Digital Service Delivery

Recent Insights from Service Providers

Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, November 2023

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada
Canada

ARPIO Overview

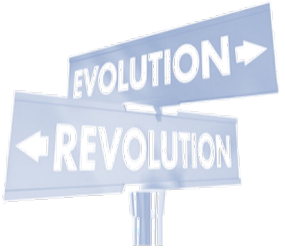
What is the ARPIO?

- The Annual Report on Project Implementation and Outcomes is a mandatory annual report **completed for each direct service contribution agreement.**

Why is the ARPIO important?

- It holds **valuable insights** into how organizations deliver services, what they are seeing on the ground, and challenges they face.
- Provides key information about **how Service Provider Organizations (SPOs) contribute to client outcomes.**

Service Locations | Wins & challenges in outcome achievement | Partnerships | Success Stories | Challenges & Innovation | Delivery Details | Community Impacts



The COVID-19 **pandemic was a driving force for innovation** within the sector.

2020-21 → **2021-22**

Earlier reports focused on the impact of the sudden shift to digital service delivery.

2022-23

More recent reports focus more on new or innovative practices to support digital as the 'new norm'

Achieving client outcomes

2020-21 2021-22

A key component of the ARPIO allows organizations to **highlight issues and factors impacting their ability to achieve Settlement Program outcomes** with their clients:

Clients **access services** that meet their needs	Clients **gain knowledge** and are able to make decisions about **life in Canada**	Clients acquire **knowledge, skills and connections** to prepare for and **participate in the Canadian labour market**	Clients im**prove official language skills** and use them to **function in Canadian society**	Clients **participate in and are connected to communities** and social networks

Issues and factors reported consistently across all outcomes:

Flexibility

Increased access to services for those employed full time, those with lack of childcare, and those with geographic limitations.

Digital skills & access to devices

As a by product of receiving services online, SPOs reported that clients were also **improving their digital literacy**. However, those with **limited digital skills and/or no access to devices struggle** to receive services.

Volunteers

Organizations reported that they **struggled to recruit virtual volunteers** – however those that did volunteer offered digital support

Clients **access services** that meet their needs

2020-21 2021-22

Organizations contributing to this outcome (i.e. providing **needs and assets assessments and referrals** or **support services**) reported that:

- Delivering a needs assessment virtually can be more time consuming
- Client privacy concerns with online service delivery (i.e. sharing information to confirm eligibility)
- COVID related closures, uncertainty about what services were still available online made referrals challenging
- Digital services result in less of a need for transportation or childcare support services.

Clients **gain knowledge** and are able to **make decisions about life in Canada**

2020-21 | 2021-22

Organizations contributing to this outcome (i.e. organizations providing **information and orientation services**) also reported some unique challenges:

- Organizations **leveraged online platforms** more often, allowing information to be **shared quickly** and with less staff involvement.
- Additional **partners and guest speakers** could easily be included in service delivery due to **geographic barriers being eliminated**.

- Clients and staff relied more on **email as a form of low-tech remote delivery**, however it was noted that this caused more **difficulty understanding a clients information needs**.
- Organizations spent time **tackling misinformation** as clients became more apt to attempt to find information online themselves

Clients **improve official language skills** and use them to function in Canadian society

2020-21 | 2021-22

Organizations contributing to this outcome (i.e. organizations providing formal or informal **language training**) reported a number of issues and factors unique to this outcome.

Service Delivery

Individual tutoring emerged as an innovative support, without which learning would not take place.

Learning materials and instructor **professional development** were adapted to **enable effective online** language training.

Client Preferences

(as reported by SPOs)

Client groups that had a **preference for online language** services included **higher CLB/NCLS levels, employed clients, parents, people in remote areas**

Clients with **literacy needs had more difficulty** progressing in online language training.

Who was most impacted?

2020-21 2021-22

Women and racialized clients were positively impacted, this is most likely as a result of digital services

- allowing for **participation on a flexible schedule**
- **reducing barriers** to accessing services (i.e. need for childcare)
- **improving digital skills** while receiving settlement services.

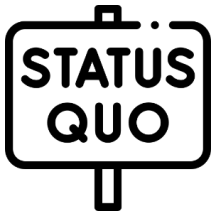
Seniors and those with hearing or visual impairments were **negatively impacted** as a result of challenges using digital devices / lack of digital supports

French-speaking clients were positively impacted, possibly as a result of **reduced geographical barriers** to accessing services in their official language of preference

How have things evolved?

2022-23

The most recent reports submitted by organizations focus less on the transition to digital service delivery and **focus more on ongoing themes and new innovations**.



Organizations continue to report that:

- **Digital services are key to offering flexibility** (in schedule and location)
- Some clients have **challenges accessing online** services, either because of a **lack of digital skills or access to technology**
- **Knowing how to access information online is key** to performing critical tasks related to life in Canada

While settling into the new norm, organizations have been innovative:

- **Online intake and appointment scheduling**, working to digitize some of the process to support in-person services
- **HyFlex** – allowing participants to choose how they wish to attend their class (in person or virtual) day to day

Striking the right balance

2022-23

Organizations reported that the resumption of in-person services has helped with client isolation and engagement

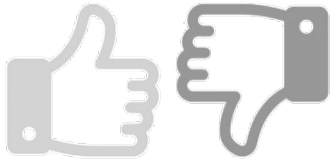
SPOs have indicated that clients have preferences for and aversions to both online and in-person services.

- Some clients are reluctant to return to in-person services, while others see the benefit of in-person
- Some clients have a preference for online services, while others find it less effective.

What is clear is that clients want the option for online and/or hybrid services.

Summary

Organizations have reported **findings that are consistent with what our data and research** is showing.



There are **clear benefits to digital service delivery**, however there are some **challenges to overcome** around digital support in the form of skills and access to devices.

The **shift to digital has been transformative** to the Settlement Program, and the ability to offer service **in person, online, or in a hybrid format** will be key to our ongoing success.

SETTLEMENT INFORMATION AND RESEARCH ALL IN ONE PLACE

- **Showcase and disseminate information about the Program**
- **Publish more frequent and targeted findings:**
  - ✓ ***2023 Settlement Outcomes Report***
  - ✓ **Link to information about CFP 2024**

English

Canada.ca/settlement-resettlement-information

French

Canada.ca/information-etablissement-reinstallation

Point your phone's camera at the QR Code of choice and a link should pop up for you to click!