



IMMIGRATION  
**PARTNERSHIP**  
Settle. Work. Belong.



# 2017/2018 Progress Report

# Waterloo Region has a long history of welcoming immigrants and refugees.

Our community benefits from the important role that immigrants and refugees play in growing the community's diversity and economy. Among the many contributions of immigrants and refugees to Waterloo Region are diverse skills, experiences and a drive to get ahead. A receiving community that is responsive and ready to welcome newcomers is crucial to their successful integration and the prosperity of the community.



As an immigrant, I feel I was quickly integrated. My family received important advice and help to start our new life here. As a result, me and my husband have a job, our children were immediately integrated into the educational system, we have free access to a lot of facilities (library, English courses if necessary, programs for children).

*Community Survey  
Respondent*



Residents, community organizations, municipal, post-secondary and business partners form the Immigration Partnership (IP) to facilitate the successful settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region. Following directions set out in a Community Action Plan (CAP), over 100 community partners work together to address organizational, systems and policy issues. The goal is to make Waterloo Region a community where immigrants and refugees successfully **settle, work and belong** – the three pillars of our work.

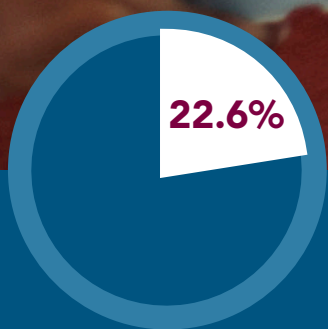
In 2016, immigrants, refugees and the broader community provided feedback about their experiences and the results of collaborations, initiatives and partnerships that emerged from the 2014-2016 CAP. Building on that feedback, partners planned and launched a new Community Action Plan for 2017-2019.

Efforts focus on people who immigrated a long time ago or more recently, refugees and refugee claimants, immigrants who are and are not Canadian citizens.

Immigration Partnership and the CAP are grounded in principles which focus on delivering community-driven impact by being responsive, collaborative and results-oriented. Over the past year, community partners made significant progress in creating positive change in Waterloo Region.







The immigrant population has grown to **119,335** people, or **22.6%** of the population.



Almost **1 in 5** residents are a member of a visible minority group.



**2.7%** of the population are **recent immigrants** (immigrated between 2011 and 2016). That is 14,045 people.

# Waterloo Region Immigration Facts

(2016 Census)

**9,340**

non-permanent residents  
(those on a work or  
study permit, refugee  
claimants and their  
family members) resided  
in Waterloo Region.



Census data can  
underestimate this  
number; some estimates  
place the actual number  
closer to **20,000**  
individuals.



Statistics Canada projects  
that the immigrant  
population in Waterloo  
Region will grow to  
between **25.4%** and  
**31.2%** by **2036**.



Recent immigrants  
are more highly  
educated than  
established immigrants  
and Canadian-born  
individuals.

**57.6%** of recent  
immigrants have  
a postsecondary  
certificate, diploma or  
degree, compared to  
**51.7%** of Canadian-  
born and **55.2%**  
of established  
immigrants.





Being refugees  
and not speaking  
English forced us to make  
decisions that ultimately  
harmed us.

Community Survey  
Respondent



# Settle

## Priority actions:

1. Educate service providers to effectively support immigrants and refugees
2. Collaborate and coordinate with relevant sectors to ensure that systems, policies and programs meet the needs of immigrants and refugees

## Steering group partners:

Eliseo Martell (Chair), Community Member; Laura Stoutenburg (Vice-Chair), Conestoga College; Jennifer Ardon, Canadian Lutheran World Relief; Jessica Bigelow, Big Brothers Big Sisters Waterloo Region; Shelley Bolden, Region of Waterloo Public Health; Margaret Brockett, Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre; Shelley Campagnola and Jon Carney, Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support; Shannon Down, Waterloo Region Community Legal Services; Debbie Engel, Carizon Family and Community Services; Gael Gilbert, Supportive Housing of Waterloo; Christine Gilles, CMHA Waterloo Wellington; Lynne Griffiths-Fulton and Fran Olmstead, Reception House Waterloo Region; Lynn Macaulay, Lutherwood; Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Kitchener Public Library; Ed Kaut, Region of Waterloo Social Services; Sakina Kirefu-Khan, Grand River Hospital; Ana Luz Martinez and Ohayla Al-Khatib, KW Multicultural Centre; Priscilla Muzira, AIDS Committee of Cambridge Kitchener-Waterloo and Area; Nermin Ozdemir, House of Friendship; Kaylee Perez, Mennonite Central Committee Ontario; Sharon Schmidt, Welcome Home Refugee House; Crystal Brown, Conestoga College; Janice Tuling and Mary Pam Vincer, YMCA Immigrant Services; Janet Waito and Pauleen Payne, St Louis Adult Education Centre; Sherry White, Region of Waterloo Housing; Farida Allie, Liliana Araujo, Community Members

## 2017/18 alumni:

Helen Ala Rashi, ShamRose for Syrian Culture; Iman Arab, Community Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Concerns; Fauzia Baig, Region of Waterloo Housing; Linda Black and Heidi Harris, Region of Waterloo Public Health; Amanda Botelho and Eunice Valenzuela; Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support; Kristen Bustamante, Region of Waterloo Children's Services; Laura Connoy, Community Member; Gina Hickman, Region of Waterloo Human Resources and Citizen Services; Kathy Hogarth, Muslim Social Services; Pari Karem (Past Chair), YMCA Immigrant Services; Katie Krauss, Big Brothers Big Sisters Waterloo Region; Mohamed Mendame, Muslim Association of Canada/Embrace Syria; June Moyo, AIDS Committee of Cambridge Kitchener-Waterloo and Area; Harry Whyte, Ray of Hope, Inc.

## Staff support:

Dan Vandebelt

## Outcomes at a glance

### Strengthened the provision of interpretation in health and other services

- Developed and disseminated reference guides to service providers and the public about when to use different forms of interpretation and how to access interpretation services.
- Hosted workshops on interpretation ethics for volunteer informal interpreters and how to work with trained interpreters for service providers.
- Collaborated with the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network to promote appropriate interpretation at local hospitals and other health settings.

### Reinforced information sharing and collaboration among services that affect immigrant settlement

- Engaged new partners and brought together settlement and mainstream service providers to identify barriers, gaps and solutions in the delivery of services to immigrants and refugees.
- Planned language learning program adaptations to address barriers.
- Shared 59 weekly updates including information about 585 relevant events and resources to over 158 community partners from at least 60 different organizations/groups.
- Held quarterly Settlement Executive Directors Group meetings to build relations and collaboration.
- Supported settlement partners to host collaborative professional development sessions for staff.

### Reduced barriers to housing for immigrants and refugees

- Shared immigrant and refugee perspectives within planning via the Homelessness and Housing Umbrella Group and other housing sector tables.
- Developed relations with and recognized landlords for providing affordable housing to immigrants and refugees with the second annual Newcomer Landlord Award on National Housing Day.

## We collaborate with:

Homelessness and Housing Umbrella Group, Waterloo Region Oral Health Coalition, Access Alliance, Refugee Health Clinic, Mental Wellness Network of Waterloo Region



We've wasted time and money trying to muddle through the basics. All new arrivals need info on how things work

Community Survey Respondent



## Facts and Data That Direct Our Actions

Hello

Bonjour

**9,300** Waterloo Region residents do not speak **English or French**  
(2016 Census)



Learning English and learning where and how to do things were among the most frequently reported **barriers to settlement** by immigrants and refugees  
(2017 Community Survey)





[There is a] lack of enough experience of [employment service] staff... to connect educated people to what they need

Community Survey Respondent



# Work

## Priority actions:

1. Develop tools that promote the hiring of immigrant and refugee talent to employers
2. Engage, educate and support employers to recruit, hire and retain immigrant and refugee talent

## Steering group partners:

Ian McLean (Chair), Greater KW Chamber of Commerce; Sheila McIntosh (Vice-Chair), Region of Waterloo Human Resources and Citizen Service; Beisan Zubi, Communitatech; Carol Simpson, Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin; Chris Farrell, Waterloo Region Small Business Centre; Elizabeth Arcilla, Orange Sky Enterprises; Eltag Elkhaila, KW Multicultural Centre; Eva Wassef, YMCAs of Cambridge & Kitchener-Waterloo; Isabel Vankuik, Scotiabank; Julie Newman, Carizon Family and Community Services; Michelle Jutzi, Wilfrid Laurier University; Tim Callan, Agilec; Tina Allishaw, Conestoga College; Janet Lehman, JW Sweid Foods, Marilena Benak, The Literacy Group; Roberto Villamar, Community member; Sue Benoit, Teledyne Dalsa

## 2017/18 alumni:

Phil Noelting, Qwalify; Nihal Salem, KW Multicultural Centre, Marlene Meehan, Health Force Ontario; Chris Prossner, The Literacy Group; Dave Thomas, The Working Centre, Delia Bortos and Jeff Somoila, Teledyne Dalsa; Heather Rankin and Lil-Marie Myers, YMCAs of Cambridge & Kitchener-Waterloo; Lisa Wright, Conestoga College; Wendy Adema, Mennonite Central Committee Ontario; Doug Campbell, Region of Waterloo Employment and Income Supports; Pam Poole, Cindy Tarasow, Maria Lambour, Gayle Horyn, Community Members

## Staff support:

Nora Whittington



[This] seminar has helped me to think about other employees' cultural views in many different situations. Although I already believe I am very tolerant of other cultures, I do have to remember that sometimes our views will be different



I will help to better practices around working together, onboarding, recruitment



Employer Education Workshop Participants



## Outcomes at a glance

### Created tools to help employers understand why to hire immigrants and refugees

- Created a resource guide about the benefits of hiring immigrants and refugees.
- Published articles in industry magazines to encourage employers to hire immigrants.
- Launched a media campaign encouraging employers to hire immigrants and refugees.

### Engaged employers to understand needs and promote ways of hiring immigrants and refugees

- Participated in more than 10 industry events to network with employers, promote immigrant hiring and create opportunities for employment services to connect with employers.
- Developed an understanding of labour force needs through conversations with employers and by partnering on the EmployerOne Survey to gather data.
- Assessed needs and connected employers to appropriate services to access newcomer talent.

### Increased employer capacity to hire and retain immigrant and refugee talent

- Organized peer-to-peer educational events for nearly 150 local employers where they learned about ways of hiring immigrants and competencies for working effectively with newcomer employees.
- Hosted networking events where around 280 local employers and 340 potential immigrant and refugee employees developed connections.

## We collaborate with:

Community Employment Literacy Committee, EmployerOne Survey, Job Developers Group, Employment and Income Support Community Advisory Committee

## Facts and Data That Direct Our Actions



**Finding employment** is the most frequently reported **challenge** of immigrants and refugees

(2017 Community Survey)



**30%** of immigrant and refugee respondents rated employment services as **"fair"** or **"poor"**

(2017 Community Survey)



Recent immigrant median **employment income** is **23.3% lower** than that of individuals born in Canada

(2016 Census)

At **12.1%**, recent immigrant **unemployment** is **double** the rate for individuals born in Canada

(2016 Census)



# Belong

## Priority actions:

1. Promote awareness and networking of formal and informal organizations and groups addressing immigrant and refugee isolation
2. Develop and implement public education initiatives that promote belonging of immigrants and refugees to the broader community
3. Support local municipalities to provide leadership in the welcoming and inclusion of immigrants and refugees

## Steering group partners:

Iman Arab (Chair), Community Member; Dianne Boston-Nyp (Vice-Chair) and Ingrid Brand, Volunteer Action Centre; Aleksandra Petrovic, Social Development Centre Kitchener-Waterloo; Annabelle Girard, KW Art Gallery; Brice Balmer and Sarah Shafiq, Interfaith Grand River; Deb Bergey and Gina Hickman, Region of Waterloo Human Resources and Citizen Service; Janet Howitt, Delton Glebe Counselling Centre; Jessica Cave, Bridges to Belonging; Jim Bowman and Pamela Albrecht, City of Waterloo; Julie Sudds, Waterloo Regional Police Service; Kelly Kipfer, Waterloo Public Library; Kelly Steiss, Rebecca Florence and Nadine McNeelands, City of Kitchener; Lee Ann Wetzel, Region of Waterloo Planning, Development and Legislative Services; Luke Moyer, YMCAs of Cambridge & Kitchener-Waterloo; Marika Galadza, Reception House Waterloo Region; Minkyung Kim, KW Multicultural Centre; Shannon Markle, Idea Exchange; Vanessa Lopak, City of Cambridge; Elba Martinez, Faith Hussin, Hiren Rawal, Hoda Ghonim, Jassy Narayan, Karun Karki, Pamela Rojas, Community Members

## 2017/18 alumni:

Donna Mancuso, Waterloo Regional Police Service; Asma Al-Wahsh, Community Member; Paulina Cisneros, KW Multicultural Centre; Heather Melo, City of Cambridge, Nicole Neufeld, KW Art Gallery; Marla Pender, City of Kitchener; Heidi Harris, Region of Waterloo Public Health

## Staff support:

Diana Palmerin Velasco



[Educate] the larger community about us, our contributions, our potential, how we are assets to this community versus the false belief that we sit on welfare, that we "demand" Canadian culture give up customs and traditions and replace them with "ours". Schools need it, parents groups need it just as much as service organizations

Community  
Survey Respondent



## Outcomes at a glance

### Connected and supported groups addressing social isolation

- Developed relationships with formal and informal organizations addressing immigrant and refugee isolation.
- Supported ethno-cultural groups to access funding for their initiatives that connect newcomers to the community.
- Informed Members of Parliament about immigrant concerns at town halls on senior's issues.

### Built public awareness of and commitment to supporting belonging and inclusion in a diverse community

- Implemented the #IamWaterlooRegion campaign to celebrate the stories and contributions of immigrant and refugee residents of Waterloo Region.
- The March 21 #IamWRagainstdiscrimination 2017 campaign and #belongtogetherWR 2018 campaign trended on Twitter and reached over 585,000 people and engaged almost 1,100 residents.
- Held the inaugural Global Migration Film Festival in Waterloo Region from December 5-18 in partnership with the International Organization for Migration, to showcase the promises and challenges of migration.
- Organized two training sessions with the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition and ONESTEP to increase the capacity of 30 public organizations, businesses, and community members to hold constructive conversations on inclusion and belonging.

### Strengthened municipal leadership in the welcoming and inclusion of immigrants and refugees

- Municipal partners engaged over 100 newcomers in interactive presentations on local democracy, municipal services and opportunities to get involved with their local governments.
- Municipal and other partners hosted a community citizenship ceremony at Kitchener City Hall, in partnership with the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, where more than 50 residents took the oath of citizenship.
- Municipal partners provided venues and other support for the Global Migration Film Festival and participated in public awareness campaigns.

## We collaborate with:

Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, ONESTEP, New Story Group, Peel Regional Diversity Roundtable

## Facts and Data That Direct Our Actions



**59%** of immigrant and refugee respondents felt isolated in the last year; this was highest among **15-35 year olds**

(2017 Community Survey)

**27%** of immigrant and refugee respondents **experienced discrimination** in the last year, most often at work or when seeking work

(2017 Community Survey)



**59%** of immigrant and refugee respondents felt a **strong sense of belonging** to Waterloo Region. This tended to increase with length of time in Canada

(2017 Community Survey)





## Immigration Partnership Council:

**Karen Spencer** (Chair), Family and Children Services of Waterloo Region; **Pari Karem** (Vice Chair), YMCA Immigrant Services; **Peter Donahue** (Past Chair), Wilfrid Laurier University; **Eliseo Martell** (SSG Chair), Community Member; **Ian McLean** (WSG Chair), Greater KW Chamber of Commerce; **Iman Arab** (BSG Chair), Community Member; **Linda Terry** (Past Vice Chair), Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries; **Lucia Harrison**, KW Multicultural Centre; **Jennifer Roggemann**, Jennifer Roggemann Immigration Law; **Kelly McManus**, University of Waterloo; **Tracy Hare Connell**, The Coaching Co.; **Jenny Flagler George**, Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network; **Nancy Bird**, United Way Waterloo Region Communities; **Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders**, Region of Waterloo Community Services; **Ernest Osei**, **Yasir Dildar**, Community Members; **Sonja Erstic**, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (ex officio), **Conal Vaughan**, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (ex officio)

## 2017/18 alumni:

**Jan Varner**, United Way Waterloo Region Communities; **Theron Kramer**, **Elif Gunce**, **John Haddock**, Community Members

## Staff support:

**Tara Bedard**, **Pauline Peng**, **Paulina Rodriguez**

# Partnership-wide

## Priority actions:

1. Advise all levels of government and systems leaders about desired changes and resource needs in Waterloo Region
2. Implement communication strategies to educate the general public about immigration matters
3. Cultivate opportunities for collaborative learning and development



There is tremendous need for coordinated services that overcome silo mentality. There needs to be better coordination with and support of social services that support the various cultures and faiths of newcomers.

Community Survey  
Respondent



## Outcomes at a glance

### Government and systems leaders made aware and engaged on immigrant and refugee settlement

- Advised federal and provincial immigration and other ministers and officials and challenges and proposed solutions related to community capacity, employment challenges, local settlement resource needs and Canada's citizenship guide as a tool to foster belonging through ongoing meetings and participation in public consultations.
- Engaged area MPs, MPPs and Regional Council in advocating for adequate settlement supports and sustained Legal Aid Ontario funding for immigration and refugee law services.

### Public awareness about immigration supports and matters deepened

- Streamlined information about local services for immigrants and refugees in the new Immigration Waterloo Region website, making it easier for immigrants, refugees and others to find information in one place.
- Published newsletters on immigrant employment, evaluation and relationships. Raised awareness of the experiences of immigrants and work done locally to support their settlement and inclusion.
- Engaged local television, radio, print and online media to publish pieces about immigration in Waterloo Region and ways in which community stakeholders support immigrant settlement.

### Collaborative learning and development strengthened

- Developed and implemented a shared performance measurement strategy through the work of an Evaluation Advisory Committee.
- Engaged over 500 community stakeholders and partners at three community forums to welcome Syrian refugees, celebrate settlement successes and reflect on the implications of immigration research and broader immigration trends on immigrant attraction and retention.
- Deepened capacity for community learning through stronger collaboration with local post-secondary institutions and community-based research groups.

## We collaborate with:

International Migration Research Centre, Centre for Community Based Research, Wellbeing Waterloo Region

## Impact of partner involvement in Immigration Partnership



Over **80%** of respondents implemented initiatives to **support newcomer** welcoming and inclusion  
(2017 Partner Survey)

Over **90%** had increased their awareness of local services  
(2017 Partner Survey)

Over **80%** worked more **collaboratively** with other organizations  
(2017 Partner Survey)



# HIRE IMMIGRANTS WATERLOO REGION



#HireImmigrantsWR



## Join us

Immigration benefits the whole community, and everyone has a role in making immigration successful. Get in touch to explore ways the Immigration Partnership can support you through the Community Action Plan and how you can contribute to achievements of its goals.



ENTRANCE FREE

5 - 18 DECEMBER 2017  
WORLDWIDE

### GLOBAL MIGRATION FILM FESTIVAL

WWW.IMMIGRATIONWATERLOOREGION.CA/WRMIGFEST

<b>PROBLEMSKI HOTEL</b> DIRECTOR: ANASTAS PRINCE OF GEORGES CINEMA WATERLOO, 6PM	<b>THE BURNING</b> DIRECTOR: ALBERT ROCHON ALBERT ROCHON CC WATERLOO, 7PM	<b>CAMERAMAN</b> DIRECTOR: JEFFREY CAMERAMAN CC FOR THE WEST, 7PM	<b>Casa ajena</b> DIRECTOR: JEFFREY DOWNTOWN DISTRICT COMMUNITY CENTRE, 6:30PM	<b>THE INNOCENCE</b> DIRECTOR: JEFFREY KINGSTON CC ALLIANCE, 6:30PM
<b>NANA</b> DIRECTOR: JEFFREY KINGSTON LIBRARY CAMBRIDGE, 6:30PM	<b>THE BURNING</b> DIRECTOR: ALBERT ROCHON ALBERT ROCHON CC WATERLOO, 7PM	<b>MANTA</b> DIRECTOR: JEFFREY WILLIAMSBURG CC WATERLOO, 6:30PM	<b>THE BURNING</b> DIRECTOR: ALBERT ROCHON ALBERT ROCHON CC WATERLOO, 7PM	<b>MISAFER</b> DIRECTOR: JEFFREY KINGSTON CC ALLIANCE, 6:30PM

PARTNERS





# Support local programs

In recognition of the overwhelming support for newcomer settlement in Waterloo Region, the **Immigration Partnership Fund for Immigrant and Refugee Initiatives** was created at the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation.

The Fund encourages the generosity of residents to respond to emerging gaps and needs in local programs to ensure the successful settling, working and belonging of immigrants and refugees. Visit **kwcf.ca** and choose this fund to donate today.

## Immigration Waterloo Region

**immigrationwaterlooregion.ca**

is a multilingual portal that helps immigrants, refugees and other newcomers get to know the community and connect to local services. Browse for information and subscribe to the community calendar to find out about upcoming programs and events.



235 King Street East, Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4N5  
519-575-4757 x3171

[ImmigrationPartnership@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:ImmigrationPartnership@regionofwaterloo.ca)

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[www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca](http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca)

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