

INTRODUCTION

Foreign credential recognition (FCR) is the process of verifying that training, education, and experience obtained in another country meet federal, provincial or territorial standards for practice in Canada.

Consultations under Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)'s Supporting Black Canadian Communities Initiative revealed that FCR represents a significant challenge for many Black immigrants. This study explored the FCR experiences of Black internationally trained professionals (ITPs) in occupations that are regulated in Canada.

OBJECTIVE

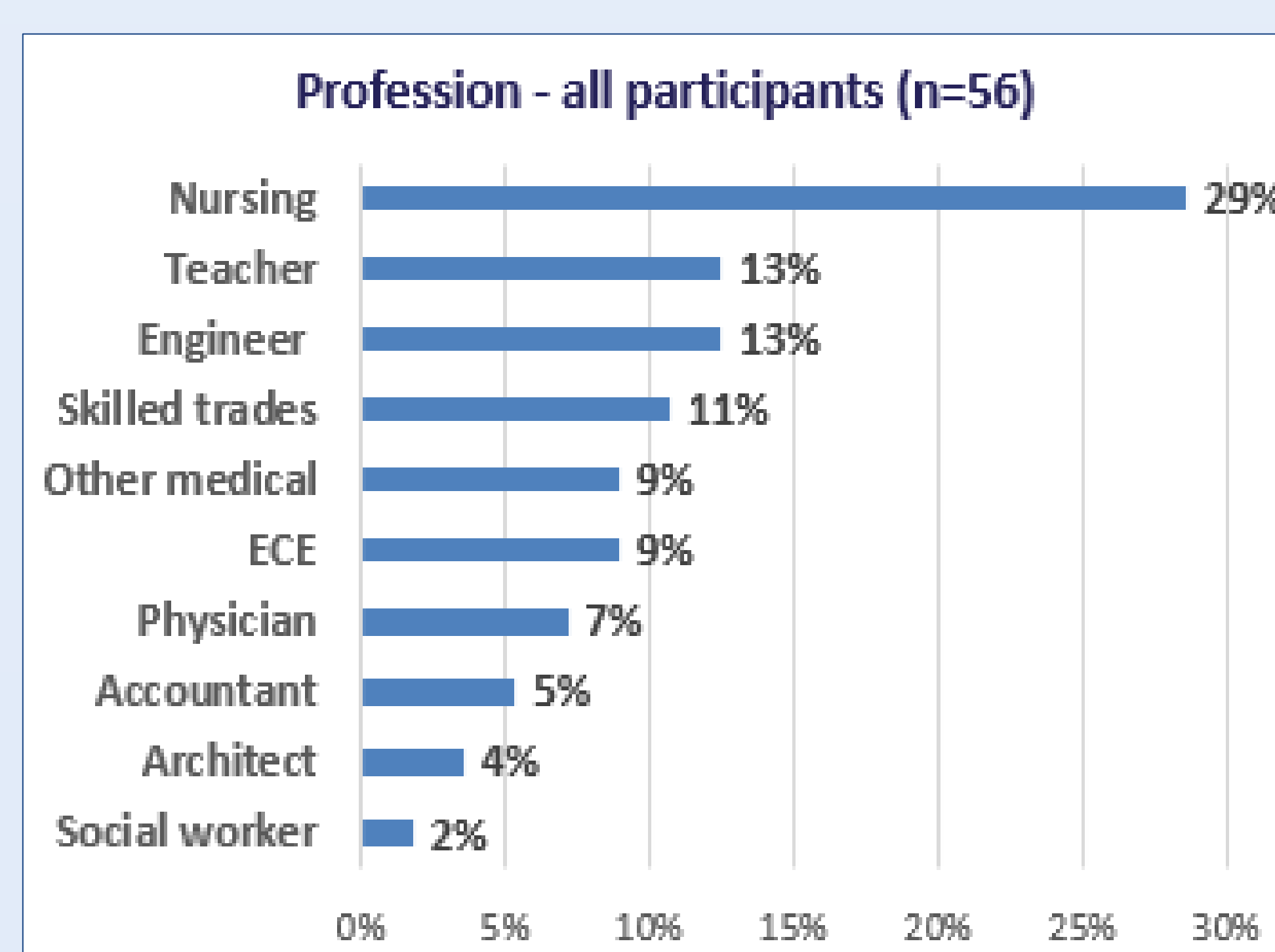
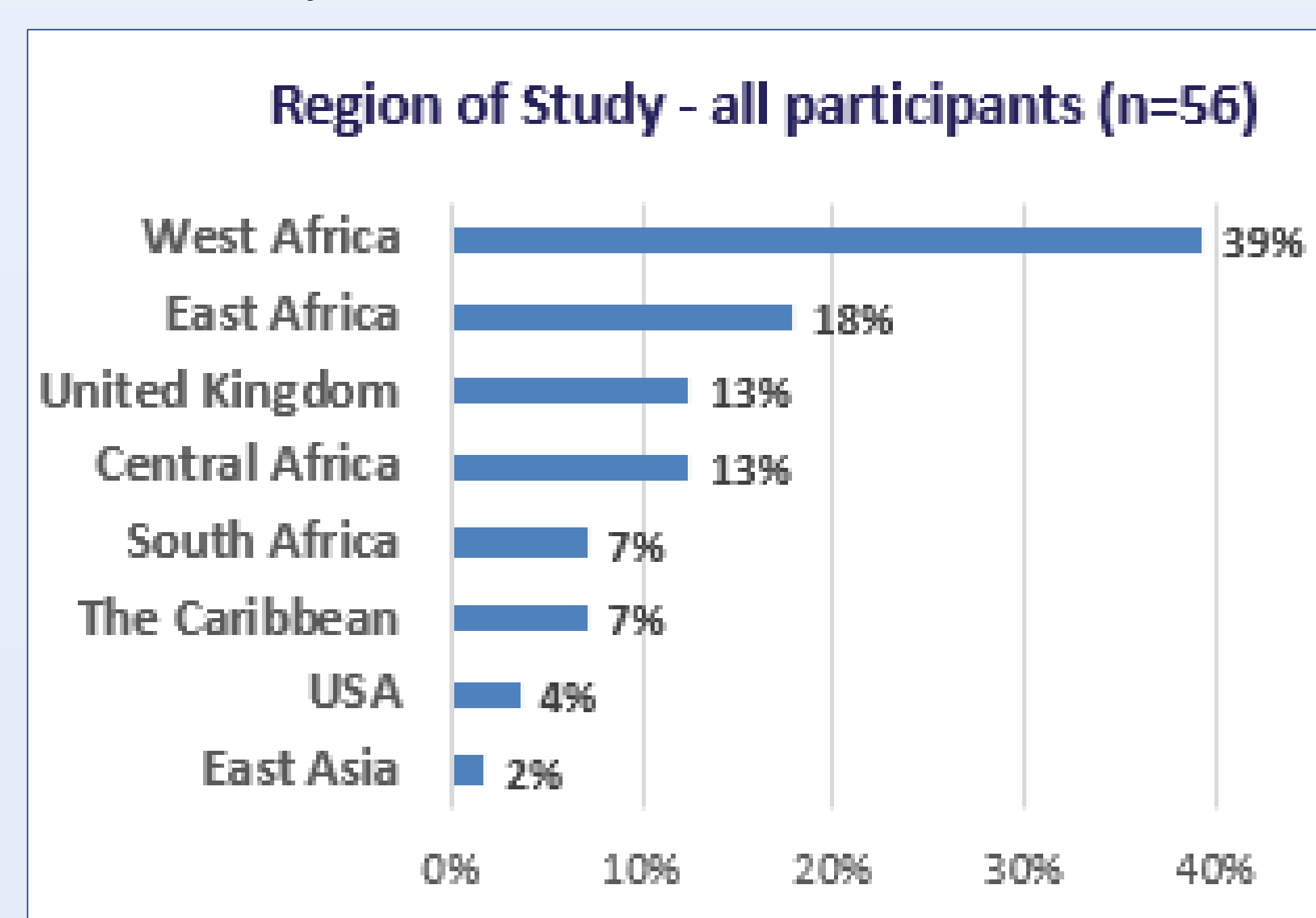
The purpose of the study was to better understand the experiences, challenges, and needs of Black ITPs in relation to having their foreign credentials recognized to be able to work in their occupation of training in Canada.

METHODOLOGY

- Literature Review (academic and grey literature);
- Scoping interviews with professional associations (4 interviews: early childhood education (ECE); engineering; nursing; and, construction and skilled trades);
- One-on-one interviews with Black ITPs (26 interviews);
- Focus groups with Black ITPs (4 groups engaging a total of 30 participants).

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

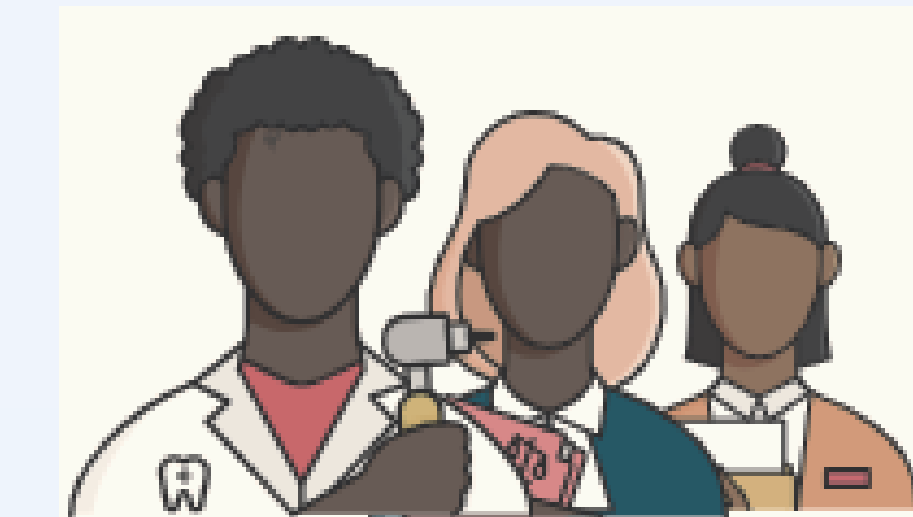
- A total of 56 Black ITPs participated in the study.
- Representation from across Canada but most resided in Ontario (38%) or in Prairie provinces (33%) [Others: BC=11%; Atlantic=11%; QC=5%; Northern Canada= 2%].
- A bit more men (55%) than women.
- Majority aged between 26 to 35 years (64%), followed by 36 to 45 years (27%).
- Majority were permanent residents (61%), followed by temporary residents (21%), and Canadian citizens (18%).
- Most (80%) pursued their studies in their region of birth.
- Most (68%) had completed the FCR process, either successfully (57%) or unsuccessfully (11%); the remainder were in the process of having their credentials recognized (29%) or were considering FCR (3%).



FINDINGS

INFORMATION GATHERING PREFERENCES

- More than half of participants (54%) primarily used official sources (e.g., government and regulator sites) to obtain more information on FCR. However, almost half (46%) said they relied more substantially on non-official sources (e.g., acquaintances, persons of guidance, social media) as they deemed these more approachable easy to understand, and preferred socially interactive means of obtaining information.



KEY CHALLENGES

- For some Black ITPs, poor understanding of what FCR is and how it works;
- Length and cost of the process;
- Perceived excessive scrutiny of documents and qualifications by regulators;
- Difficulty securing employment – particularly profession-related employment (this impacts ability to afford costs of FCR and can negatively impact their path back to working in their profession of training in Canada);
- Difficulty finding and accessing training needed to help them bridge the differences in the professional norms, practice context, and/or ways of doing things in Canada compare to in their country of training.



KEY NEEDS

- Candid information on what to expect in advance;
- Clear information on pathway options back to working in their profession in Canada;
- Profession-specific support services and profession-specific programs;
- Connection to: mentors in their field in Canada; Canadian professional groups or network communities that can provide guidance and support to ITPs; and, Black profession-related groups where members can connect, support one another, and share information;
- Support to connect with profession-related employment in Canada;
- Access to supervised practice programs/observerships/hands-on training specifically targeted to ITPs trained in non-Western countries in order to provide them with a space to learn, try-out, make mistakes, and ask questions about profession-specific differences in the Canadian context.

CONCLUSIONS

Black ITPs can face a variety of challenges in their FCR journey. While many of these challenges are shared with other ITPs, the study's findings suggested that some differences most salient for Black ITPs are: a preferences for obtaining information through social means; a need for support in connecting with profession-related employment in Canada; a need for support in connecting with a mentor in Canada and/or a profession-specific support network; and, a need to access hands-on training to help them bridge the differences between the training they obtained outside of Canada and Canadian practice norms for their profession.

DISCLAIMER

The findings/views from this study remains solely that of GGI and should not be attributed to ESDC nor the Government of Canada.