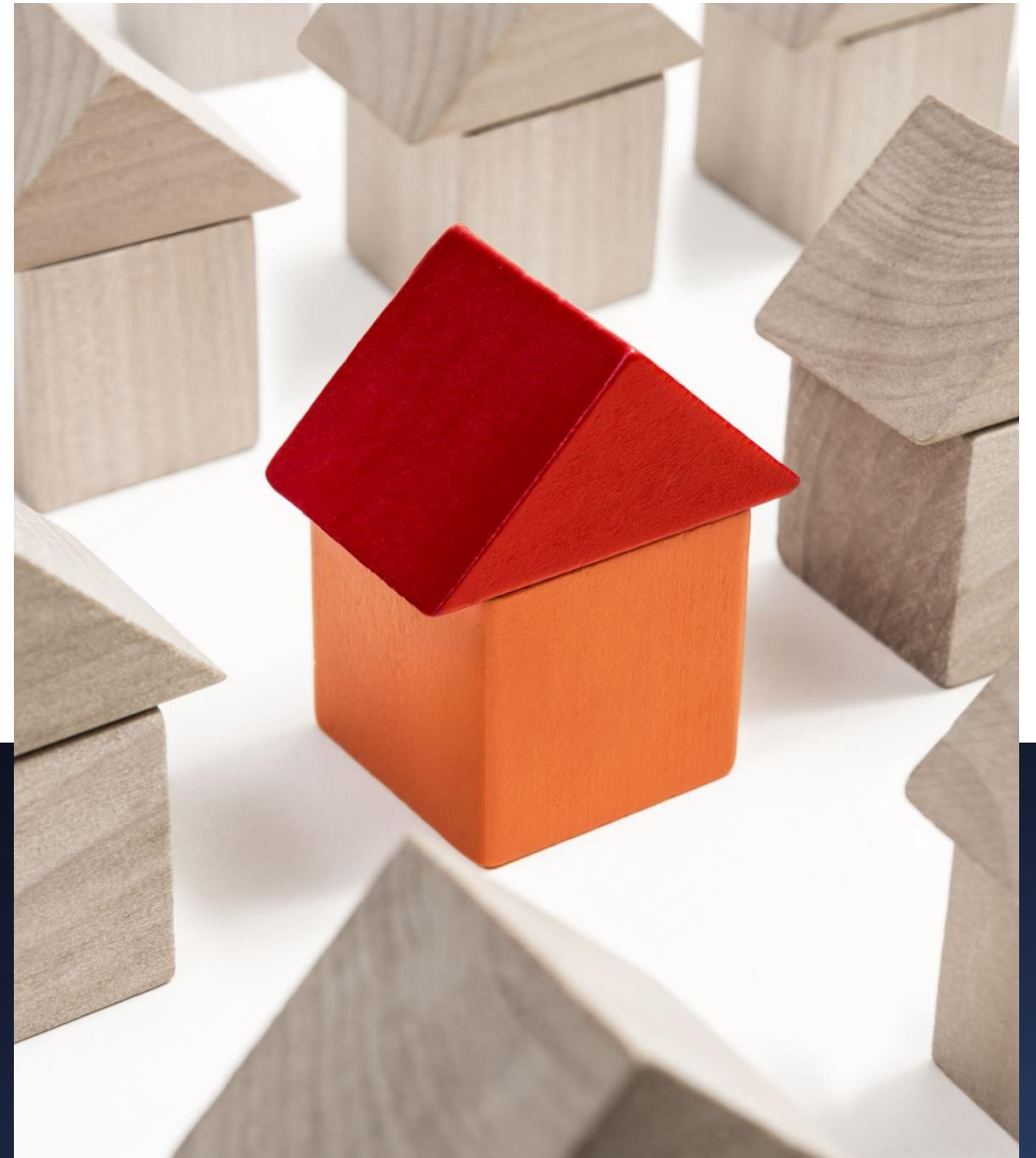


Navigating Housing Challenges: Collaborative Approaches and Resourceful Solutions for Newcomers and Displaced Persons

Jessica Batres, Danielle Pineda,
Monica Tembo & Florentien
Verhage



Land Acknowledgement

Vancouver Island contains mountains, fertile agricultural lands, beaches, ancient rainforests, rivers, fjords, and archipelagos, which make up the traditional territory of more than fifty Coast Salish, Kwakwaka'wakw, and Nuu-cha-nulth Nations.

The work of Durham LIP and CDCD exists on lands that Indigenous peoples inhabited for thousands of years prior to European colonization. These lands are the traditional and treaty territories of the Nations covered under the Williams Treaties, including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, and the Chippewa Nations of Georgina Island, Beausoleil and Rama.

As immigrants and settlers, we acknowledge with respect the Indigenous people whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

As we discuss the important topic of housing, it is crucial to recognize the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization on Indigenous communities. The displacement and marginalization of Indigenous Peoples have had profound effects on their access to land and housing. In our efforts to address housing issues, we must commit to understanding and respecting the rights, traditions, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples, and work collaboratively towards solutions that honor their sovereignty and heritage.



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Please download and install the Slido app on all computers you use



What comes to mind when you think about housing challenges for newcomers?

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

What comes to mind when you think about housing challenges for newcomers?

Finding Housing for Displaced Ukrainians and Refugees on Vancouver Island



Who are we?



- **Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA):** ICA is an immigrant serving agency that supports the full integration of newcomer immigrants and refugees into the social, economic, and civic life of the Greater Victoria region of British Columbia.
- **Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership (GVLIP):** The GVLIP is a community coalition operated by ICA that focuses on creating strategic partnerships to develop equitable policies impacting employment, education, health care, and housing in the Capital Region. Funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.
- **Refugee Readiness Team for Vancouver Island (RRT-VI):** The RRT-VI was a 2-year community coalition led by ICA that prepared communities to welcome and support Afghan refugees and displaced Ukrainians from 2022-2024. Focused on housing, healthcare, employment, and education, the team gathered community partners across Vancouver Island to create safe and resilient communities in which refugees and displaced Ukrainians could thrive. Funded by the government of British Columbia.

Funded by / Financé par:



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

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Currently, how much do you think you would have to pay on average for a 2-bedroom rental on Vancouver Island?

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Housing landscape on Vancouver Island

❖ Greater Victoria – South Island (397,237 residents, 19% immigrants)

- Population growth 2016-2021 (2021 Census): 8% [in which Langford: 31.8% growth]
- Price average two-bedroom rental (10/2024): **\$2,866/month**
- Rental Vacancy Rate (01/2024): 1.6%

❖ Nanaimo Region – Central Island (115,459 residents, 15% immigrants)

- Population growth 2016-2021 (2021 Census): 10%
- Price average two-bedroom rental (10/2024): **\$2,378/month**
- Rental Vacancy Rate (01/2024): 2.7%

❖ Courtenay/Comox Region – North Central Island (63,282 residents, 13% immigrants)

- Population growth 2016-2021 (2021 Census): 9.2%
- Price average two-bedroom rental (10/2024): **\$2,172/month**
- Rental Vacancy Rate (01/2024): 0.8%



RRT-VI Housing Study: Multi-Faceted Study Design

❖ Engagement styles

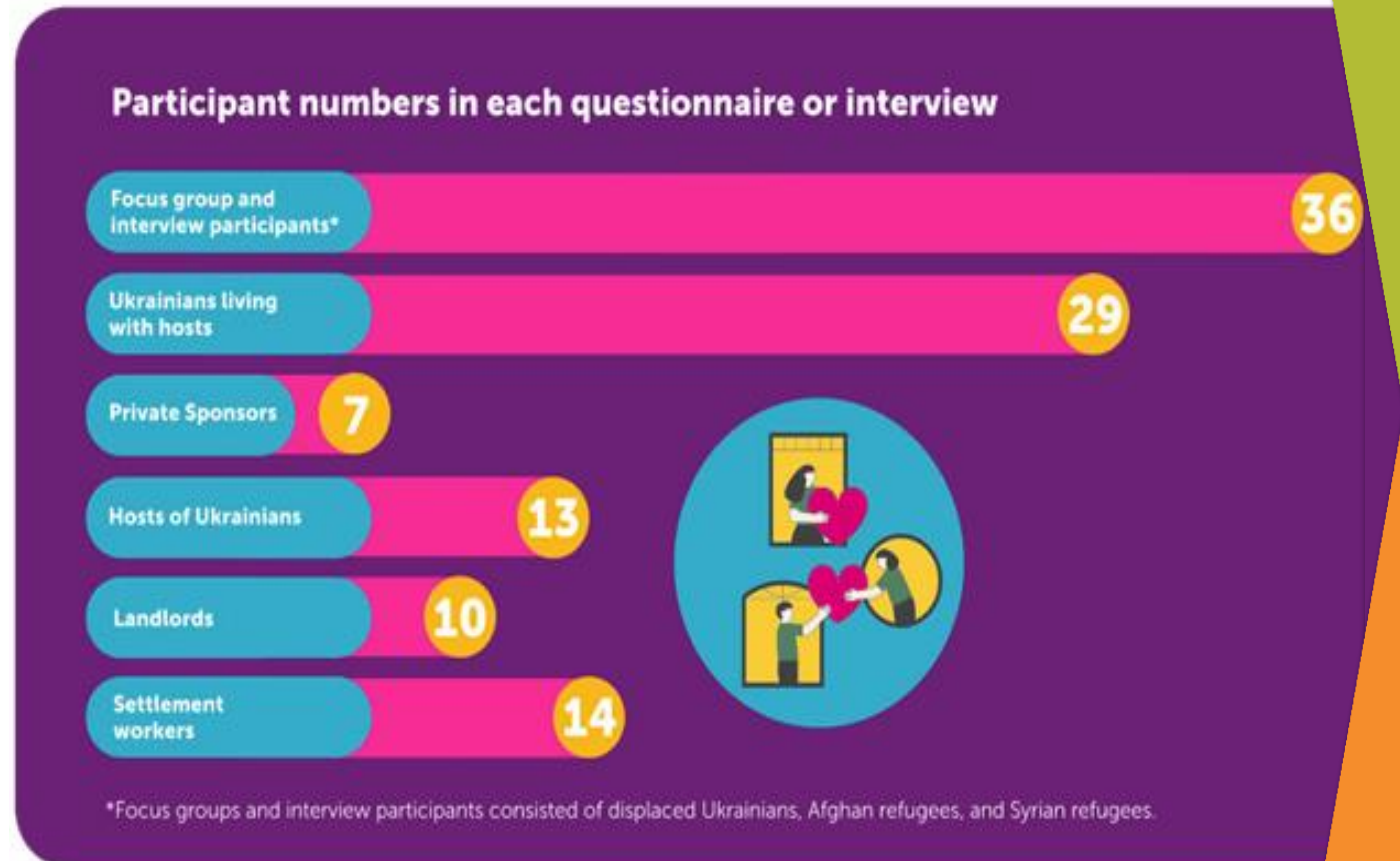
- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus groups

❖ Locations

- South Island
- Mid Island
- North Island

❖ Subjects

- Interviews/focus groups for refugees & Ukrainians: **36**
- Ukrainians living with a host: **29**
- Hosts of displaced Ukrainians: **13**
- Private sponsors of refugees: **7**
- Settlement Workers: **14**
- Landlords: **10**



Demographics of Participants

Total participants: 109

❖ Immigrants: 65

- 84% Displaced Ukrainians
- 11% Syrian refugees
- 3% Afghan refugees
- 75% female
- 25% male
- 53% 31-40 years old
- 44% Ukrainians living with hosts
- 42% South Island
- 32% Central Island
- 6% North Central Island

❖ Housing providers: 23

- 91% South Island

❖ Supporters: 21

- 38% South Island
- 62% Central Island



Finding Housing: Refugee and Displaced Individuals

❖ Barriers to finding housing

- **62%** lack of available housing
- **46%** lack of secure employment
- **39%** lack of credit history

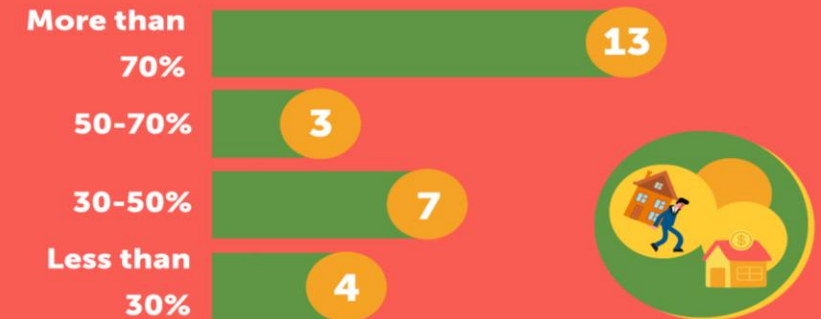
❖ Themes

- High rental prices & financial strain
- Long search duration to find rental: 3-6 months
- Most (78%) feel strongly connected to their communities

❖ Strategies

- **50%** of renters found rental through word of mouth, 25% found rental online.
- For those living with hosts while finding a permanent rental
 - **70%** were using online resources
 - **36%** were receiving support from hosts
 - **10%** were using word of mouth

PERCENTAGE OF INCOME SPENT ON RENT



Do you feel "connected" to your community?



Housing and Hosting: Housing Providers



❖ Hosts

- Hosting is rewarding
- Supporting guests through navigation: e.g., connecting to professional support and other navigating support
- Felt supported by Ukrainian organizations
- Would host again:
 - When Ukrainian
 - Less interest in hosting refugees from other backgrounds

❖ Landlords

- No concerns about refugee tenants (43%)
 - Lack of references, credit history was *not* mentioned as a concern
- Willing to renting to refugees especially when:
 - Knowing they have received information about being a tenant
 - Having access to translators and interpreters



Supporting Housing Searches: Settlement & Sponsors

❖ Top four - Barriers for refugees

- High rent
- No Canadian references
- Limited income
- Rejection of large families

❖ Top four - Vulnerable groups in the housing market

- Low income
- Non-English speakers
- Immigrants/refugees
- West Asian and African origin

❖ Sponsor group challenges

- Planning challenges: financial, vacancy rate, housing families



Recommendations

❖ Foster relationships and community connections!

❖ Information sharing

- Develop information-sharing strategies
- Create an online information-sharing platform
- Organize community workshops

❖ For community organizations

- Engage hosts & landlords and provide tailored support
- Develop accessible online resources
- Advocate for a cross-sectoral support infrastructure

❖ For government and housing policies

- Evaluate the effectiveness of housing strategies
- Adopt inclusive housing policies
- Promote diversity in housing options

RESPONSE:

❖ GVLIP event: Hope for Home

Nov. 22, 2024

❖ RRT-VI Landlord Success Stories

Video Campaign →





Thank You

Find our full report here →



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Sahel Rezaei

RRT-VI Coordinator (2022-2024)

Social Enterprise Coordinator

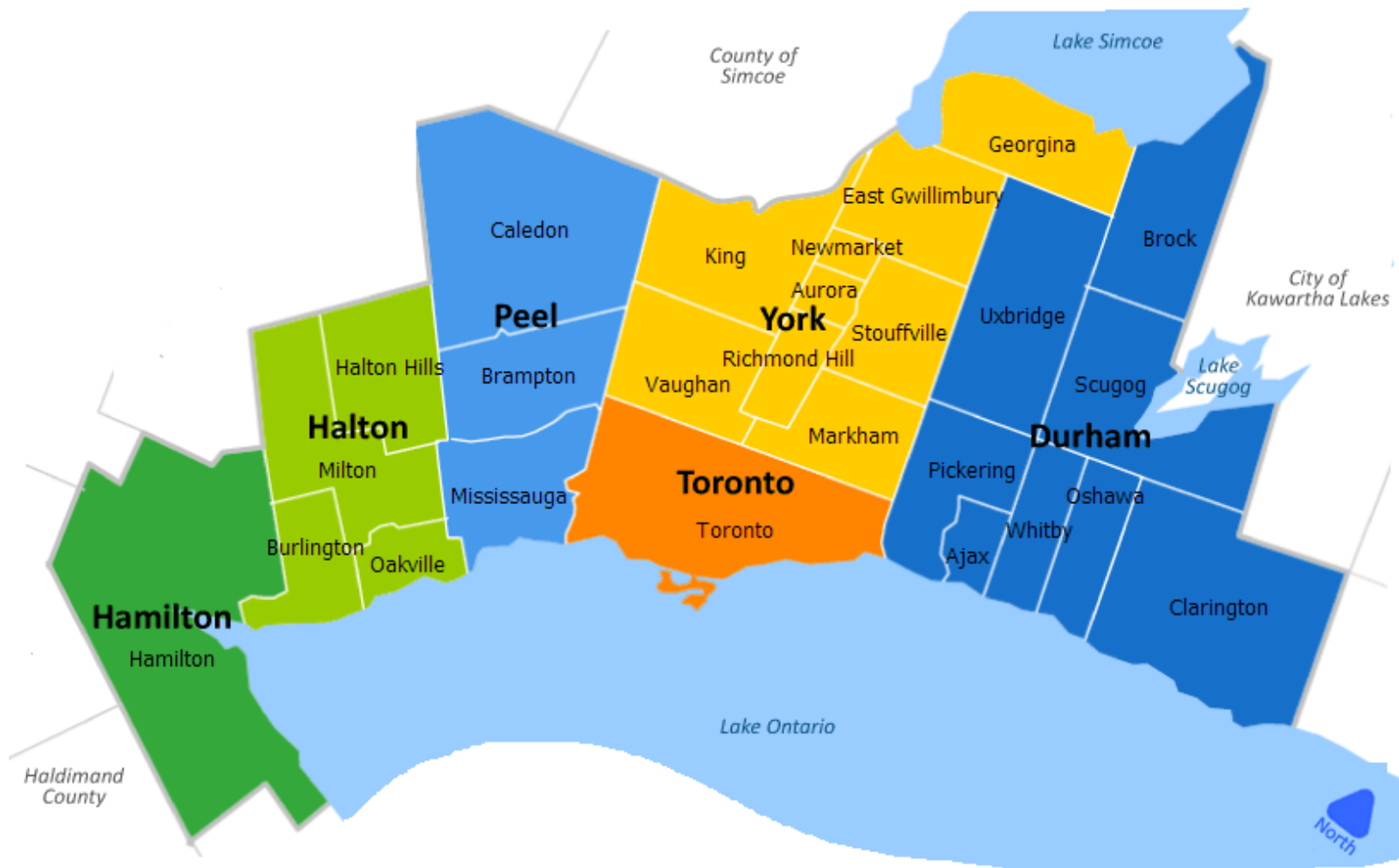
srezaei@icavictoria.org





Newcomer Housing Journey Map

Durham Local Immigration Partnership



Greater Toronto Area



POPULATION



753,090

Estimated Population
(As of year-end 2023)

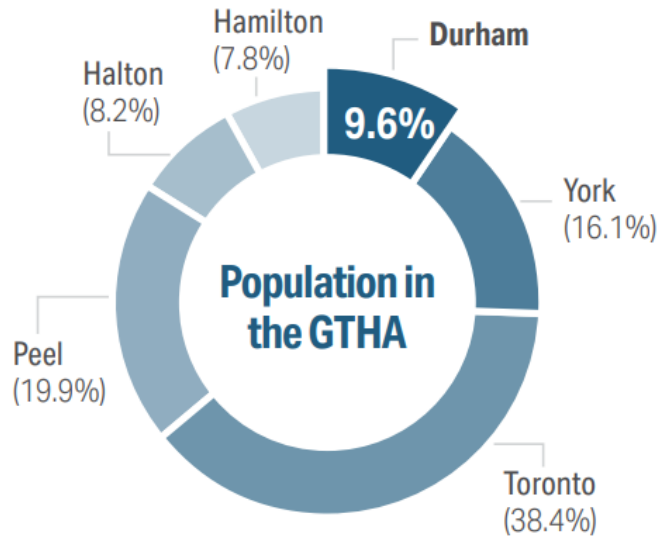
696,992

2021 Census

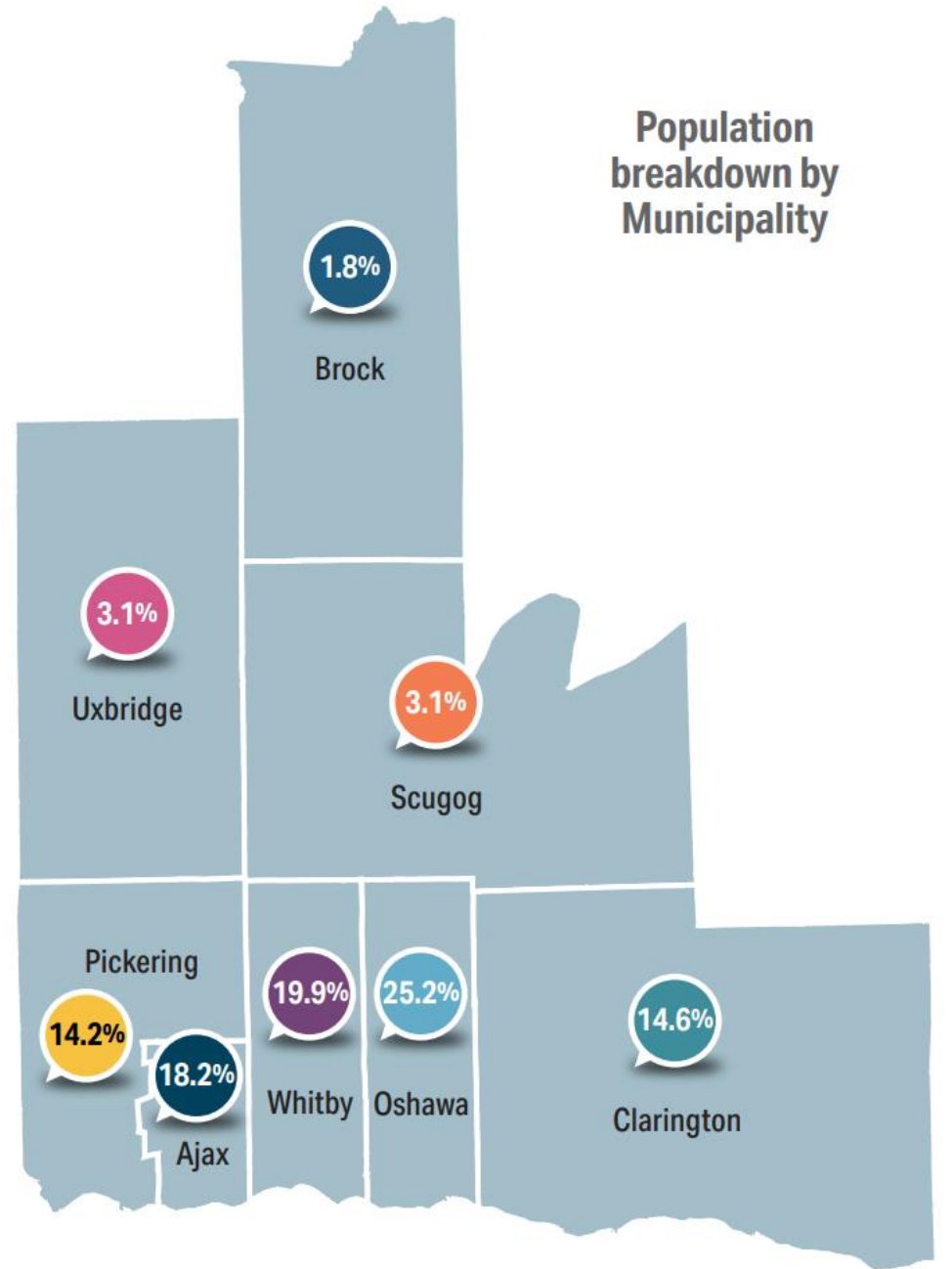


2.7%

Average annual
population increase,
(2016-2021)



Population breakdown by Municipality

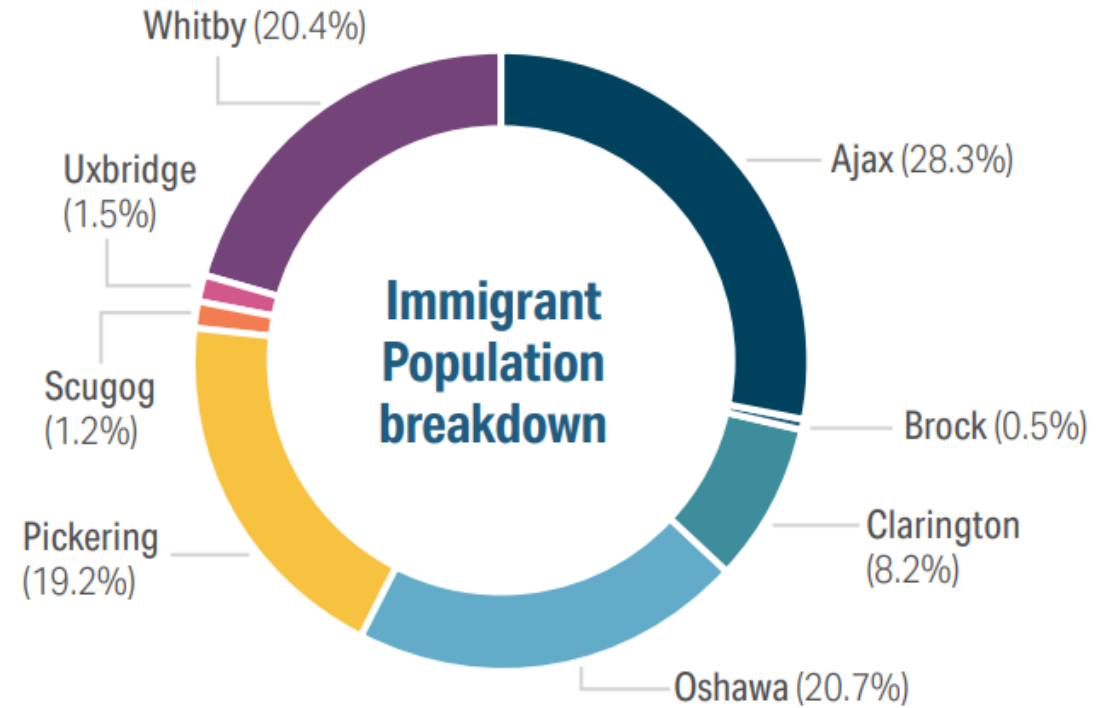




1 in 4 residents
in Durham are
immigrants (26.8%)



7 in 10 new residents moving
into Durham in the last 5
years are immigrants

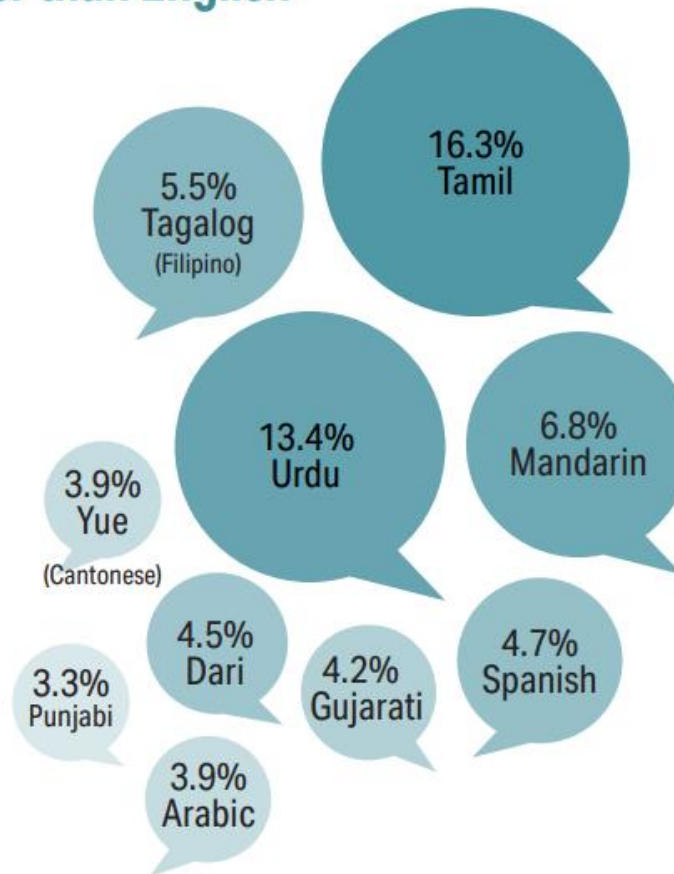


A Look at Durham

Place of Birth	2021	2016
India	33.9%	14%
Pakistan	6.6%	9.9%
Philippines	6%	11.4%
China	5.4%	6.4%
Nigeria	4.8%	1.4%

A Look at Durham

Languages spoken most often at home other than English



A Look at Durham: Immigrant outcomes

Based on a study commissioned by the Durham Local Immigration Partnership, immigrants in Durham have promising economic outcomes.



Close to 30% of immigrants to Durham have a bachelor's degree or higher.

This is consistent with findings from the 2021 Census.



Year after year during a ten-year period, there is a steady increase in immigrants' median income.

The largest jump in earnings seems to occur three years after arrival, with more substantial gains in income happening 3-5 years after landing.

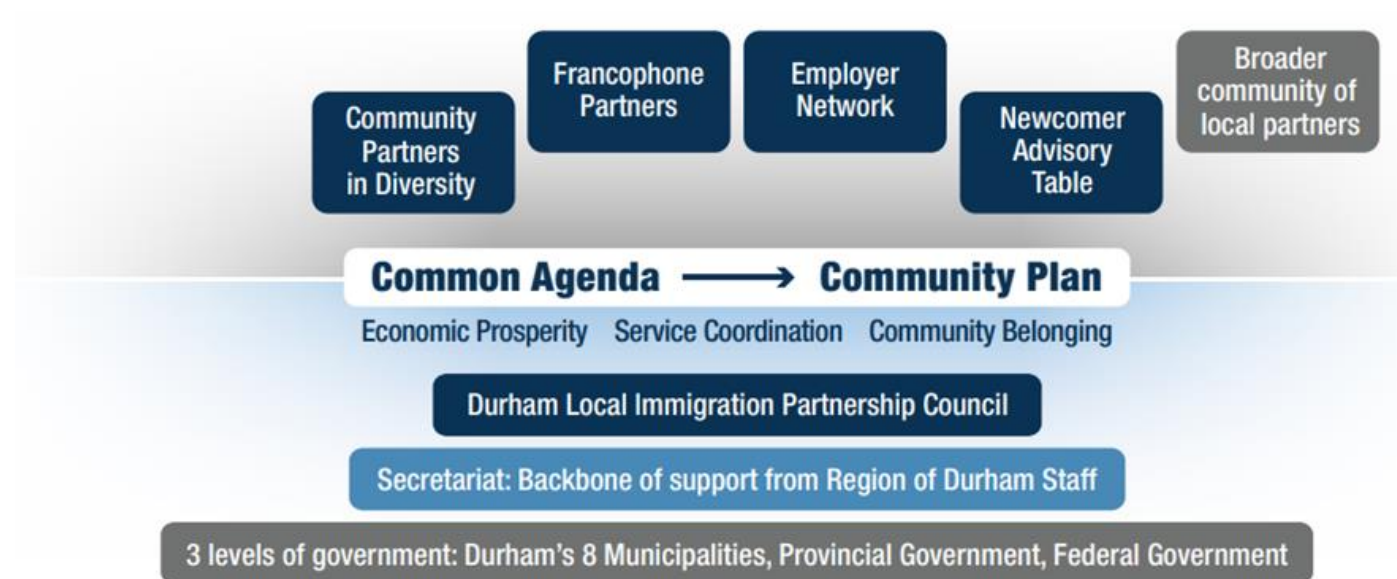


Durham has a large number of immigrant entrepreneurs.

Between 2008 and 2018, Durham's share of immigrants with self-employment more than doubled, from 5,415 to 11,310 individuals.

Overview of DLIP

- Established in 2009.
- Over 140 Durham LIP community partners representing a broad cross-sector of sectors and systems.
- 5 settlement partners: Afghan Women, Community Development Council of Durham (CDCD), Durham Region Unemployment Help Centre (DRUHC) and Conseil d'Organisme Francophone de la Région de Durham (COFRD), The Neighborhood Organisation (TNO)



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What do you think are the most important issues related to housing?

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DLIP Consultations

- A survey was done for the community. We received 550 responses
- Housing was the top issue identified by respondents
- How to look for housing was an issue identified

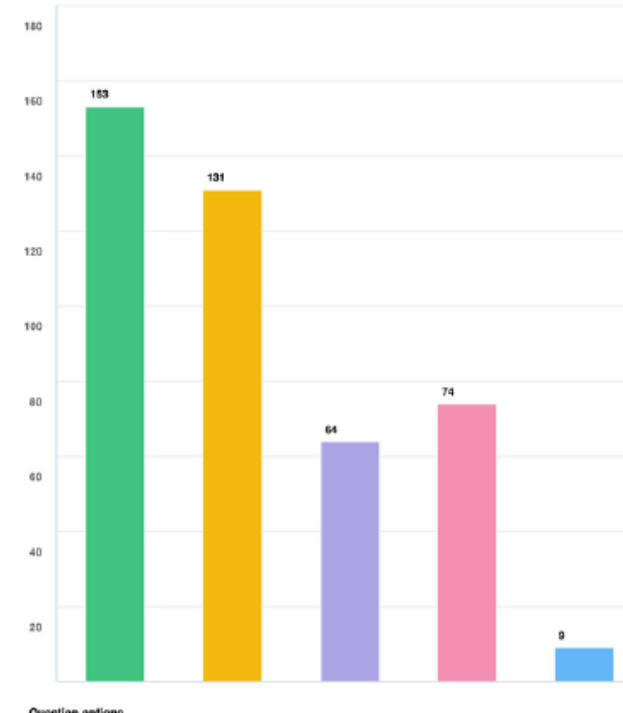
IMMIGRATION & SETTLEMENT RELATED PRIORITIES

Housing

Overall, 717 people chose *Housing* as their 1st, 2nd or 3rd priority. On aggregate, they felt the most important housing issues are:

1. Affordability of housing – 256 (36%)
2. Availability of housing – 215 (30%)
3. Tenant rights and conditions of housing – 124 (17%)
4. How to look for housing – 105 (15%)
5. Other – 17 (2%)

Q12 When it comes to housing for new immigrants, what issue(s) should the Region and local agencies prioritize? Please select all that apply.





The making



The Making

Met with community organisation working in housing services;

CDCD

IESHD-Outreach workers

Community living

Housing services from ROD

Feedback from NAT and partners

The tool is live and can be edited



The Tool

- A step-by-step guide to assist newcomers find supports and services in their journey to secure housing.
- Map includes resources for every step
- [Newcomer Housing Journey Map - Durham Immigration](#)



Funded by:

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Financé par :

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et Citoyenneté Canada



Community launch event: Spring 2023

Housing Journey Map For Newcomers: Launch Event

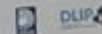
Join us as we unveil the



Durham Region Newcomer Housing Journey Road Map

Panel presentation featuring
David Firang, Associate Professor, Trent University;
Ambalika Roy, Canadian Centre for Housing Rights;
Danielle Schaffel, Durham Community Legal Clinic; and
Community Development Council Durham.

Hosted by: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
Sponsored by: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Fostering a strong and inclusive region



diversity@durham.ca
durham.ca/diversity

Housing Panel

Perspective	Speaker
Advocacy	Canadian Centre for Housing Rights
Academia	Trent University
Legal	Durham Community Legal Clinic
Lived experience	Recent refugee in Durham
Community programming/front-line	Community Development Council Durham





Outcomes

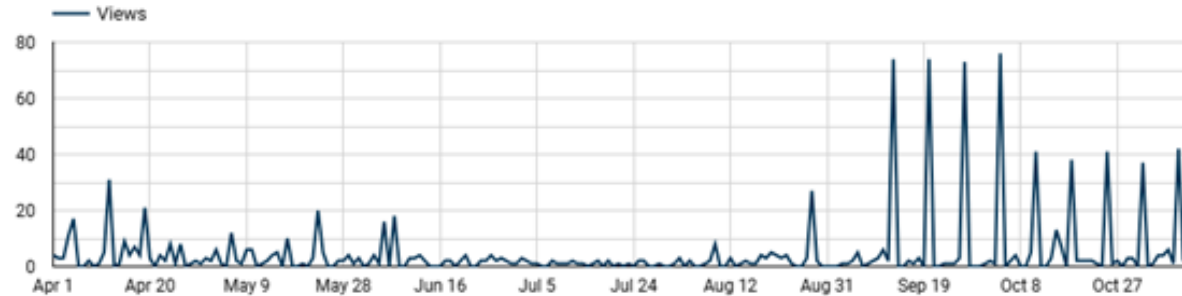
Community:

- 8 Booths at libraries
- Distributed over a hundred physical copies and 200 postcards

Outcomes

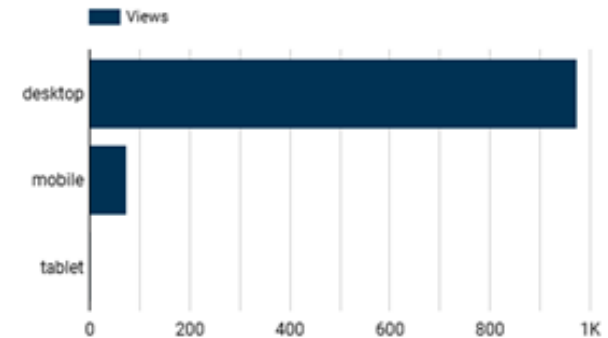
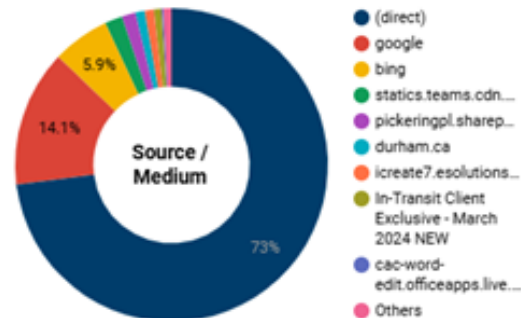
Page title: Newcomer Housing Journey Map - Durham Immigration (1)

Apr 1, 2024 - Nov 12, 2024



Views	Total users	New users	Sessions	Sessions per user
1.0K	801.0	672.0	964.0	1.2

Avg. Engagement Time per Session (in seconds)
28.1



Thank you



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Danielle Pineda

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Newcomers Road Map in Durham

- **Purpose:**
To guide newcomers through the process of securing permanent housing



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**How will a Landlord- focused
program improve access to rental
units ?**

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

What is on ground

- **CDCD Welcome Centre:** Offers a range of services for newcomers.
- **CDCD Housing:** Specialize in finding housing for clients by establishing connections with housing providers in the region, facilitating placements based on clients' needs and preferences.
- **CDCD Durham Humanitarian Response Project:** Offers comprehensive support for newcomers currently in hotels, Pickering, Whitby & Oshawa
- **Shelters (e.g., CFOC):** Provide temporary space for newcomers needing immediate housing assistance.
- **DCLC (Durham Community Legal Clinic):** Provides information on tenant rights and responsibilities to raise newcomers' awareness.
- **Collaboration Among Housing Agencies:** Once client is housed and issues arise, client will be supported through collaboration of housing providers in the city where client lives, CDCD Ajax/Pickering, JHS, North House, etc.

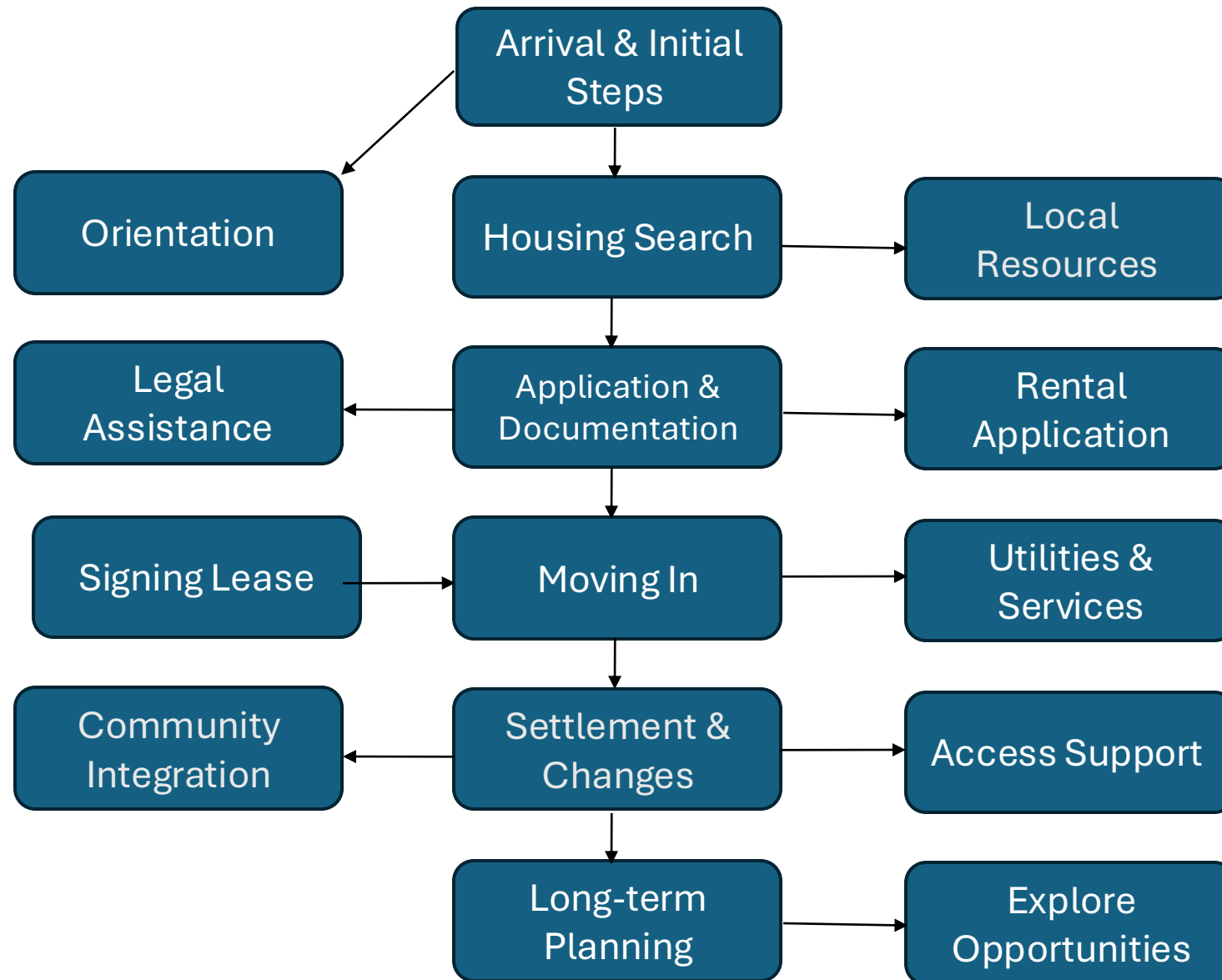
HOUSING SETTLEMENT WORKERS CDCD/DHRP

The housing workers play a crucial role in assisting newcomers with housing needs:

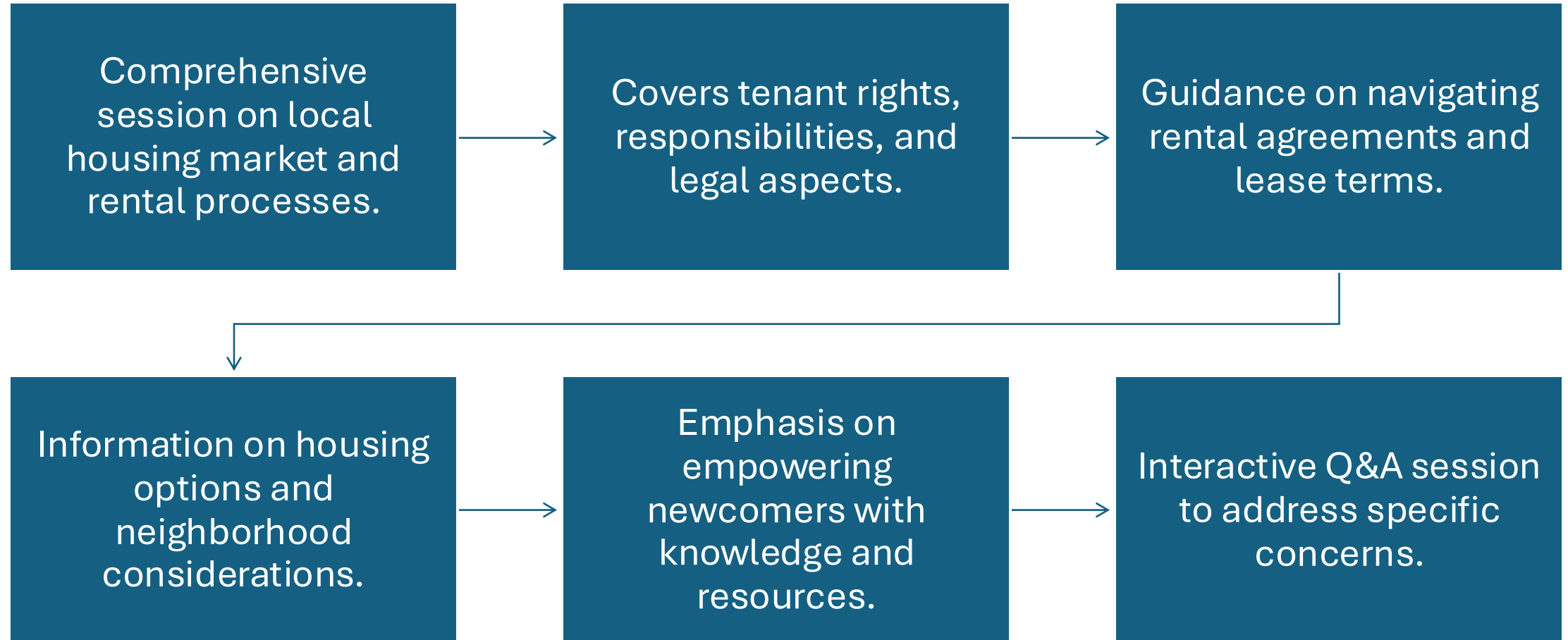


- Conducting personalized housing needs assessments to understand newcomers' preferences and barriers.
- Providing language interpretation services to facilitate communication during housing-related interactions.
- Offering ongoing support and guidance throughout the housing search process, including assistance with applications for financial aid.

Newcomer Housing Journey Flowchart



Housing Orientation



Housing Search Assistance

Personalized support in finding suitable housing options.

Assistance with rental applications and property viewings.

Submit rental applications with necessary documents for subsidized housing. Market rent/RGI were applicable

Guidance on negotiation with landlords or agencies.

Access to listings and resources for affordable housing.

Collaboration with local landlords and housing agencies.

Financial Assistance

Ontario Works or government funded program available

Explain the eligibility criteria for accessing financial assistance.

Financial counseling and budgeting support.

CDCD-Offers financial supports such as LMR and moving cost to eligible newcomers in hotels.

Tenant Education and Support



Education on budgeting, household management, and community integration.



Workshops or seminars covering topics such as tenant rights and responsibilities.



Guidance on maintaining a healthy and sustainable tenancy.



Support for resolving conflicts with landlords or neighbors.



Resources for accessing community services and support networks.



Regular follow-up to address any emerging issues and ensure housing stability.

Transition to Permanent Housing

Celebrate successes as newcomers secure permanent housing.

Signing lease: Read and understand the lease before signing seek support if needs be.

Assistance with moving logistics and utilities setup including schools (SWIS).

Referral to additional support services as needed. Donations food & Furniture banks, churches, community integration agencies.

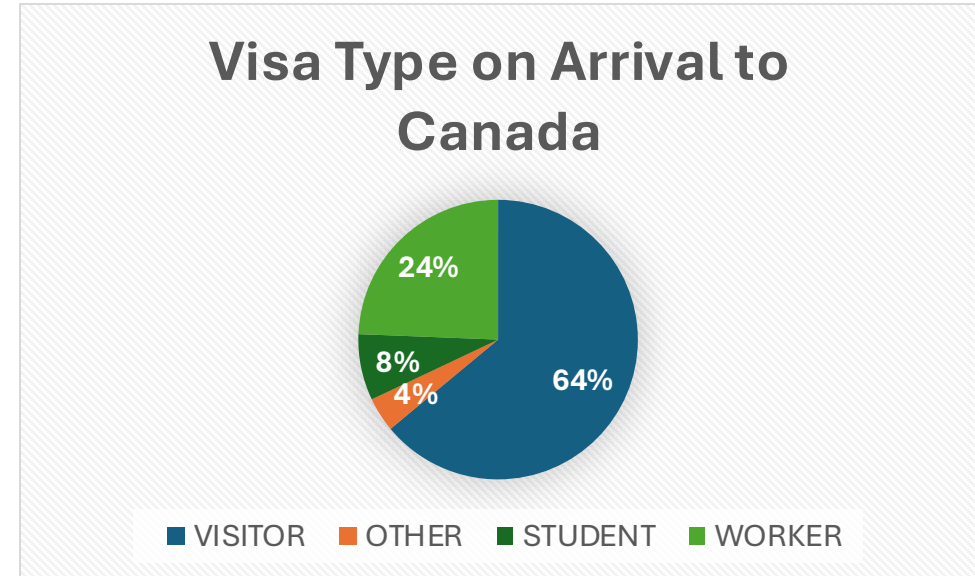
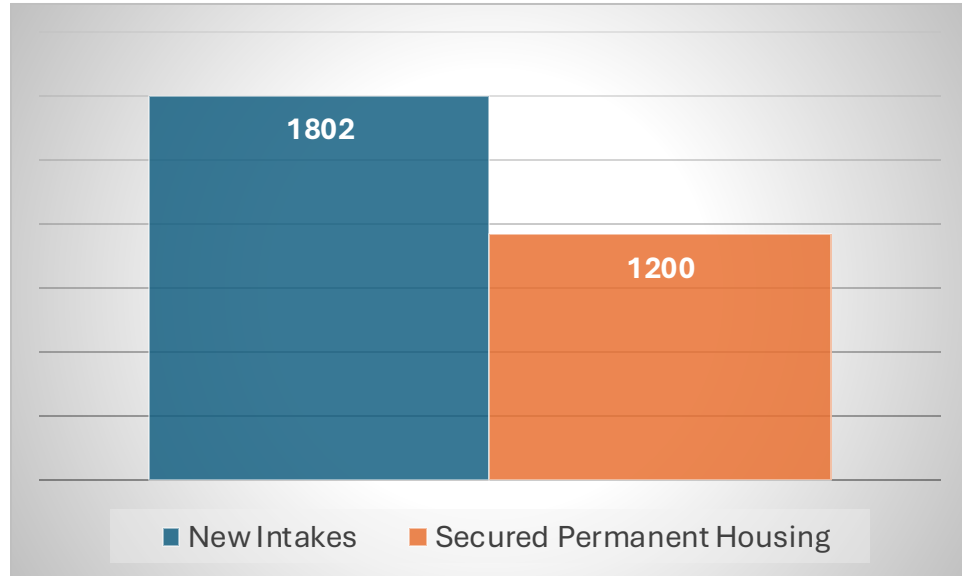
Regular check-ins to ensure successful transition and address any challenges.

Continued support post-placement for housing stability, provided with collaboration with other agencies

Overview of CDCD Durham Humanitarian Response Project

- **Temporary Accommodation with Wrap-around Supports:** We provide temporary accommodation in hotels with comprehensive wrap-around supports while newcomers search for permanent housing.
- **Emphasis on Stability:** We prioritize stability during this transitional period to ensure newcomers have a secure and supportive environment as they navigate the housing market.
- **Holistic Approach with Wrap-around Supports:** Our program takes a holistic approach by offering a range of support services, including housing assistance, language and cultural support, employment services, and community integration activities, to address the diverse needs of newcomers.

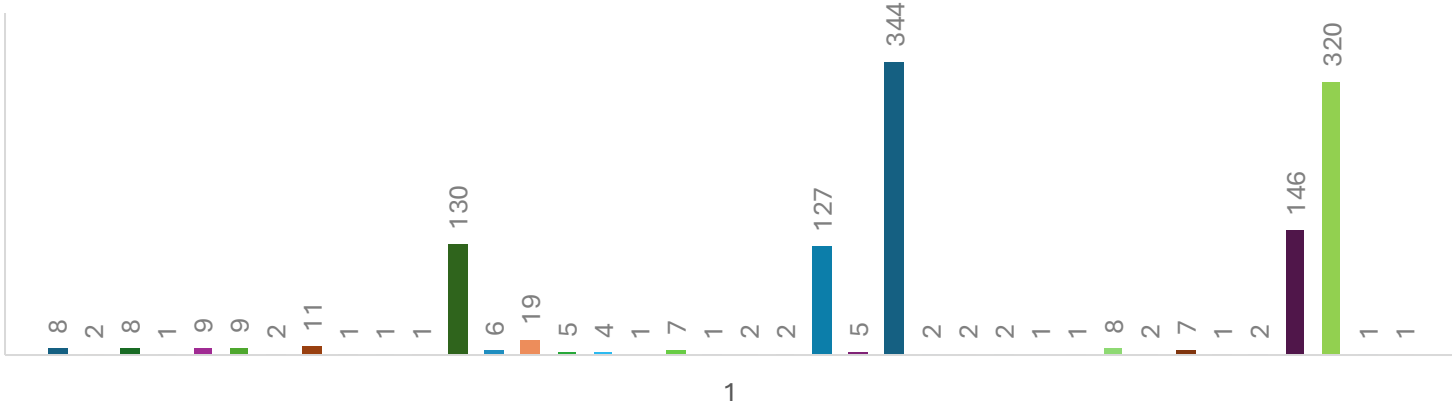
Q1 2022 – Q3 2024



COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

- AFGHANISTAN
- AZERBAIJAN
- BAHAMAS
- BANGLADESH
- BOLIVIA
- CANADA
- CHINA
- CONGO
- CUBA
- EGYPT
- ERITREA
- ETHIOPIA
- GEORGIA
- GHANA
- GUINEA
- HAITI
- HONDURAS
- HUNGARY
- ITALY
- JAMAICA
- JORDAN
- KENYA
- MAURITIUS
- NIGERIA
- Other
- PAKISTAN
- RUSSIA
- RWANDA
- SIERRA LEONE
- SOUTH AFRICA
- SRI LANKA
- SUDAN
- SYRIA
- TANZANIA
- UGANDA
- UKRAINE
- USA
- ZIMBABWE

Breakdown of Clients by Countries of Origin. 38 Countries !



Challenges Newcomers Face with Landlords in the Community

- **Rental History & Credit:** Difficulty securing rental agreements due to lack of local credit history or references.
- **Discrimination & Bias:** Facing bias based on race, ethnicity, or region.
- **Employment Instability:** Difficulty finding stable employment; landlord will doubt the stability in the unit.
- **Landlords requiring high deposits:** creating financial strains for newcomers.
- **Canadian Work Experience:** Barrier due to the value placed on Canadian work experience.
- **Credential Recognition:** Overseas credentials may not be recognized, requiring costly re-certification; landlords are not patient for this process.
- **High Unemployment:** Competing with high unemployment rates in some regions.
- **Limited Flexibility:** Majority of Landlords cannot accommodate larger families or cultural preferences in housing arrangements.
- **Psychological Trauma:** Coping with past trauma impacts settlement process.

Thank you

Contact me:

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Audience Q&A

ⓘ Start presenting to display the audience questions on this slide.

Thank you!

