



IMMIGRATION
PARTNERSHIP
Settle. Work. Belong.

Collaborating in Research: Waterloo Region *“Immigration Matters”* survey of immigrants

P2P 2019 LIP Preconference
October 30, 2019

INSPIRING
IMMIGRATION
CONNECTIONS
IN WATERLOO
REGION





**1. Collaboration is critical in research.
We need collaboration because we
can't do as much as we want to on
our own.**

Waterloo Region Immigration Profile



Service Use: Languages & Countries of Origin

This profile provides an overview of the languages and countries of origin of immigrants and refugees accessing services in Waterloo Region in 2018. Data was collected from seven service providers that support newcomers.¹ It is meant to assist and groups in planning services to respond to demographic shifts in the newcomer population.

Top Languages of Service

While each of the seven local organizations served different types of immigrant and refugee clients, etc.) there was overlap in the top languages of service requested by their clients.² The most common top languages of service or interpretation organizations were:

1. Arabic
2. Tigrinya
3. Spanish
4. Amharic
5. Farsi/Persian
6. Somali
7. Mandarin



Other languages mentioned were: Punjabi, Turkish, Serbian, Dari, Swahili, Kurdish, Vietnamese, Gujarati, Burmese, Ojib, Afar, Betsi, Anasik, French, Korean, Oromo. Languages were spoken by anywhere from several hundred clients who spoke Amharic to a handful of clients that spoke some of the latter languages.³

The 2018 Immigration Partnership (IP) Partner Survey also asked about top languages of service. Almost 40 local organizations shared a similar list of the top languages requested. The top seven languages were the same, with the remaining languages including noted above as well as Cantonese, Korean, Nepali and Shona.

According to the 2016 Census, there were over 120,000 residents of Waterloo Region whose first language is not English or French. While many of them have also learned one or more other languages, there were more than 9,000 Waterloo Region residents who were not born in English or French. The languages with the largest number of individuals in Waterloo Region who did not speak English or French were:



Partner Survey 2018 Final Report

The Immigration Partnership of Waterloo Region collaboratively develops and implements strategies for the integration of immigrants and refugees. Our work involves public sector representatives, employers, and community organizations to address organizational, systems, and policy issues in our community.

This report outlines findings from the IP Partner Survey 2018, which aims to understand the experiences of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region and how the Partnership can better support them.

Summary of Findings

In 2018, partners were quite committed to the integration of immigrants and refugees. Partners experienced many benefits from being engaged, more collaboration was occurring and immigrants and refugees in 2018 compared to the persistent challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees. Issues that we continue to engage in through the IP include:

- **High Engagement:** Partners are highly engaged. Their involvement in IP was a source of support and resources for immigrants and refugees.
- **Affirmation of Immigration Partnership:** The Immigration Partnership is focused on the critical issue of immigration and refugees, a catalyst for effective change and a valuable resource for partners.
- **Increased Knowledge:** Partners are consistently learning about immigrant/refugee needs and available services.
- **Increased Collaboration:** There was significant collaboration between partners. Participants had made and received more referrals and referrals.
- **Increasingly Meeting Needs:** The majority of partners reported that the needs of immigrants and refugees have been better met in the last year. They are somewhat less likely to suggest that there are unmet needs in the areas of housing services, education, and employment and skills training programs. This had changed somewhat from 2017 when there were more unmet needs in these areas.

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Public Perceptions of Immigration in Waterloo Region

Background

In June 2018, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada in discussion with Local Immigration Partnerships across Canada delivered the presentation "Support for Immigration: Public Opinion and How it Informs Our Approach."¹ It was discussed that around the world, Canadians remain among the most accepting of immigrants.² It was noted that in current public opinion research public views on immigration in Canada continue to be mostly positive but that some polarization of opinion is taking place; in particular a decrease in the perceived positive impact of immigration as scope narrows from all of Canada to one's neighbourhood.

The Environics Institute for Survey Research report "Focus Canada – Spring 2019: Canadian public opinion about immigration and refugees" states: "Overall, Canadians' views about immigrants and refugees have held remarkably steady since last fall, and in a few cases have become more positive. As before, there is no public consensus on the presence and impact of immigrants and refugees, with significant segments of the population holding opposing views [...]. Opinions are more evenly divided when it comes to concerns about too many immigrants not adopting the right values and some refugees not being legitimate; but in these cases the balance of opinion has held steady if not improved slightly in the past six months."³

To better understand local opinions, the Immigration Partnership commissioned research on public perceptions of immigration in Waterloo Region. Data was gathered through the 2019 Waterloo Region Matters Survey, a mixed-mode survey conducted by the University of Waterloo's Survey Research Centre.⁴ Results present a snapshot of public opinion at this time and may change.

Survey Results

Results show similar trends in Waterloo Region as have been seen in Canada-wide surveys on public perceptions of immigration. Opinions tend to be quite positive related to questions focused on the community conditions and benefits of immigration, whereas they become less positive related to questions focused on the actions of immigrants and refugees and supports to them.

¹ Presentation on file with the Immigration Partnership.

² Gallup, World Poll 2016.

³ See: https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/focus-canada-spring-2019/environics-institute-focus-canada-spring-2019-survey-on-immigration-and-refugees-final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=8dd2597f_2.

⁴ See: <https://uwaterloo.ca/survey-research-centre/docs/3007975>.

May 2019

“Immigration Matters” survey

- Demographics
- Use of local services
(settlement, interpretation, English language learning, housing, employment, health, legal, small business/entrepreneurial supports, etc.)
- Sense of belonging, isolation, discrimination
- Top challenges, what was most helpful, top suggestions to better support the settling, working and belonging

Immigration Matters Waterloo Region Survey

We want to hear from you about the welcoming, integration and wellbeing of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.

This survey is intended for any immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region. This includes people living in Waterloo Region who are Canadian citizens, permanent residents, temporary residents or foreign nationals.

The Immigration Partnership will use the survey results to guide how organizations work together and improve services to best support immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.

Please complete this survey by [July 9](#). It will take about 10-15 minutes. You can return it to the Immigration Partnership, (235 King St. E., 6th floor, Kitchener, N2G 4N5) or ImmigrationPartnership@regionofwaterloo.ca.



All the information you provide in the survey will remain anonymous and confidential. Only the survey staff will have access to the information. You do not have to provide your name or any contact information to fill out this survey. People who complete this survey can choose to enter their name and email address into a draw for a prize. If you provide this information, your name and email will remain confidential and will only be used for the draw. They will not be connected to your survey answers. Completing the survey is voluntary and you can skip any question you do not want to answer.

Section A: Basic Information

1. Which of the following best describes you?

- I immigrated to Canada as an economic-category immigrant
- I immigrated to Canada as a family-category immigrant
- I immigrated to Canada as a government assisted refugee
- I immigrated to Canada as a privately sponsored refugee (including BVOR – Blended Visa Office Referred)
- I am currently in Canada as a temporary resident (refugee claimant)
- I am currently in Canada as a temporary resident (international student)
- I am currently in Canada as a temporary resident (on a temporary work visa)
- Other (please specify) _____



Top challenges for immigrants

	% responses
Finding work	46%
Finding affordable housing	29%
Making friends or social connections	26%
Learning English	23%
Learning where and how to do things	20%
Transportation	15%
Accessing health care	13%
Making sure my kids are okay at school and in the community	13%
Discrimination/racism	10%
Receiving public or social services	9%

What helped immigrants most?

	% responses
Making friends	40%
Having family support	37%
Finding work	24%
Volunteering	23%
Community programs and services	21%
Belonging to a religious group	19%
Being involved in a cultural association or connection with others that share your background or language	17%
Settlement worker	13%
Other community group	5%

2. Collaborating is valuable and enables us to start several steps ahead



SLIDO POLL:

Has your LIP recently been involved or do you anticipate being involved in research with any of the following?

- A. Immigrants
- B. LIP partners or organizations serving immigrants
- C. Employers
- D. General public
- E. None of the above
- F. Not sure

**3. What more could we do?
What could facilitate further
research collaboration between
LIPs?**

SLIDO POLL: How could you best benefit from other LIPs research experience?

- A. Templates of similar survey/interview questions
- B. Final report examples to see how similar data was analyzed/reported or to compare with your findings
- C. General advice/tips (planning, promotion, analysis, use of the findings, etc.) from others that have done similar projects
- D. Having others who have done similar projects provide feedback on your tools, plans, findings, etc.
- E. NONE of the above would be very useful for me

To access any of our reports:
www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/factsheets

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