Digital Transformation of the Settlement Sector

Findings from the 2023 Settlement Outcomes Report

Settlement and Integration Policy Branch, November 2023
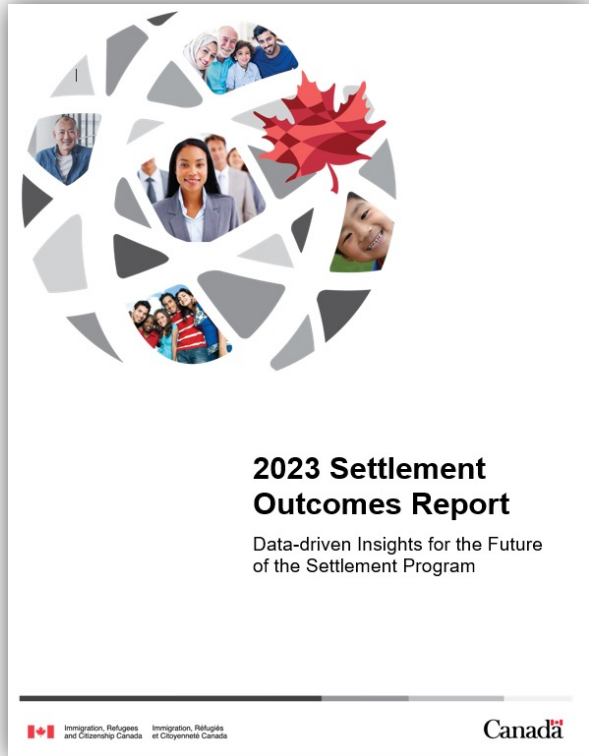
The 2023 Settlement Outcomes Report

The report is divided into 3 separate parts that can be read together or separately

Chapeau/ Executive Summary
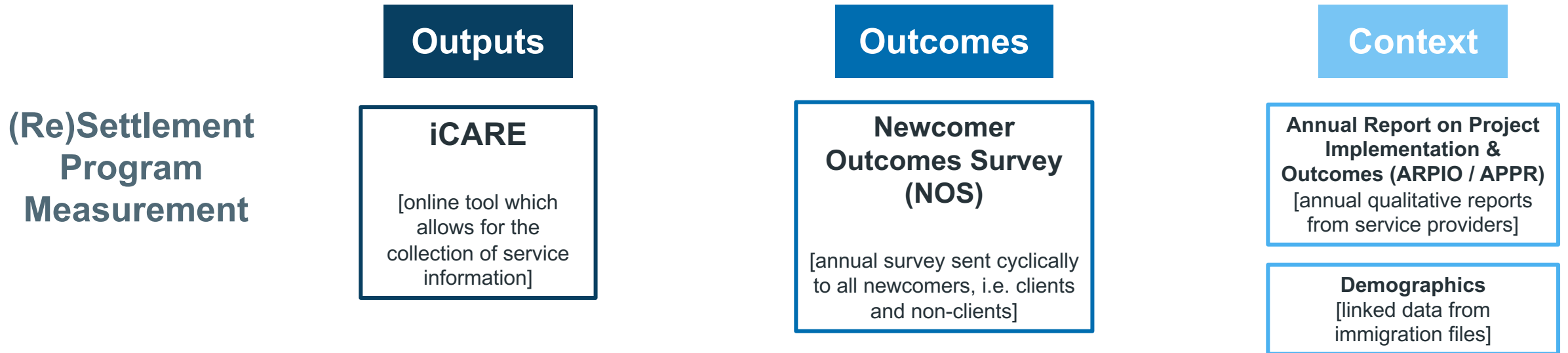
Part 1: Newcomer Outcomes Stock Take

Part 2: Digital Transformation

Part 3: Place-Based Programming

Measuring Success

(Re)Settlement Program Measurement

Outputs

iCARE

[online tool which allows for the collection of service information]

Outcomes

Newcomer Outcomes Survey (NOS)

[annual survey sent cyclically to all newcomers, i.e. clients and non-clients]

Context

Annual Report on Project Implementation & Outcomes (ARPIO / APPR) [annual qualitative reports from service providers]

**Demographics** [linked data from immigration files]

Other sources of evidence

- ❍ Case studies on certain aspects of (re)Settlement Programming
- ❍ Official evaluations of IRCC programming
- ❍ Official reports from other Government Organizations (e.g. Statistics Canada)
- ❍ Academic Literature
- ❍ Grey Literature (e.g. other reports, research papers from other organizations)
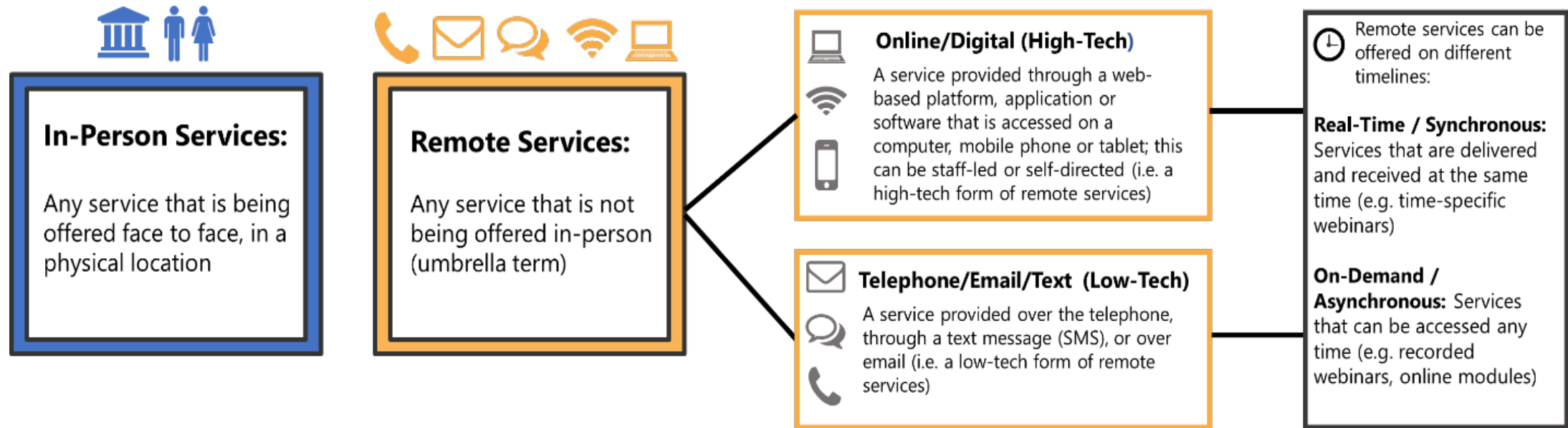
Note: Study period: 2020-21 and 2021-22

Key Findings

Part 2: Digital Transformation
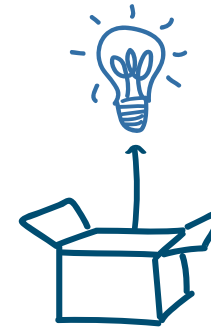
What do we mean by remote, digital, online?

Remote Services is an umbrella term that captures both high-tech and low-tech forms of service delivery

In-Person Services:

Any service that is being offered face to face, in a physical location

Remote Services:

Any service that is not being offered in-person (umbrella term)

Online/Digital (High-Tech)

A service provided through a web-based platform, application or software that is accessed on a computer, mobile phone or tablet; this can be staff-led or self-directed (i.e. a high-tech form of remote services)

Telephone/Email/Text (Low-Tech)

A service provided over the telephone, through a text message (SMS), or over email (i.e. a low-tech form of remote services)

Remote services can be offered on different timelines:

Real-Time / Synchronous: Services that are delivered and received at the same time (e.g. time-specific webinars)

On-Demand / Asynchronous: Services that can be accessed any time (e.g. recorded webinars, online modules)

The pandemic has shifted the way clients access settlement services

Remote service delivery was the top format for domestic clients at the height of the pandemic. SPOS returned to offering in-person services as physical distancing requirements eased.
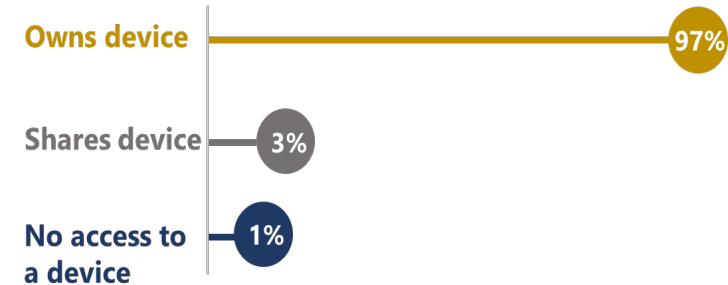

Remote services continued to be the dominant form of service delivery for pre-arrival clients in the years following the of the start of the pandemic.
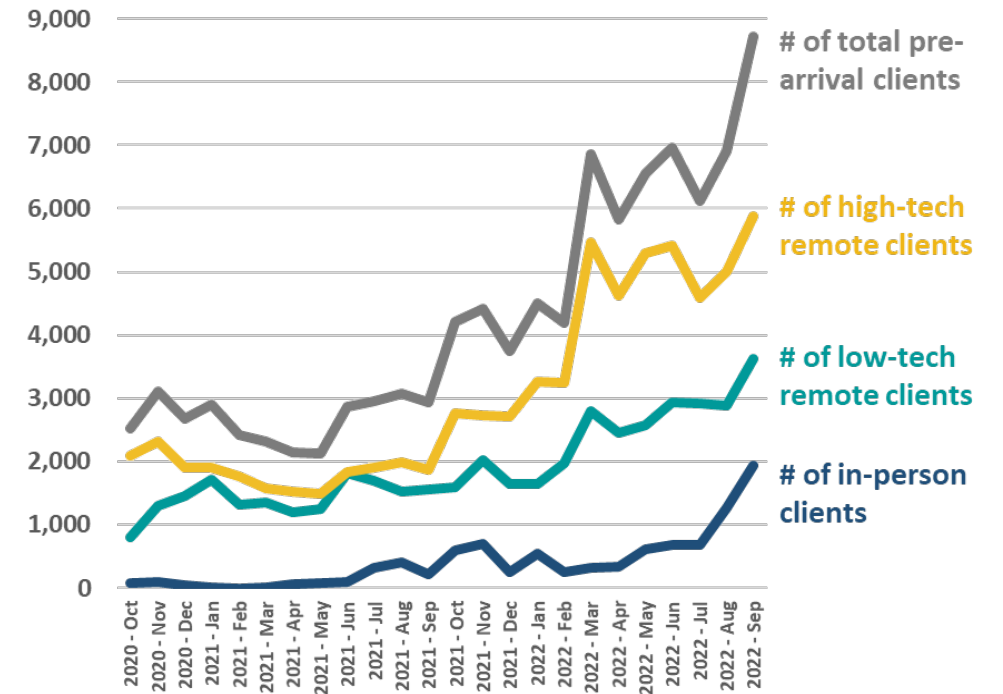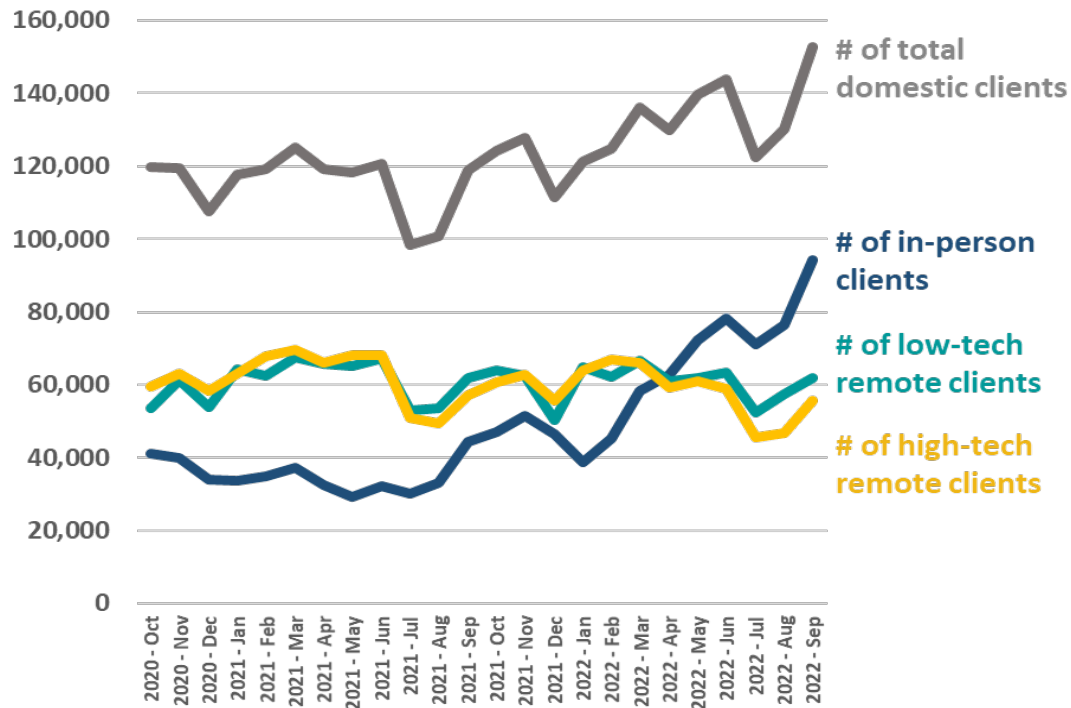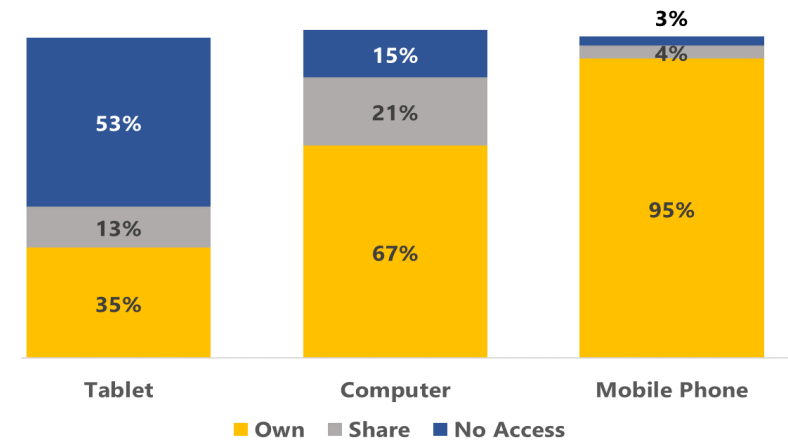
- According to the Remote Service Delivery survey of SPOs in 2020, most clients were able to access online services.

- Similarly, a study of IOM refugees found that 80% owned a mobile phone, and 70% always or often had internet access.

- The Digital Case Study client survey in 2022 also found the vast majority of clients had no issues accessing services online (88% were comfortable using the internet for online settlement services).

  - 97% of respondents also reported having access to their own device to use settlement services.
  - More respondents reported owning a mobile phone compared to any other device.

*The vast majority of survey respondents owned a digital device to access settlement. services*

Owns device — 97%

Shares device — 3%

No access to a device — 1%

More clients reported owning a mobile phone than any other device.

	Tablet	Computer	Mobile Phone
No Access	53%	15%	3%
Share	13%	21%	4%
Own	35%	67%	95%

■ Own ■ Share ■ No Access

7

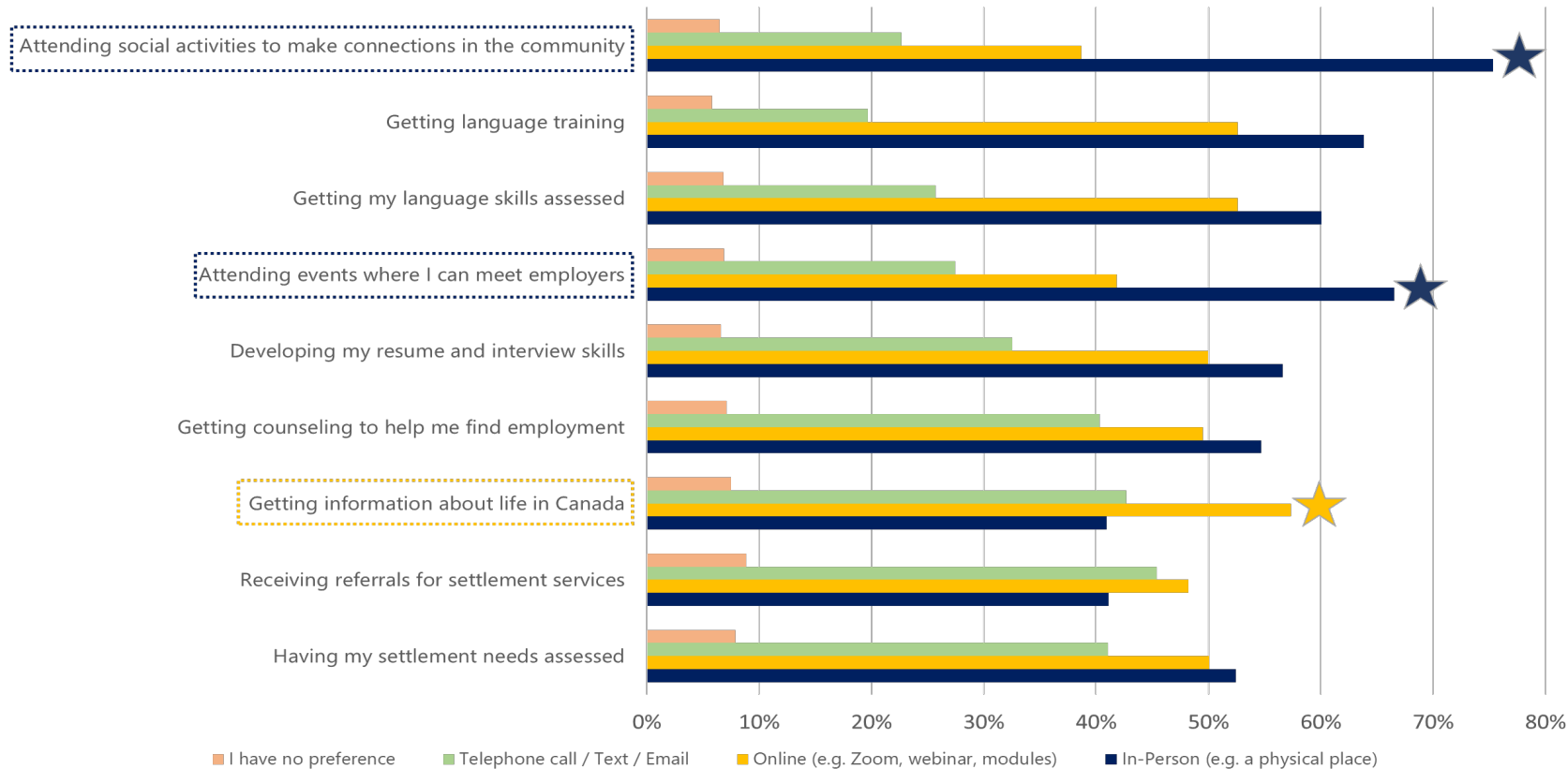# … but some newcomers need supports to access online services

The top issue with remote services varied by survey respondents' demographics. For resettled refugees, clients with secondary school or less education, and seniors, the #1 issue related to digital skills.
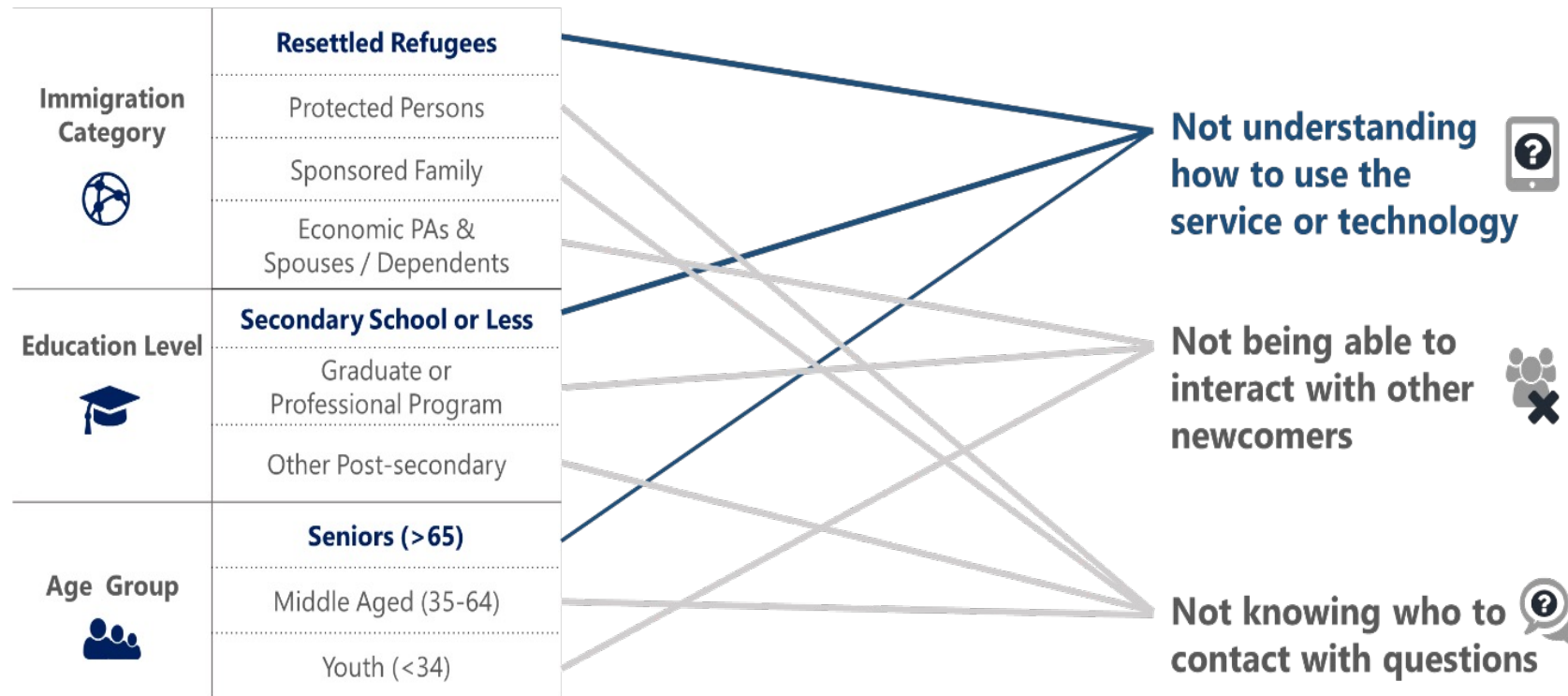
Source: IRCC (2022) DCS Client Survey

Clients prefer to access some services online more than others

The top services that respondents preferred to access in-person were social activities with the community (a CC service) and employer networking (an ErS service).


Chart categories (top to bottom):
- Attending social activities to make connections in the community
- Getting language training
- Getting my language skills assessed
- Attending events where I can meet employers
- Developing my resume and interview skills
- Getting counseling to help me find employment
- Getting information about life in Canada
- Receiving referrals for settlement services
- Having my settlement needs assessed

Legend:
- I have no preference
- Telephone call / Text / Email
- Online (e.g. Zoom, webinar, modules)
- In-Person (e.g. a physical place)

Source: IRCC (2022) DCS Client Survey

> " *The only thing that I would have liked to be in-person is actually the one-on-one mock interviews, because in the interview itself, you need to see the reaction and how the other party behaves...and the way they react to your answers or to the way you react in an interview."*
>
> **Client Focus Group Participant**

There are good reasons why newcomers prefer to access information online

Focus group participants explain why newcomers prefer to access information online:

Convenient & Flexible
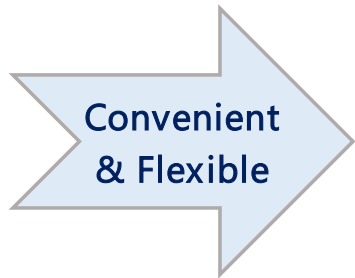
- Online services were easier to accommodate in clients' schedules (e.g. working clients, pre-arrival clients preparing for departure to Canada)
- On-demand services (e.g. pre-recorded sessions) were convenient for busy clients
- Clients with health concerns (e.g. immunocompromised) were able to participate remotely

Time & Cost Efficient

- Less time or money spent on travelling to the service location
- Rural/remote access services more easily when commuting barriers are removed
- Some clients felt they could attend sessions without worrying about the cost of childcare
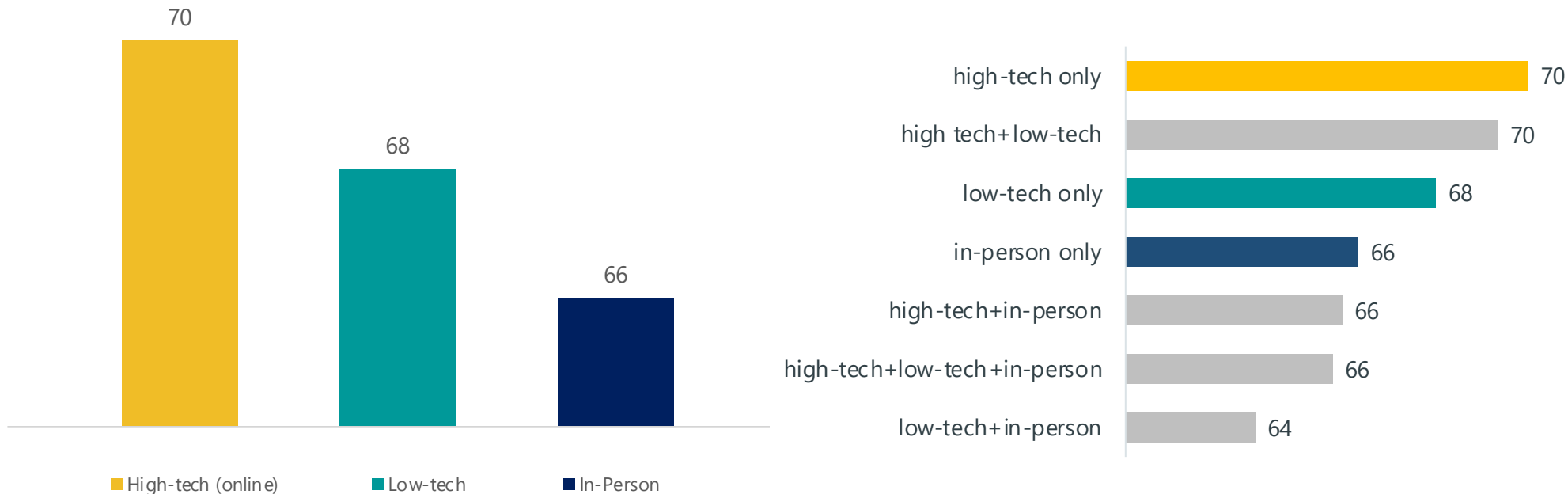
Easier Access to Information

- Information available publicly, freely, accessible at any time (online) has made it easier for clients to learn about Canada
- Online information can be easier to navigate at clients' own pace
- Recorded sessions allow clients to access information anytime – not just at a session

Source: IRCC (2022) DCS Client Focus Groups

Clients who used Information and Orientation services online had greater knowledge of life in Canada

Online delivery of information had the strongest results among clients, even compared to various hybrid forms of delivery.
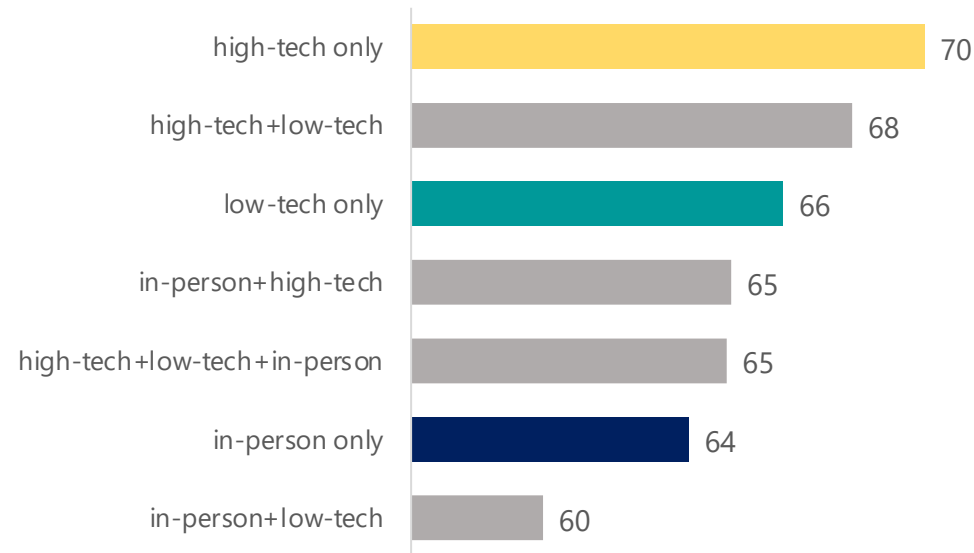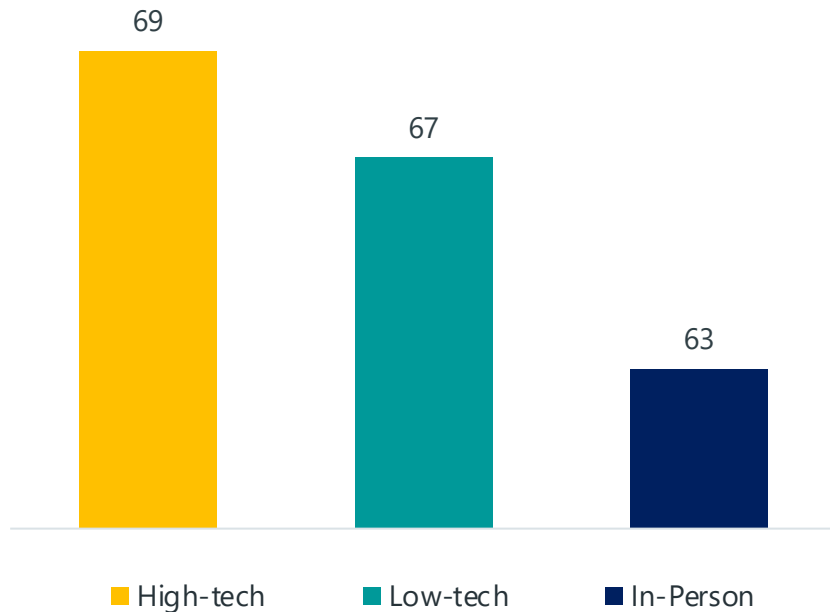

High-tech (online)   **Low-tech**   **In-Person**

Category	Value
high-tech only	70
high tech+low-tech	70
low-tech only	68
in-person only	66
high-tech+in-person	66
high-tech+low-tech+in-person	66
low-tech+in-person	64

Knowledge of life in Canada represents an index of knowledge of housing, healthcare, education, money and finance, and law and justice.

Source: iCARE-NOS data linkage

Note: Two general linear models were employed. Model 1 included dummy variables of three modes of access and Model 2 controlled for: gender, age, language, province/territory, education, temporary status and immigration category. The results were statistically significant at a p-value of 0.05 or lower.

Online delivery of employment related services had the strongest results among clients, even compared to various hybrid forms of delivery.

69
67
63

- ■ High-tech
- ■ Low-tech
- ■ In-Person

Category	Value
high-tech only	70
high-tech+low-tech	68
low-tech only	66
in-person+high-tech	65
high-tech+low-tech+in-person	65
in-person only	64
in-person+low-tech	60

Knowledge of working in Canada" represents an index of knowledge (scored out of 100) on the following topics: how to apply for jobs, establishing networks, getting education assessed, starting a business and soft skills.

Source: iCARE-NOS data linkage

Note: Two general linear models were employed. Model 1 included dummy variables of three modes of access and Model 2 controlled for: gender, age, language, province/territory, education, temporary status and immigration category. The results were statistically significant at a p-value of 0.05 or lower.

Privacy & Security

> " *Many (clients) are saying...we still don't trust you enough to share with you our immigration documentation...virtually. We want to see you in person. And then any follow-ups, we don't mind interacting with you virtually"*

Service Provider
Focus Group Participant

Digital Standards

DESIGN WITH USERS · ITERATE AND IMPROVE FREQUENTLY · BUILD IN ACCESSIBILITY FROM THE START · WORK IN THE OPEN BY DEFAULT · EMPOWER STAFF TO DELIVER BETTER SERVICES · COLLABORATE WIDELY · BE GOOD DATA STEWARDS · USE OPEN STANDARDS AND SOLUTIONS · DESIGN ETHICAL SERVICES · ADDRESS SECURITY AND PRIVACY RISKS

Canada

Resources

Some SPOs identified significant **future potential savings** by reducing expenditures on real estate (e.g. for office space and service delivery), but very few had actually divested themselves of properties.

Savings

- **Savings realized** primarily related to reducing expenditures in areas that were no longer relevant in the shift to remote: printing, office supplies, in-person childcare, transportation, travel and parking costs

- **Operational efficiencies** were also identified including streamlining and centralizing intake and referral processes. SPOs also noted the ability to service more clients cost-effectively through remote service delivery

Costs

The main costs associated with delivering online services could be organized as follows:

- **Software** : associated with obtaining licenses (e.g. Zoom)

- **Hardware**: related to obtaining technology for SPO staff or clients (e.g. laptops, smartphones)

- **IT Infrastructure**: other costs (beyond hardware and software) needed to develop or migrate to new IT management systems (e.g. facility, network, server, data)

- **Human Resource**: hiring new staff (e.g. IT Support), training existing staff, supporting hybrid working arrangements

- **Service Delivery**: costs directly associated with delivering online or hybrid service (e.g. developing new curricula, offering digital skills courses)

An increase in the demand and supply of remote services has led to **increasing resources directed** toward the provision of online service delivery.

To summarize the main takeaways

While most newcomers will be able to access online services (primarily through a mobile phone), **some face barriers**. Clients from one or more of the following categories experience barriers: **resettled refugees, seniors, and clients with lower education levels.**

Digital skills supports can benefit newcomers who face barriers to accessing remote settlement services. The sector is exploring different ways to deliver these supports as well as digital literacy.

Newcomers prefer to access information about life in Canada online more than any other format. Online is also a more effective way to deliver I&O (to most clients) compared to other formats.

Online employment related services also had promising results from a service delivery and effectiveness perspective; however newcomer still prefer to access some interpersonal aspects in-person (e.g. employer network)

Online services have the **potential for future savings** (e.g. in real estate, program efficiencies), but carry **significant upfront costs** in software, hardware, IT infrastructure, and personnel investments.

SETTLEMENT INFORMATION AND RESEARCH
ALL IN ONE PLACE

- **Showcase and disseminate information about the Program**

- **Publish more frequent and targeted findings:**

  ✓ **Upcoming *2023 Settlement Outcomes Report***
  ✓ **Information about CFP 2024 once the process is launched**

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!

Annexes 🧹

Other useful information for your reference

Annex A: Overview of the 1ˢᵗ Settlement Outcomes Report

Settlement Outcomes HIGHLIGHTS Report
Summary Findings from IRCC's First
Settlement Outcomes Report 2021
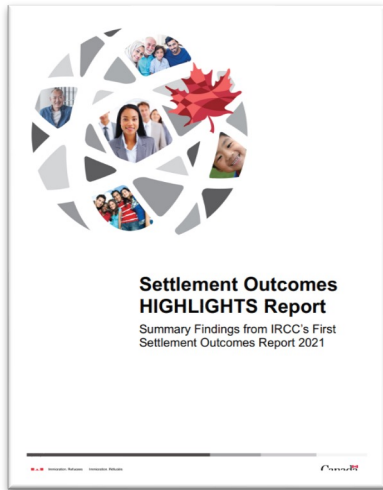
- In 2021, **the Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report** was published publicly

- Guided by the Settlement Program's Performance Information Profile and the Departmental Results Framework, the Report focuses on reporting on outcomes from the Settlement Program Logic Model

- Existing data helped IRCC tell a baseline story of Settlement Program performance

- **The Report established foundational knowledge on**:

  o How resources are distributed by service line/outcome

  o Who uses settlement services

  o How long clients access settlement services

  o Are clients improving their knowledge (e.g. in law, justice, housing, healthcare, finances, and education in Canada)

  o Are clients working? (See Figure A)

Figure A: Example - Are clients working?
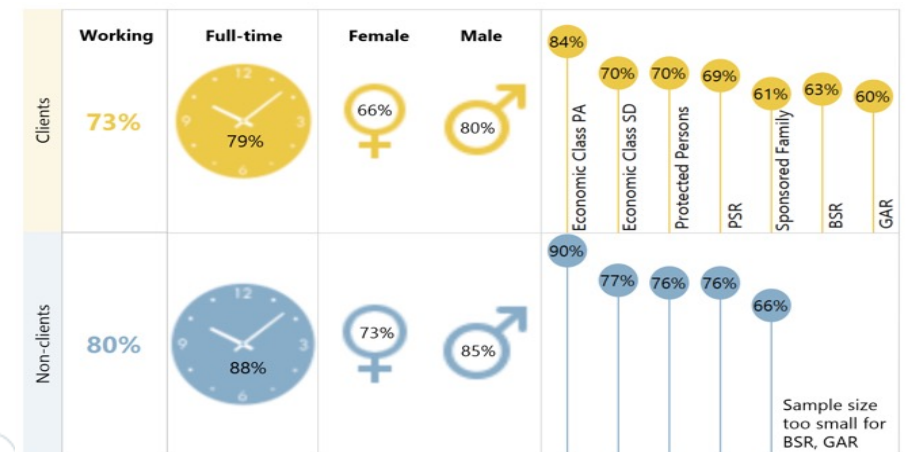
Source: Newcomer Outcomes Survey

Annex B: iCARE – Measuring Outputs

Q: WHAT IS iCARE?

A: A data entry system that collects key characteristics of services used by clients of the Settlement and Resettlement Programs, including Pre-Arrival. The data is entered by SPOs and they are required to report monthly as per their Contribution Agreement with IRCC. iCARE has been used to collect Settlement Program data since 2013 and Resettlement Program data since 2014.

Q: WHAT DOES iCARE TELL IRCC?

A: For each service a client receives, SPOs use iCARE to provide IRCC with:

Client identifier

Service type

Location

Use of support services

Service dates

Topics covered

Service format
(e.g., online, in-person)

Language Training SPOs also tell IRCC details like Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) levels and attendance.

Annex C: NOS – Measuring Outcomes

Q: WHAT IS THE NOS?

A: Annual survey of newcomers to Canada that collects settlement outcomes information from both clients and non-clients of the (Re)Settlement Program.

Q: WHAT DOES THE NOS TELL IRCC?

A: Designed with Statistics Canada, collects information specifically to measure immediate (knowledge gains), intermediate (behaviour changes), and long-term (integration) outcomes, as well as outcomes of the Resettlement Program. Sections include:

Life in Canada   Official Languages   Working in Canada   Social Engagement   Barriers, Awareness, and Impact   Additional demographic questions

Responses are linked to IRCC's administrative and (Re)Settlement service data to get a full picture of a respondent's demographics and Program use.

Where can I see the results?
Results from the NOS feed into almost all of IRCC's (Re)Settlement Program research and outcomes analysis. The **Settlement Outcomes Highlights Report** is the flagship product.

iCARE

We use iCARE to help determine who our clients are (and aren't!), as well as which services they have received for specific lines of questioning.

Annex D: Context Setting (ARPIO/APPR and Demographics)

Adding **context** to the outcomes we're seeing is important to inform next steps and program direction.

1) **Demographics** – UCI in   iCARE   is linked to immigration files in order to
    • Understand differential outcomes, who is more impacted by events
    • Look at trends over time to keep our finger on the pulse (not just in crisis)

2) **Individual delivery and organizational factors** – ARPIO (formerly APPR)
    • Completed by direct Settlement service providers only
    • Provides information on promising practices, challenges
    • Identify where additional guidance/program tweaks might be required to support our SPOs