economic immigrants into Canada in 2009 .

4.2.2.6 Dependents in the Economic Class

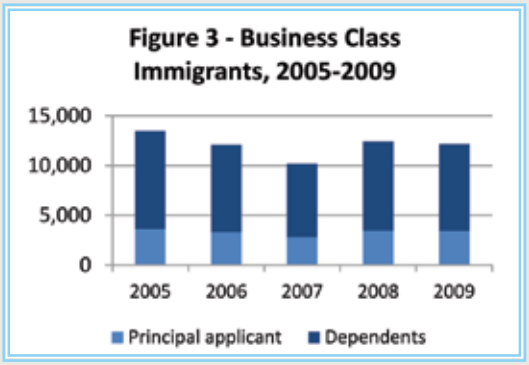
The seemingly large number of immigrants accepted in the economic immigrant class, 153,498 in 2009, at first glance paints a skewed picture. When looking at the number of immigrants in this class there needs to be distinction between the number of principal applicants and their dependents. The proportion of dependents will be demonstrated for each sub class within the economic immigrant class.

The largest class of economic immigrants is the skilled worker class, however about 60% of the 95,962 immigrants are dependents, as can be seen in Figure 2 (CIC 2009). This can be interpreted that for every person who has the criteria to enter as a skilled worker there is the possibility that they will bring more people into the country with them.

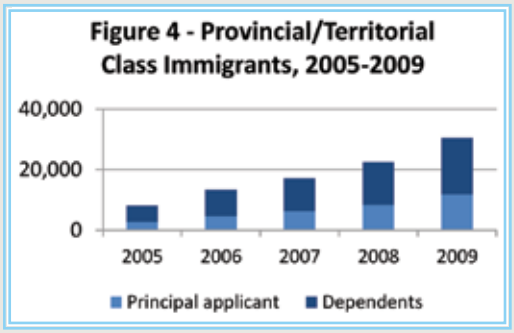


The requirement of ongoing experience and residence in Canada of the Canadian Experience class results in a rather low number of dependents entering Canada in this sub-class. Of the 2,545 immigrants, only 30% were considered dependents.

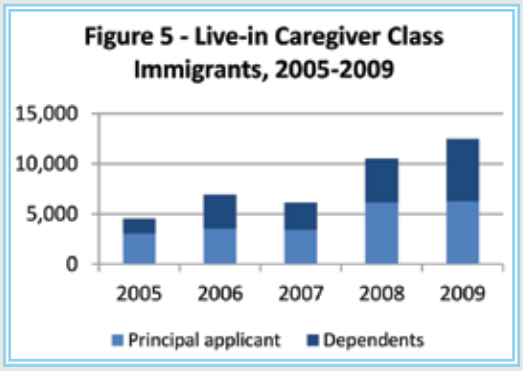
The Business class applicants, accounting for 8% of immigrants in 2009, bring in the highest proportion of dependents. This means for the 12,159 immigrants who entered Canada under this title, only 3,423 persons were evaluated and accepted under the requirements, as can be seen in Figure 3 (CIC 2009).



The provincial nominee program has increased in popularity since 2005, what is interesting to note is that as the number of nominated immigrant's increase, the ratio of dependents that join them is decreasing. This means that there are more immigrants in this class that will be entering the workforce every year. The growth and ratios can be seen in Figure 4 (CIC 2009).



The final group, live-in caregivers, is another class where the number of dependents is historically lower than the number of principal applicants, as can be seen in Figure 5. In 2009, this ratio was about 50%. This characteristic is inherent in the nature of the class, and the specific skills and living arrangements required.



When the division in principal applicants and dependents is identified, the number of immigrants who enter Canada who have been approved under the economic immigrant system, and have the highest potential to enter the labour force, drops to under 25% of all immigrants into Canada. This suggests that in 2009, there were only 64,007 immigrants in the economic class ready to work, not the 153,498 as initially indicated.

4.2.2.7 Underutilization of Skills within the Economic Class

"When applying for a visa many immigrants may mistakenly assume that granting of the "points" for their occupation and education is an approval of the skills and qualification "(Hathiyani, pg 131). In reality, many professional occupations are regulated and require education and experience from Canada. Immigrants in this category come to Canada with savings and the expectation that they will easily integrate into the labour force. However this is not always the case. The largest emphasis is placed on education. However, as the report by Albiom and Maytree suggests, education in non-Canadian institutes is devalued at a rate of 30%, professional degrees need to be approved by governing bodies. The Albiom and Maytree report further identifies experience outside of Canada is discounted by 70%, this being 1/5 of the criteria to be granted acceptance into Canada (Albiom 2009, pg 25).

4.2.3 Refugee Immigration Class

While refugees only comprise of 12% of Canada's immigrants from 2005-2009, Canada has a long history of accepting refugees. Refugees are categorized by the UN in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, as a person who "owing to a well-rounded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable or, owning to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of protection of that country"

Three strategies are used in the case of Refugees:

- Repatriation – allowing the refugees to resettle in their countries of origin once the conditions have improved
- Local integration into the asylum country – aiding refugees to integrate in the country that they fled to
- Third country resettlement – in the case that the refugee cannot remain in the initial asylum country they will be resettled into more appropriate environment

When a country becomes inhospitable, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 19551), or other referral organizations will refer the refugees to settle in Canada. After the referral process a Canadian visa officer will decide if the person meets the requirements of Canada's refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement program. Additionally, there is the potential for the home country to be deemed a 'source country' by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Countries that qualify as a source country include locations in which there is a continuous civil war, or armed conflict in conjunction to the aforementioned requirements. Refugees accepted into Canada from a source country are also eligible for the Immigration Loan Program. The loans are often approved for medical costs, travel documents, and transportation to Canada. Once refugees have landed in Canada they will be granted financial assistance to help pay for immediate needs such as: travel from the airport, temporary accommodations, assistance in finding permanent accommodation, basic household items, and general orientation to life in Canada.
In the case arriving to Canada without any status; a refugee claim can be made at the border, once they have arrived in Canada. This can only be done if the refugee is entering Canada as the first safe country, that is, they cannot enter through the U.S. Although this is a viable option, refugees that are accepted into Canada in this manner do not get the same support from the government.

4.2.4 Temporary Foreign Workers

Another group of immigrants into Canada are the temporary foreign workers. While they are not granted permission to permanently stay in Canada, they come in order to work for a period of up to 8 months. Temporary workers, although not a permanent fixture in Canadian society, account for 404,886 people in Canada in 2009. Almost 153,000 more temporary workers entered Canada in 2009 than immigrants in that same year, see Table 5.

Table 5 - Temporary Foreign Workers 2005-2009
By Count

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Initial entry	81,649	94,192	114,829	134,378	119,114
Re-entry	41,045	44,855	49,963	57,903	59,364
Total entries	122,694	139,047	164,792	192,281	178,478
Still present	101,664	116,688	135,607	170,152	226,408
Total Foreign workers	224,358	255,735	300,399	362,433	404,886

Unlike the other immigrant classes, the temporary worker application process begins with the employer. The employer petitions the government to hire a temporary foreign worker, the application is then processed by Human Resource and Social Development Canada (HRSDC). HRSDC is screening the application in order to ensure that:

- the job offer is genuine;
- the wages and working conditions are comparable to conditions Canadians would face;
- the employer conducted a search for available applicants within Canada, by posting the job on Job bank;
- the worker is filling a labour shortage;
- the employment of the foreign worker will create new jobs for Canadians;
- skills and knowledge will be passed from the foreign worker onto Canadians;
- Hiring of the worker will not create a labour dispute.

Canada has developed 5 areas of focus of temporary workers: academia, seasonal agriculture, film and entertainment, information technology, live-in caregiving.

In the temporary agricultural sub-class, the worker waits for the application to be approved by HRSDC then applies with the ministry of labour of their home country. The ministry of labour in their home country considers past experience before approval for them to be sent to Canada. In this class the employer is required to partially pay the airfare, provide free housing, and ensure they are registered in provincial health insurance. As a temporary worker they are required to pay into Canadian Pension and Employment Insurance, after one valid contribution has been made, then the workers are eligible to claim these benefits after they reach the age of 65, regardless of where they are living at the time.

4.3 Summary of Canadian Immigrant Classes

The Canadian immigration strategy works to accommodate a wide spectrum of immigrants into Canada. This wide target area is both the immigration policies strength and weakness. Its strength lies in the ability of a diverse immigration population to enter Canada, while its weakness is in the confusion of knowing which group to apply to. The paper work that applies in any immigration circumstance is compounded when there is an initial confusion of which class to apply under. Immigrant hopefuls need to first learn the requirements of each group before they can choose which one to apply to. Improving the information presentation of the immigrant groups can aid the initial experiences of immigrants into Canada.

5 Community Characteristics

5.1 Small Size Communities

Canada is a vast country, even with 90% of the population living within 200 km of the US border approximately 20% of the population live in rural communities. When characterising a rural community, the popular idea of endless farmland at great distances from shopping centers is no longer the reality. Rather, rural communities are characterised by all areas that are not defined by: concentrations of 1000 and a population density of at least 400 per square kilometre. In fact Canada's Agricultural sector employs a mere 1.8% of the population. Where conversely, in reality the rural communities function as mini cities, where opportunities for entrepreneurial endeavours are many, land space is relatively inexpensive, there is more potential for factories to flourish, and a need for trained professionals is mounting. In short, rural communities trade off access to large city centers for smaller communities, safer neighbourhoods and a general better quality of life.

In terms of migration rural and small size communities are also referred to as third tier communities. The common definition of a third tier city is a city with a population less than 500,000 and employment opportunities, cultural diversity, and immigration services are limited in delivery (Krahn 2005). These third tier cities have a difficult time attracting immigrants because they are less well known and often do not have the proper advertising to inform immigrants of opportunities. In addition to lack of information to attract immigrants, third tier cities also have difficulties in providing services to immigrants once they arrive. The main issue is a lack of infrastructure which permeates into language classes that are rigid in timing and only offer classes to a lower accreditation level, compounded with low frequency public transportation and lack of child minding, resulting in access issues (Zehteb-Martin 2007).

5.2 Manufacturing Industry

Many rural and small towns across Canada are heavily dependent on the manufacturing industry. The manufacturing sector has a demand for a large range of workers including skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled (Leach 2007). The positions that are hardest to fill by local workers are the high skilled positions of welders, CNC operators and the like. It is for these positions that immigrants apply as skilled workers, or return on temporary work permits. With the ability of manufacturing companies to hire over a spectrum of working class there is good diversification in the work force.

Often in times of economic hardship manufacturing communities are affected by the changes, however "when overall manufacturing employment is increasing, it increases faster if [rural and small town] areas and when manufacturing employment is declining, it declines more slowly in [rural and small town] areas" (Beshiri 2010). This means for a worker in the manufacturing industry it is strategic to be employed in a rural region. Not only are rural industries more resilient against the economy, but in rural communities manufacturing plays a larger role in employment, 13% in rural communities and 11% in larger urban centres. The manufacturing industry has the ability to attract immigrants into communities based on its flexibility in job potential and resilience in the economy.

5.3 Agriculture

In Canada there is a heavy weight on agriculture and resource extraction. In order to keep the agricultural product at a low cost and remain competitive in the global market there is a need to minimize the cost of labour. The high skills that are required in the physical labour of the agricultural industry and the low wages do not attract many Canadian citizens to work. As a result many rural communities seek seasonal immigrants to work in the fields and fill the jobs that are undesirable to Canadians. Although the conditions of work, long hours, low wages and overtime, are not desirable to immigrants, the conditions

and wage is higher than they can obtain in their countries. Often workers who do a good job will be rewarded with being rehired the following year; the agricultural industry creates a steady and predictable flow of temporary migrants into Canada (Bauder 2007).

5.4 Low-German Mennonite Population

The Mennonite belief established in 16th century Netherlands is a descendent of the Anabaptists, holding a belief of adult baptism. Mennonite history is one of migration, since they formed in the 1500's they have been seeking a way to retain cultural and religious independence from the state. The main migration channel was from Netherlands 1500's, to Poland in 1530, to Russia 1789, to Canada 1874, to Latin America (Mexico, Paraguay) 1920's, since that time some have scattered across the globe, some returning to Canada. In seeking cultural and religious independence Mennonites have two main conditions: military exemption and freedom in education. The Mennonites seek military exemption because they are non-combative and do not believe in participation in military operations; they settle their disputes with arbitration. In terms of education, Mennonite communities would like to teach classes in German, the language of worship, and would also like to teach the students about their Mennonite faith. In Canada there are provincial standards and in this case Mennonite school will not fulfill these standards, conversely they prepare the students for the way of life in their communities. In the early days of their existence the Mennonites were craftsmen with many trades, but throughout their long history of migration they soon became farmers and even today it is their dominant skill. In short, Mennonites are an ethno-religious group who wish to continue their life as they have for five centuries, in turn preserving their faith.

6 Services for Immigrants

In response to the high volume of immigration into Canada in comparison to other developed countries, Settlement Services are funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Services include: interpretation and translation, assistance in completing forms and applications, Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), help in finding a job or required training, information about community services, health care, school and other social services. The services are provided to new immigrants with no cost and are confidential. However, government funded services are not the only service that immigrants will access when they emigrate into a community; there are countless fee for access services as well as informal services that are provided by communities at large.

6.1 Best Practices in Immigrant Integration and Settlement

Immigration integration in recent years has been seen as both a process and an outcome. When speaking about the outcome of integration many aspects are considered including economic, social, civic and can be obtained over one lifetime. Settlement considers the immediate needs such as shelter, food, basic language skills, and basic orientation. Later forms of settlement include education and training, employment, language, health services and housing services (Mwarigha 2002). In accommodating immigrants, best practices are in place to help guide and assure their needs are being addressed. The Canadian Council for Refugees has *Best Settlement Practices* which are a good guideline to build upon (Refugees 1998). According to these guidelines, services should:

1. Be accessible to all who need them.
2. Be offered in an inclusive manner, respectful of, and sensitive to, diversity.
3. Empower clients.
4. Respond to needs as defined by users.
5. Take account of the complex, multifaceted, interrelated dimensions of settlement and integration.
6. Be delivered in a manner that fully respects the rights and dignity of the individual.
7. Be delivered in a manner that is culturally sensitive.
8. Promote the development of newcomer communities and newcomer participation in the wider community, and develop communities that are welcoming of newcomers.
9. Be delivered in a spirit of collaboration.
10. Be made accountable to the communities served.
11. Be oriented towards promoting positive change in the lives of newcomers and in the capacity of society to offer equality of opportunity for all.
12. Be based on reliable, up-to-date information.

These guidelines are important to follow in order to ensure that the funding that is set aside for settlement services is utilized in an efficient manner. In delivering these services it is also critical to understand the value added of forming partnerships between service providers. In 2005 CIC performed an evaluation of its ISAP programs; the study identified community based service providers as the most effective and efficient means of providing the services immigrants need most. Furthermore, CIC identified service providers that partnered among each other increased the positive effects for immigrants (CIC 2005).

6.2 Barriers

Although best practices in immigrant integration strategies have been established, and settlement services are offered, immigrant populations continue to face barriers. These barriers make integration very difficult. Despite the fact that there are many services that need improvement in addressing these barriers, their identification allows for efforts to be focused. The general immigrant barriers will be discussed in the following section.

6.2.1 Language

Often new immigrants into Canada have obtained accreditation in international English or French language tests, but do not speak English or French at the same level as Canadian citizens or long-time Canadian immigrants. This is true for individuals who want to enter into the labour market, and individuals who simply want the opportunity to partake in everyday communication. Helping immigrants obtain a certain standard of language has been one task of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) as well as other language courses that are offered in communities, including private tutoring and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. The lack of language skills is identified as a key barrier to entering the labour market and integrating socially into a community (Hathiyani 2007).

6.2.2 Access to Social Networks

Considering that many immigrants leaving their country of origin are not only leaving behind a familiar culture, but also a social network which provided for them a sense of their belonging; Social networks become more relevant in a new country where the immigrant may not have this network of support. Another valuable benefit of social networks is when the immigrant is ready to secure employment. In today's economic world, the best way to obtain a job is through established social networks. The loss of social network for immigrants strongly affects the economic class of immigrants. Creating social networks is one method that can be used to aide immigrants and communities to stimulate social capital fostered in the relationships built through networks with shared norms, values and understanding which facilitates cooperation within or among groups (Omidvar 2003). Although there is intention in Canada to promote social inclusion, at present the largest barrier is the access to meaningful and relevant information (Caidi 2005). The main purpose of the economic class of immigrants into Canada is to strengthen the economy, unfortunately without the ability to evaluate education and experience outside of Canada this process has not produced the intended results. Canada's Multiculturalism Act is a policy that encourages "full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in eliminating any barriers to that participation (DJC 1985)"

6.2.3 Access to Housing

A major consideration in immigrant migration is affordable and adequate housing. In recent years housing has become a very important aspect of the integration process (Teixeira 2010). In the transition period for immigrants and refugees, when affordable housing in unavailable, they will live in overcrowded conditions, utilize social houses, sleep in shelters, or 'couch-surf'. These conditions only temporarily and inadequately fulfill the basic need of shelter. Affordability is only one obstacle immigrants' face when searching for housing. Other barriers such as collection of information about housing vacancies, language barriers, discriminatory practices of landlords, lack of understanding of rights and responsibilities as tenants and renters, all combine to make housing a large problem.

Immigrants' lack of access to relevant and appropriate information regarding the housing market makes them vulnerable to fall into housing conditions that are not desirable. Acceptable housing, also known as core housing needs, is any dwelling that falls below in being:

- Adequate – defined as a residence that does not require any major repairs
- Suitable – defined as a dwelling that does not have enough bedrooms for the make-up of residents;
- Affordable – dwelling should cost less than 30% of before-tax take household income(Dunning 2007).

While adequate and affordable housing requires no further explanation, suitable housing is calculated by crowding. Crowding is a measure that helps understand the conditions under which people live. The ideal criteria for adequate housing are presented in Haan's dissection of crowding (Haan 2010):

- There are no more than 2 persons per bedroom;
- Parents have a bedroom that is separate from children;
- Members that are age 18 or older have their own bedroom, unless they are married or living common-law;
- Children age 5 or older do not share a bedroom if they are of the opposite sex.

Although this is used to measure the crowding in housing, there also needs to be consideration for cultural preferences. That is, in some cultures the above conditions may not be considered negative and may in fact be the preferred situation.

Of all immigrants, it can be generalized that refugees experience the greatest difficulties in obtaining acceptable housing. This group has the largest proportion of lone-parent households. As can be expected, family class immigrants have fairly good housing situations. This is because they come into Canada after their families have settled and have demonstrated that they can support the newcomer.

The skilled immigrant class is often the individuals who enter Canada and in time sponsor the family class immigrants. When skilled immigrants enter Canada they often dedicate a large portion of their income to housing expenses. The immigrants who enter Canada under the best conditions are the immigrants who enter Canada with the greatest wealth; the Business immigrant class (Hiebert 2010)

6.2.4 Access to Social Services and Health Care

In the initial stage of immigrant settlement, the availability and services of Canada's Health system is very unclear, especially to immigrants who come from countries where healthcare is very expensive or inaccessible. Accompanying the differences in health care programs between countries are language barriers and immigrant status; health literacy can become a large issue with new immigrants. In many cases, health services and information are not sensitive to cultural, faith and language needs of diverse communities. Often in order to overcome language deficiencies, immigrants will isolate themselves from their problems and therefore not get the help they need, or they will rely on their children who have higher language proficiency.

In conjunction with health literacy, the issue of mental health literacy should be considered. At times immigrants cannot identify mental health issues; they do not understand their causes, are fearful of persons exhibiting mental health issues, and may have incorrect beliefs about mental health treatments. This may lead to reluctance in getting help for mental health issues, and do not know how to treat someone with mental health issues. Although immigrants are less likely to identify with mental health issues than Canadian born, in general, immigrants are also less likely to suffer from mental health issues. Conversely, refugee may have unmet needs caused from traumatic pre-migration experiences (Simich 2009) and are the immigrant group most likely to suffer from mental health issues. The health and mental health literacy of immigrants is a crucial aspect that will help immigrants integrate and feel comfortable in their community

6.2.5 Transportation

Lack of transportation has been identified as a large barrier to immigrants. When first arriving to Canada transportation is required to access services, attend jobs, and simply get around. This barrier is eased through the public transit systems that exist in many cities. However, in small towns and rural areas public transit is often sparse or nonexistent. This means that immigrants, along with many residents cannot access services and are left in highly isolated situations. Some cities offer Welcome Community programs which assist immigrants in the early days of their settlement. Further still, some communities will offer voluntary driving assistance, but again these services are irregular. In order for immigrant services to be productive, accessibility and transportation issues need to be addressed.

7 Conclusion

Canada is a country that has been built through migration. Throughout its short lifetime, many people have immigrated into this country for a wide spectrum of reasons, be it labour conditions, higher wages, or religious freedom. The immigration history of the country can be explained through several migration theories, each providing a specific insight, quietly painting the picture of this diverse nation.

While Canada still has a long way to go in order to completely integrate all of its immigrants, many steps have been taken to begin the process. Canada is unique in the world because of the wide variety of the types of immigrants in the three classes (economic, family, refugee). Each immigrant class will enter Canada with specific needs, understanding the composition of the flow of immigrants will help identify the different barriers and the required services to address them. The identification of the five main barriers (lack of language, social networks, housing, social services and health care, and transportation) helps communities and policy formation by directing the focus of immigrant needs. The services that are currently being provided can be expanded and diversified, based on the community needs. Community needs will be dictated by the types of economic activity as well as the size and history of the region. Services that flourish in one region is in no ways guaranteed to work in another.

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Supplementary Tables

Percent Population with no Formal Education, Statistics Canada Census 2006													
	CAN	ON	El/St.T	Bay	Mal	Ayl	C.E.	St.T	SW	DD	W.E	El/St.T imm.	El/St.T imm. '01-'06
No certificate, diploma or degree	23.8%	22.2%	29.8%	46.6%	39.6%	40.1%	21.3%	25.8%	22.5%	26.4%	37.1%	43.6%	43.6%

Table 13 - Percent Population with no Formal Education, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Education Levels of Educated Population, Statistics Canada Census 2006													
	CAN	ON	El/St.T	Bay	Mal	Ayl	C.E.	St.T	SW	DD	W.E	El/St.T imm.	El/St.T imm. '01-'06
Certificate, diploma or degree	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
High school certificate or equivalent	33.5%	34.4%	40.8%	46.2%	42.7%	40.6%	36.4%	40.9%	39.8%	41.0%	45.0%	38.5%	27.3%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	14.2%	10.3%	14.3%	16.8%	16.9%	12.6%	11.8%	14.0%	15.5%	15.5%	17.7%	19.0%	17.0%
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	22.7%	23.6%	29.3%	28.5%	28.8%	26.3%	30.5%	29.9%	28.6%	29.6%	26.8%	25.1%	12.5%
University certificate, diploma or degree	29.6%	31.7%	15.6%	8.5%	11.6%	20.5%	21.2%	15.2%	16.0%	13.7%	10.5%	17.5%	43.2%

Table 14 - Education Levels of Educated Population, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Adequate Housing Conditions, Statistics Canada Census 2006											
	CAN	ON	El/St.T	Bay	Mal	Ayl	C.E.	St.T	SW	DD	W.E
Regular maintenance only	65.68%	67.90%	65.94%	67.58%	59.71%	64.56%	67.43%	68.20%	62.11%	65.47%	57.59%
Minor repairs	26.85%	25.51%	26.47%	24.43%	35.16%	29.31%	26.28%	23.38%	29.81%	27.34%	32.77%
Major repairs	7.47%	6.59%	7.59%	7.99%	4.95%	6.12%	6.07%	8.42%	7.76%	7.19%	9.64%

Table 15 - Adequate Housing Conditions, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Percent Housing over 30% Income, Statistics Canada Census 2006											
	24.35%	ON	El/St.T	Bay	Mal	Ayl	C.E.	St.T	SW	DD	W.E
> 30% income	24.88%	27.67%	22.22%	24.35%	19.01%	22.86%	17.02%	24.25%	18.81%	17.80%	25.71%

Table 16 - Percent Housing over 30% Income, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Elgin County and St. Thomas Occupation, Statistics Canada Census 2006	
Management occupations	6.80%
Business	13.90%
Natural and applied sciences	3.30%
Health occupations	6.00%
Occupations in social science	5.80%
Occupations in art; culture; recreation and sport	1.50%
Sales and service occupations	20.50%
Trades	19.70%
Trades	7.20%
Occupations unique to processing; manufacturing and utilities	15.30%

Table 17 - Elgin County and St. Thomas Occupation, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Elgin County and St. Thomas Industry, Statistics Canada Census 2006	
Agriculture and other resource-based industries	7.50%
Construction	5.50%
Manufacturing	24.00%
Wholesale trade	3.70%
Retail trade	9.80%
Finance and real estate	2.80%
Health care and social services	10.80%
Educational services	4.60%
Business services	15.80%
Other services	15.40%

Table 18 - Elgin County and St. Thomas Industry, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Labour Force Activity, Statistics Canada Census 2006										
	El/St.T	Bay	Mal	Ayl	C.E.	St.T	SW	DD	W.E	El/St.T imm.
Not in Labour Force %	32.12%	35.20%	28.13%	38.02%	27.32%	33.91%	22.21%	28.45%	37.46%	36.54%
Employment Rate %	64.17%	60.18%	68.01%	58.56%	69.06%	61.90%	75.77%	68.99%	59.82%	57.05%
Unemployed %	3.71%	4.62%	3.32%	3.51%	3.67%	4.17%	2.15%	2.73%	2.72%	6.41%

Table 19 - Labour Force Activity, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Income Ranges, Statistics Canada Census 2006

	Canada		Ontario		Elgin		Bayham		Malahide		Aylmer		Central Elgin		St. Thomas		Southwold		Dutton/Dunwich		West Elgin	
Total - Employment income groups		100.00%	5570870	100.00%	34805	100.00%	1550	100.00%	1265	100.00%	3140	100.00%	3205	100.00%	18885	100.00%	3910	100.00%	870	100.00%	1975	100.00%
Without employment income	706550	4.94%	267855	4.81%	1485	4.27%	50	3.23%	30	2.37%	110	3.50%	210	6.55%	750	3.97%	140	3.58%	55	6.32%	150	7.59%
With employment income		95.06%	5303010	95.19%	33320	95.73%	1500	96.77%	1235	97.63%	3035	96.66%	3000	93.60%	18135	96.03%	3770	96.42%	820	94.25%	1825	92.41%
Less than $10,000	2410380	17.73%	914265	17.24%	6545	19.64%	510	34.00%	340	27.53%	755	24.88%	725	24.17%	3010	16.60%	440	11.67%	330	40.24%	435	23.84%
$10,000 to $19,999	2096945	15.43%	723240	13.64%	4520	13.57%	295	19.67%	235	19.03%	495	16.31%	445	14.83%	2380	13.12%	335	8.89%	110	13.41%	215	11.78%
$20,000 to $29,999	1947115	14.32%	672840	12.69%	4305	12.92%	245	16.33%	225	18.22%	575	18.95%	390	13.00%	2150	11.86%	170	4.51%	150	18.29%	395	21.64%
$30,000 to $39,999	1895300	13.94%	714390	13.47%	3970	11.91%	125	8.33%	125	10.12%	385	12.69%	300	10.00%	2295	12.66%	295	7.82%	145	17.68%	300	16.44%
$40,000 to $49,999	1501950	11.05%	613580	11.57%	3485	10.46%	105	7.00%	80	6.48%	325	10.71%	275	9.17%	2045	11.28%	455	12.07%	10	1.22%	190	10.41%
$50,000 to $59,999	1079360	7.94%	452510	8.53%	3810	11.43%	90	6.00%	85	6.88%	130	4.28%	285	9.50%	1965	10.84%	1110	29.44%	25	3.05%	110	6.03%
$60,000 to $79,999	1405930	10.34%	618015	11.65%	4130	12.39%	85	5.67%	50	4.05%	200	6.59%	380	12.67%	2655	14.64%	650	17.24%	15	1.83%	90	4.93%
$80,000 and over	1256715	9.24%	594170	11.20%	2550	7.65%	45	3.00%	85	6.88%	175	5.77%	200	6.67%	1625	8.96%	300	7.96%	20	2.44%	85	4.66%
Median employment income $	31484		34673		33131		17878		22738		25059		27456		36486		51911		16579		27165	
Average employment income $	40953		44660		38557		24866		28625		30095		37419		41450		46970		22816		33387	
Standard error of average employment	42		78		429		1428		1737		966		1970		567		851		2372		2900	

Table 20 - Income Ranges, Statistics Canada Census 2006

Median and Average Household and Employment Incomes, Statistics Canada Census 2006											
	Canada	Ontario	Elgin	Bayham	Malahide	Aylmer	Central Elgin	St. Thomas	Southwold	Dutton /Dunwich	West Elgin
Median employment income $	31,484	34,673	33,131	17,878	22,738	25,059	27,456	36,486	51,911	16,579	27,165
Average employment income $	40,953	44,660	38,557	24,866	28,625	30,095	37,419	41,450	46,970	22,816	33,387
Median Household income	53,634	60,455	57,839	51,191	61,530	50,957	71,300	54,876	71,189	60,226	49,415
Average Household income	69,548	77,967	66,422	58,674	71,638	59,266	83,368	62,064	81,537	65,715	58,088

Seasonal Agricultural Workers and Host County FARMS Program					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Barbados	0	0	1	1	1
East Carribean	0	0	21	5	7
Jamaica	0	0	225	267	264
Mexico	163	175	125	113	118
Trinidad and Tobago	0	0	124	132	93
total	163	175	496	518	483

Table 21 - Seasonal Agricultural Workers and Host County FARMS Program,

Funded by:
Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Financé par :
Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada