



# Final Report

**Submitted to  
Citizenship and Immigration Canada**

**Submitted by  
Central South Etobicoke  
Local Immigration Partnership Leadership Council**

**Funded by:**



**Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada**

**Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada**

**Coordinated by:**



## Central South Etobicoke



## Acknowledgements

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The report that follows provides the immense knowledge the Central South Etobicoke LIP has gained from engaging in the Local Immigration Partnership Initiative, as well as our considerations and strategic plans for the future.

Without the generous financial support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada through the Local Immigration Partnership program, the research, consultation and engagement processes required to complete this report would not be possible.

I would like to thank the almost 100 newcomers and employers who invested their time through focus groups, individual interviews and consultations.

The representatives from Central South Etobicoke service delivery organizations also deserve a great deal of recognition for their hard work and contribution in creating the foundation for activities to engage newcomers and improve their outcomes.

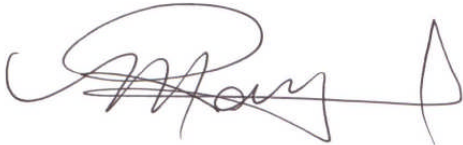
The member agencies of the Central South Etobicoke LIP Leadership Council were pivotal in spearheading the progress of the LIP Initiative. Council Members demonstrated dedication, insight, vision and knowledge in guiding both this partnership and the development of this report with its subsequent Strategic Priorities and Action Plan. The following are those agencies:

- The Arab Community of Toronto
- CUIAS Immigrant Services
- Daily Bread Food Bank
- Hormood Community
- Humber College
- JobStart
- LAMP ASK Community Information Centre
- Madbakh Women's Initiative Inc.
- Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services
- PTP Adult Learning and Employment Programs
- Toronto District School Board
- Toronto Employment and Social Services - Etobicoke South Employment Office
- Toronto Public Health
- Toronto Public Library - Brentwood Branch
- Toronto Public Library - Richview Branch
- VESA - Vital Enrichment Service Association
- vpi Inc.
- Women's Habitat
- YWCA



The mainstay of this initiative is the LIP Lead Agency Team, led by Avril White, JobStart Manager, Programs and Services. Their expertise, energy, leadership and administrative support were essential to the success of the Central South Etobicoke Local Immigrant Partnership and development of this final report. This exceptional group is comprised of Researchers: Avril White – Manager, Programs and Services; Yasmeen Tian, Riley Dillon and Miglena Todorova – Researchers; and Denise Randell - Administrative Assistant.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Raymond', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Raymond  
Director, Programs and Services  
JobStart  
Lead Agency for the Central South Etobicoke LIP



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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In 2008, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) - in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) - issued a call for proposals for the development of Local Immigration Partnerships, popularly known as LIPs. Throughout 2009 and 2010, CIC approved funding for a total of thirteen community agencies to operate 17 LIP Councils covering neighbourhoods throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). During that time, CIC also funded the Toronto Newcomers Initiative (TNI), a LIP operated by the City of Toronto.

With the formation of LIPs, service providers and other interested community stakeholders have been provided the resources to:

- Establish neighbourhood partnerships based on a common interest in improving community responses to immigrant needs;
- Conduct primary research towards understanding the particular needs of newcomers to effectively settling and integrating in the province, and
- Develop strategic priorities and action plans that support effective settlement and integration of immigrants in their respective areas.

The neighbourhood partnerships that officially formed the Central South Etobicoke LIP actually started before CIC's Call for Proposals. However, CIC formally began funding the effort in November 2009 with an anticipated program end date for the Phase 1 on August 31, 2010.

By late February 2010, the process towards generating the primary research data began in earnest. With the hiring of the LIP manger and researcher, a great deal of outreach commenced to find newcomer participants for focus groups. Front line staff, from various service providers, were also pivotal in providing focus group information to their newcomer program participants, and, as a result, 75 newcomers provided information on their settlement and immigration experience in Central South Etobicoke. During this time, consultant, William G. Wolfson, provided facilitated governance meetings, in which the LIP Leadership Council would develop its Terms of Reference, mission, vision and structure – a process that would later greatly assist in developing the partnership's 2011-12 Strategic Priorities and Action Plan. From May through August 2010, additional focus groups were held to obtain information on more sector-specific newcomer issues, service provider surveys for line- and executive-



staff were disseminated and analyzed, employers were interviewed and the first stage of Strategic Planning Work Groups were held. These various modes of consultation provided a much broader view of not only newcomer experiences; but also provided the avenues to develop a greater understanding of the context that newcomers must work within in order to settle and integrate into the area. In September 2010, the process for completing the Final Report began, and it became clear that a literature review was needed in order to put the primary research data into even greater context to the historical needs of recent immigrants. In addition, the LIP Leadership Council worked to refine and categorize the Strategic Priorities and Action Plan points initially articulated by Work Group members.

Within the constraints of the three contractual periods taken to complete Phase I of the LIP initiative, the research, partnership development and planning process was not textbook. However, it was these various constraints that brought out the best efforts of newcomer participants, service providers and employers, and bodes well for the ability of the Central South Etobicoke LIP to implement the actions advocacy and partnerships during Phase II, of the Ontario-wide LIP initiative.



## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

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Relative to its population size, Canada has the second highest share of migrants in the world (United Nations, 2010). In the past decade, the country received approximately 225,00 – 260,000 immigrants each year (CIC, 2010). In 2009 alone, 252,179 immigrants were admitted into the country. Within this number, 153,498 (60.9%) were admitted to Canada under Economic Immigrant status<sup>1</sup>, 65,200 (25.9%) under Family Class Immigrant status<sup>2</sup>, 22,846 (9.1%) under Refugee status<sup>3</sup>, and 10,634 (4.2%) under the category of Other Immigrants<sup>4</sup>. The remainder entered under “category not stated” (CIC, 2010).

Upon arrival to Canada, the majority of immigrants choose to settle in one of three of the largest metropolises in the country – namely, Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver; with 69% of the country’s most recent immigrants calling one of these cities home, in 2006. Toronto has traditionally been the most popular destination for newcomer migrants, attracting as much as 40% of recent immigrants during the same time period (Murdie, 2008). The newcomers who settle in any one of these three cities have various reasons for doing so. However, the two main factors influencing their decision to move to any one of these three Canadian metropolises are the wealth of employment opportunities in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, and/or the desire to reconnect with already established family and/or friends (Statistic Canada, 2003).

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<sup>1</sup> Economic immigrants are “skilled workers, business immigrants, provincial and territorial nominees and live-in caregivers”. They are selected based on their skills and ability and are expected to contribute to Canada’s economy (CIC, 2010, p. 1).

<sup>2</sup> Family class immigrants are sponsored by close relatives or family members in Canada, and include spouses and partners, dependent children, parents and grandparents (CIC, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Refugees are those persons who seek protection from their country of origin, migrate to Canada and receive assistance from either the Government of Canada or private sponsors. Refugees who have landed in Canada as well as their dependants living abroad are also included in this category (CIC, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Other immigrants include temporary resident permit holders and individuals and families who are under humanitarian and compassionate cases. These individuals are not qualified for permanent residency in any category (CIC, 2010).

## 2.1 *Historical Barriers to the Successful Settlement & Integration of Immigrants*

While the economic circumstances that newcomers face when they migrate to Canada is often better than that in their home country, the vast majority of newcomers still experience significant obstacles and barriers to their successful settlement and integration<sup>5</sup>. According to the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) conducted by Statistic Canada (2003), the most common barriers recent immigrants to Canada face are:

- i. Housing – The high cost of housing in cities, as well as a lack of Canadian credit history, co-signor or guarantor all contribute to the difficulties newcomers face in obtaining suitable housing.
- ii. Health Care – Historically, long waiting lists for medical services are the most prominent issue facing newcomers in accessing healthcare in Canada. Additional issues widely noted are the high cost of dental care and prescription medication, as well as the difficulty in finding a family doctor that accepts new patients.
- iii. Education and Training – The LSIC survey indicates that more than half of the newcomers surveyed plan to enrol in Canadian educational courses or training. However, this survey reports that newcomers face significant challenges in furthering their education due to: barriers in language; financial difficulties; the inability to find courses in line with their original career path; and the struggle between taking appropriate courses and engaging in immediate employment to meet basic needs.
- iv. Employment – This report shows that about 85% of immigrants surveyed intend to work upon arrival to Canada, and approximately 44% of newcomers actually do find a job within six months of arrival. However, it is also noted that more than half do not find a job in their original career field. Most of the jobs that they engaged in were part-time and/or temporary positions that did not require their professional skills (Dean & Wilson, 2009). This phenomenon has been referred to as “de-skilling”, “underemployment”, “skill under-utilization” and “brain-drain” by some researchers (Bauder, 2003; Dean & Wilson, 2009; Reitz, 2001). Within the community services industry, this phenomenon is often described as obtaining “survival work”.

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<sup>5</sup> Settlement is defined by CIC as “the short-term transitional issues faced by newcomers”, while integration is the “ongoing process of mutual accommodation between an individual and society” (CIC, 2010).



“Finding employment is well recognized as one of the primary steps to immigrants’ integration” (Shields et al., 2011, p.3). In order to better display the immigrant’s participation in the Canadian workforce, the following section describes the historical labour market outcome of newcomers, and the most prominent issues they face in realizing their career goals.

### **2.1.1 Labour Market Outcomes of Immigrants**

Numerous studies have been conducted to determine the labour market participation of immigrants. On the whole, it has been found that those immigrants who arrived after the 1990s have lower earning capacity compared to those immigrants who arrived prior to that decade (Bauder, 2003; Li, 2003; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Oreopoulos, 2009). Although immigrants arriving before the 1990s inevitably faced barriers in finding employment during their initial settlement period, they usually caught up to – and sometimes surpassed – the labour market performance of their Canadian-born counterparts. However, the labour market integration and success of immigrants who arrived in Canada after 1990 has been much less successful. While their income may improve with increased time spent in the country, studies do not positively project the ability of post-1990 immigrants to reach the income levels of either the Canadian-born or pre-1990 immigrant population (Li, 2003; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003).

The fact that immigrants who have arrived in the past 20 years have poorer socio-economic integration is even more concerning, considering that more recent immigrants are coming to Canada with higher levels of education than that held by both their newcomer predecessors and the Canadian-born population on a whole. A report by the Martin Prosperity Institute (2009) shows that in 2006, 42% of recent immigrants who arrived between 2001-2006 hold a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, while only 15.8% of the Canadian-born population and 25.4% of all immigrants possessed these same qualifications. Yet, the average income of more recent immigrants with higher levels of education is only \$28,217; significantly lower than that of other groups. In the same time period, the Canadian-born population earned \$64,239, and the “All Immigrant” population (pre-post 1990 immigrants) earned \$48,488. Furthermore, recent immigrants also had the lowest labour market participation rate. Their rate of unemployment was 12%, while the rate was 3.5% for their Canadian-born counterparts and 6.6% for all immigrants (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Summary Educational Attainment, Average Income and Unemployment Rate by Population Group

	Holding a Bachelor Degree or Higher	Average Income	Unemployment Rate
Canadian –born Populations	15.8%	\$64,239	3.5%
All Immigrants	25.4%	\$48,488	6.6%
Recent Immigrants (Arrived between 2001 and 2006)	42.0%	\$28,217	12.0%

Source: Martin Prosperity Institute (2009).

### 2.1.2 Labour Market Barrier: Credential Recognition

The major barriers facing immigrants in finding employment, especially in their particular subject of expertise, are a lack of recognition of foreign credentials and delayed assessment of such credentials by regulatory bodies. For example, a degree from a university in India or Pakistan is often not considered equivalent to a degree that is obtained from the University of British Columbia (Bauder, 2003). These issues have become more significant in recent years due to immigration policy changes made in the late 1960s that favour highly educated immigrants to Canada<sup>6</sup> (Dean & Wilson, 2009; Weiner, 2008). Since that time, immigrants have indicated concerns with licensing examinations, requirements for upgrading and training, as well as a lack of financial supports associated with these expenses. Furthermore, there are discrepancies between the mandate of Canadian regulatory bodies and the perspective of recent immigrants; “regulatory bodies want to ensure everyone they license is competent, while immigrants want everyone competent to be licensed” (Weiner, 2008, p. 8).

<sup>6</sup> In 1967, the government of Canada introduced a non-discriminatory immigration policy – the point system as a guideline to select immigrants based on their education, age, language and other factors (Green & Green, 2004; Man, 2004).



### **2.1.3 Labour Market Barrier: Canadian Experience**

Demands for job candidates to have “Canadian Experience” by employers have led to the exclusion of many newcomers in engaging in careers that meet their career field of expertise. For newcomers to Canada, this requirement often becomes a catch-22. Without Canadian experience newcomers are exempt from obtaining work within their field; yet without gaining employment within their field, they are unlikely to get the required Canadian experience (Bauder, 2003; Man, 2004). Bauder (2003) criticizes that, like non-recognition of immigrants credential and education, the requirement of Canadian experience is also responsible for the devaluation of the skills that immigrants bring to the country. He further argues that the requirement of Canadian experience only affects immigrants who seek positions in the “upper” labour-market segments of the workforce. For occupations that are not as attractive to the Canadian-born population - like, for example security guards - lack of Canadian experience does not appear as a barrier for employment.

On the other hand, Weiner (2008) claims that when Canadian employers require Canadian experience, what they are actually seeking may not be the specific knowledge of immigrants’ field of expertise, Instead, what they really desire is a candidate who has the actual experience and understanding of the culture and norms within the Canadian workplace. However, this requirement creates even greater challenges for newcomers to overcome because, while specific knowledge and skills can be tested and taught, the term “Canadian culture and norms” is itself a vague expression that means different things to different people.

### **2.1.4 Labour Market Barrier: Language**

“The language skills of Canadian immigrants are associated with their economic well-being and integration” (Boyd, 2009, p.2). A report completed by the Toronto Immigrant Employment Data Initiative (TIEDI) (Tufts et al., 2010) also indicates that immigrants who have better language skills also earn higher average hourly wages. Based on these statements, it is can be presumed that immigrants without fluency in either of Canada’s official languages face greater challenges in integrating into the labour force. Although recent immigrants who apply for immigration under the Federal Skilled Workers (FSW) program are required to take a language proficiency test, these tests do not assess occupation-specific language skills, or effectively measure a person’s effectiveness at utilizing speech and/or “soft” communication skills that are crucial in the work place (Weiner, 2008).



Immigrant women, whose first language is neither French nor English, also face tremendous barriers to improving their communication abilities in Canada's official languages. In 2009 alone, 31,245 females came to Canada as dependants of FSW principal applicants (CIC, 2010). Being that these women were not required to take language tests to become permanent residents in Canada, they likely had even less awareness of their communications skills in either of the official languages. Furthermore, although there are government-funded language classes available to immigrant women to improve their language abilities in order to increase their competitiveness in the labour market, many in this category have less opportunity to attend these programs. The main reasons for this inability of immigrant women to attend or even aspire to take language classes are very often due to their being the primary party handling domestic responsibilities, as well as to a societal attitude (often internalized by immigrant women) that they are only suitable for certain occupation (like caregiver), so there is no need for them to get any employment training (Tastsoglou & Preston, 2006; Wiener, 2008).

While language proficiency is crucial to successful employment in Canada, research has revealed that even immigrants who possess high proficiency in English face challenges in finding employment. Speaking in English, but without a British or North American accent, also hinders a newcomer's ability to obtain work (Creese & Kambere, 2002; Oreopoulos, 2009). Using four different accents (Canadian, Slavic, West-Indian and Indo-Pakistani accents), a study was conducted to obtain the reaction of 237 employers to job applicants with non-western accents. The result indicates that the Canadian accents that received the most positive responses (85%), while only 52% of Slavic accents and 47% of Indo-Pakistani were told that the jobs were still open (Oreopoulos, 2009)<sup>7</sup>. Creese and Kambere's (2002) research also illustrated that accent is a major barrier for immigrants in finding employment. For instance, one of the immigrant women in their study describes how her accented English became a barrier for her in entering the labour force, and eventually affected her health; this, despite the fact that she had lived in Canada for 13 years and has a high level of English proficiency:

*"I developed medical problems because of rejection, not being accepted and not getting the jobs that I was qualified for. I developed medical problems and now I will not be able to work again. I have to take care of my medical problems" (p. 15).*

Tastsoglou & Miedema (2005) suggest that denying a person's access to employment due to his or her accent is a form of racism, because the accent is considered as "improper and inferior", but not because it has creates any "functional problem" (p. 214).

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<sup>7</sup> The author did not report employer response rates for those with West-Indian accents.



### 2.1.5 Labour Market Barrier: Racial Discrimination

Due to a change in immigration policy in the late 1960s, visible minorities<sup>8</sup> in Canada have increased. In the last 20 years their numbers have increased almost three times from 4.7% in 1981 to 13.4% in 2001 (Al-Waqfi & Jain, 2008). From 1996-2001, the general population grew only 3.9%, while the growth rate of visible minorities skyrocketed 24.6% (Galabuzi, 2006). Their proportion in the Canadian labour market has also increased from 4.1% in 1981 to 12.6% (Al-Waqfi & Jain, 2008). Based on their current growth rate, the visible minority population is expected to rise to 20% in 2016, representing one in five persons within the Canadian job market (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2007; Al-Waqfi & Jain, 2008). In the larger Canadian metropolises, it is projected that visible minorities will occupy nearly half of the work force (Al-Waqfi & Jain, 2008). Yet, despite their growing prominence, visible minority populations are not performing well in the labour market. Teelucksingh & Galabuzi (2007) argue that racial discrimination is largely responsible for their poor economic outcomes.

Discrimination can happen at any stage during employment, including “recruitment, screening, selection, promotion, or termination” (Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD), 2000, p.11). A recent study done by the University of British Columbia shows that racial discrimination in the labour market actually can take place at the moment when job seekers send out their resumes. In the study, researchers sent out thousands of resumes with different information to find out how employers reacted to them. First, whether the applicants’ name was ethnic or English sounding; second, whether or not the applicants’ education had been attained in Canada; third, whether or not the applicants had Canadian working experience. The main findings were:

- i. Applicants with an English sounding name, Canadian educational background and job experience got 16% interview requests, three times more than those who had ethnic sounding name, foreign educational background and job experience (5%).
- ii. Ethnic names with Canadian job experience increased interview request rates to 11%.
- iii. Applicants who had Canadian education and experience but had a different sounding name received significantly different call back results; the applicants with English sounding names received 40% more responses than those who were with ethnic sounding names.

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<sup>8</sup> Visible minorities are defined as “persons other than aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour”; these include: “Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs and West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans, and Pacific Islanders” (Galabuzi, 2006, p. 92).



In sum, this study displays that employers show a tendency to discriminate against those who have ethnic sounding names and are without Canadian working experience (Oreopoulos, 2009), and provides a strong reason why immigrants who are visible minorities suffer the most in the Canadian labour market.

### **2.1.6 Hiring Immigrants: Employer Perspectives**

The above sections outline some of the recognized barriers that can affect an immigrant's performance in the labour market. Nonetheless, the perspectives and concerns of employers must be taken into consideration, because employers ultimately make the decisions of who to hire. Rietz (2001) raises the following points to explain how immigrants' skills are underutilized due to employers' attitudes on foreign credentials and education:

- i. Employers' non-recognition of foreign professional credentials (already licensed in Canada): Rietz explains that immigrants continue to face barriers in this regard even after their professional credentials have been recognized by Canadian licensing bodies. This is mainly because employers do not readily believe that foreign gained professional credentials are as qualified as those gained in Canada.
- ii. Employers' non-recognition of foreign education:  
For occupations that do not require a licensing process – such as Human Resource professionals, lower-level managers, supervisors and public relation personnel - employers usually hire staff based on their educational background. Study has shown that similar to licensed occupations, immigrants who seek positions in non-licensed fields also feel that their skills are underutilized because employers devalue their educational attainments and do not consider that they are equivalent to the one obtained in Canada.

In addition to the above, the non-recognition of foreign work experience by Canadian employers as explained above in the Canadian Experience section has also played an important role in the underutilization of skills in the immigrant work force. The reason suggested for the mismatch between the understanding of employers regarding foreign education, credentials and experience, and the ability of immigrants to utilize their skills is due to employer not knowing whether the education and/or work experience gained abroad is similar to the work experience within the Canadian labour market. More specifically, employers in Canada do not appear to know the quality and curriculum of institutions





abroad nor understand how those foreign qualifications are relevant to the Canadian labour market. Even more importantly, it is almost impossible for employers to evaluate these qualifications individually. For these reasons, employers prefer to recruit Canadian-born staff in order to avoid any perceived risks (Somerville & Walsworth, 2009). A study conducted by “Skills Without Borders” (2007) shows that 73% of North Peel employers surveyed indicated that the foreign credentials of immigrants are “too difficult to assess”, and the experiences and references provided by immigrants are “too difficult to verify” (p. 12). Therefore, they will not employ skilled immigrants without knowing how their qualifications meet Canadian standards.

Another important finding that emerges from this study is that beyond concerns regarding foreign credentials, education and experience, employers also feel reluctant to hire immigrants because they have little understanding of and, therefore, are uneasy about dealing with differing immigrants’ “cultural practices” and “religious rights”. They are also worried about how other staffs might react if they see someone in the company is treated differently because of his/her culture and religion (Skills Without Borders, 2007, p. 15).

### **2.1.7 Settlement Services**

Adjustment, adaption, and integration are seen as common stages newcomers have to go through while settling into their new environment (OCASI, 2001). As described in earlier sections, most newcomers experience obstacles and barriers in integrating into the new society, regardless of the country they come from and the destination they choose to settle into. Settlement service providers, in this case, play a crucial role in helping newcomers smoothly transition into their new society.

Agencies providing settlement service offer initial support to newcomers such as language training, employment counselling, housing, health service and translation/interpretation. Currently, as defined by the federal government, immigrants are only eligible for the services up to three years after their arrival (Simich, 2000). Since the integration process for immigrants usually takes more than three years, (sometimes occurring throughout their lifetime), this three-year restriction has been criticised as “the most obvious drawback in defining settlement and integration” (Simich, 2000, p. 11) and “one of the most serious problems of the current system” (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003, p. 8). In fact, after their initial settlement period, immigrants usually spend an even longer time adjusting both socially and



economically. This is especially true when considering the need to find and expand professional networks, to upgrade career skills, as well as to participate in civic and political process (Simich, 2000).

Currently in Ontario, most settlement services provided to newcomers are funded by either the federal, provincial or municipal government<sup>9</sup>, community charities and in some cases, private foundations, while the services are mostly provided by non-governmental organizations and community-based agencies (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003). Sadiq (2004) explains that in Ontario, funding from the provincial government is often more competitive than funding from the federal government. Federal funding is usually renewable with conditions attached but provincial funding is often short-term. Therefore, Immigrant Services Agencies (ISAs) have to consistently reapply for new funding when provincial funding expires.

According to Canadian Newcomer Magazine (2011), there are more than 100 ISAs in Toronto. However, not all of these agencies submit proposal directly to government ministries to apply for funding. On the one hand, large multi-service agencies get direct funding from government ministries because they have the resources and manpower to prepare and complete requested funding proposals. On the other hand, smaller agencies are funded by large multi-service agencies; they help to deliver ethno-, linguistic- and culturally-specific services that large agencies are not able to provide due to a lack of expertise. Sadif (2004) has referred this system as a “two-tier settlement system” and has argued that the system creates a “spatial mismatch” between the locations of settlement agencies and where newcomers live.

Ethno-specific settlement agencies are more likely than multi-service agencies to be accessed by newcomers because they are usually located in the neighbourhood community where newcomers reside, while many large agencies are located in places that are difficult for newcomers to access by public transportations. Therefore, it can be assumed that when the provincial government announced to cutback funding to settlement services in the mid-1990s, ethno-specific agencies were harder hit than large agencies by the cut because most of them depended on the funding from their larger counterparts. The result was, newcomers lost culturally and linguistically appropriate services provided to them in their neighbourhood, and were forced to travel further to receive services they needed.

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<sup>9</sup> As of 2008, Toronto is the only Canadian city with a formal immigrant and settlement policy framework, which was established in 2001 (Weiner, 2008).



## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

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### 3.1 *Study Rationale and Objectives*

As has been mentioned in Section 2.0, the Local Immigration Initiative (LIP) in Ontario has been funded to conduct an exploratory research component to investigate the experiences of newcomers, service providers and employers within stated catchment areas. The overall aim is to better understand the experiences, expectations and challenges of newcomers to Canada in terms of settlement and integration, as well as to understand the current workings of the newcomer service delivery system. This primary research component also aims to find out employers' perspectives on hiring newcomers, and the implications such perspectives have on labour market outcomes of newcomers. More specifically, the study aims to provide an understanding of the experiences of local newcomers today, with the aim to influence improvements in the following:

- Access and coordination of services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration in Central South Etobicoke
- Access to the local and provincial job market
- Local and provincial awareness and service provider capacity to facilitate newcomer integration
- Language Support
- Target Group needs, including but not limited to youth, parent and senior newcomers

### 3.2 *Study Location*

The geographical catchment area for the Central South Etobicoke LIP extends north from Lake Ontario to Highway 401 and extends east from the Mississauga boundary to the Humber River. The geographical area of influence for the Central South Etobicoke LIP catchment area is covered by 17 Toronto neighbourhoods: 1) Alderwood; 2) Edenbridge-Humber Valley; 3) Eringate-Centennial-West Deane; 4) Etobicoke West Mall; 5) Humber Heights-Westmount; 6) Islington-City Centre West; 7) Kingsview Village-The Westway; 8) Kingsway South; 9) Lambton Baby Point; 10) Long Branch; 11) Markland Wood; 12) Mimico; 13) New Toronto; 14) Princess-Rosethorn; 15) Runnymede-Bloor West Village; 16) Stonegate-Queensway; and 17) Willowridge-Martingrove-Richview. These areas also



correspond to the following Postal Codes: M6S, M8V, M8W, M8X, M8Y, M8Z, M9A, M9B, M9C, M9P, and M9R.

### *3.3 Central South Etobicoke: Key Characteristics*

The primary population for this study of newcomers includes individuals that have just arrived, lived and/or worked in the Central South Etobicoke area, Ontario, Canada within the past five years, and were eligible to receive support through services funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. This includes sponsored family members, convention refugees, internationally trained skilled workers, all of whom are permanent residents or have recently become citizens of Canada, as well as Refugee claimants who are eligible for some of the services sponsored by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The population thus excludes:

- temporary workers;
- foreign students who intend to settle in Canada; and
- irregular or undocumented migrants, due to their ineligibility for the settlement and employment services being investigated in this study.

In an attempt to determine the population characteristics of this initiative's study sample, the most recent demographic data available on the newcomer population in Central South Etobicoke area was reviewed. Population data, particularly information on the immigrant population, are based on 2006 Census data and data developed by the city of Toronto. Successive social, ethnic and linguistic profiles of the immigrant population of Central South Etobicoke are obtained from the City of Toronto's neighbourhood profile based on the same 2006 census data.

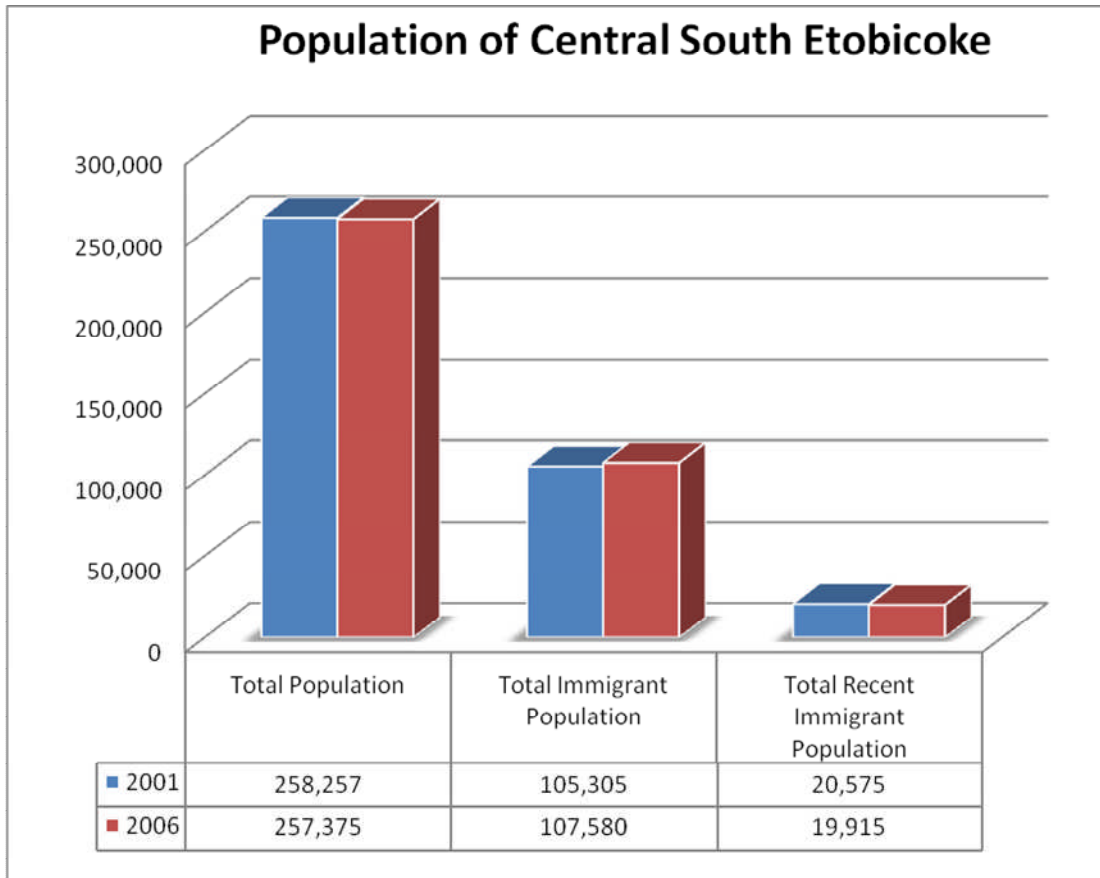
Using the City of Toronto Neighbourhood Profiles (City of Toronto, 2008) and 2006 census data, this section will first discuss the demographic structure of the LIP catchment areas, and then focus on the characteristics of recent immigrants in the same area (arrived between 2001 and 2006). In addition, the section will also provide a brief introduction of the businesses, community services, as well as service providers that are available in the Central South Etobicoke.



### 3.3.1 Demographic Structure

- i. **Population:** The 2006 Census reports that there were 257,375 people living in this area in 2006; a slight decrease from the 258,570 people recorded in 2001. Of this number 41.8% or 107,580 of them were immigrants and 18.5% or 19,915 are recent immigrants (Graph 1).

Graph 1. Population of Central South Etobicoke



Source: City of Toronto Neighbourhood Profile

- ii. **Ethnic Origin:** In 2006, the census reports that the top ten ethnicities<sup>10</sup> in Central South Etobicoke were English (47,205), Canadian (34,155), Scottish (33,445), Irish (32,815), Italian (28,185), Polish (22,465), Ukrainian (19,260), German (15,930), French (10,985), and East Indian (6,900).

<sup>10</sup> According to the City of Toronto (2008), “ethnic origin refers to the ethnic or cultural group(s) to which the respondent’s ancestors self-identified” (p.3).

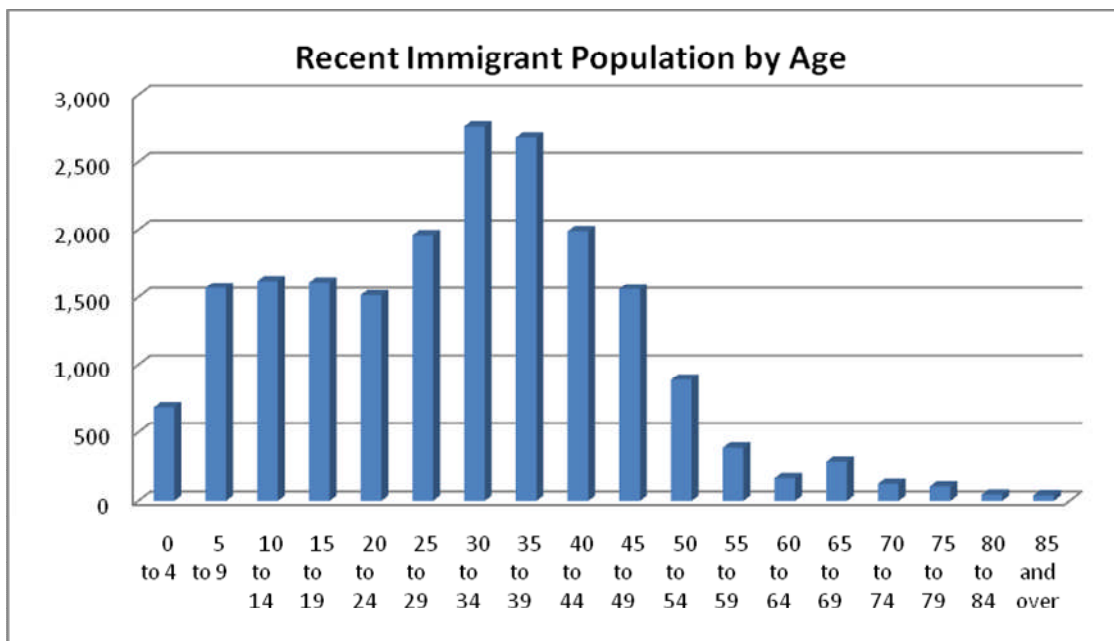


iii. **Seniors and Youth Population:** According to City of Toronto records, the total population had decreased from 2001 to 2006 (Graph 1), while populations aged 50 and up had actually increased. In 2006, 36.1% or 92,970 of the population were 50-years old and over, an increase from 2001 where only 33.9% or 87,657 of them were under the same age group. The total Population of Youth in LIP catchment area (aged 5-24) was 58,040, or 22.4% of the total population. This number has not changed significantly since 2001 (58,545).

### 3.3.2 Characteristics of Recent Immigrants

i. **Age:** The majority of recent immigrants were relatively young; about 47% of them were between the age of 25 and 44 (Graph 2). Only 10.3% were 50-years old and over, much lower than the percentage of all population in the area.

Graph 2. Recent Immigrant Population by Age



- ii. **Ethnic Origin and Mother Language:** Table 1 details the top ten ethnicities and mother tongues (languages) of recent immigrants in Centre South Etobicoke.

Table 1. Ethnic Origin and Mother Tongue

Rank	Ethnic Origin	Mother Tongue
1)	Ukrainian (2,530)	English (2,200)
2)	East Indian (2,590)	Russian (1,840)
3)	Russian (1,600)	Ukrainian (1,595)
4)	Chinese (1,365)	Urdu (1,395)
5)	Pakistani (1, 295)	Spanish (1,180)
6)	Filipino (1,130)	Chinese (Including Mandarin and Cantonese) (1,040)
7)	Polish (960)	Korean (855)
8)	Korean (890)	Tagalog (725)
9)	Albanian (745)	Polish (540)
10)	Spanish (580)	Arabic (520)

From a review of the ethnic origin of all populations and recent immigrants in the Central South Etobicoke area, it is clear that the structure of ethnicity in the area is changing. While nine out of ten dominant ethnicities (of all populations) in this area were non-visible minorities, half of recent immigrants’ top ten ethnicities fell under the visible minority category.

- iii. **Education:** Recent immigrants living in Central South Etobicoke were highly educated with 37.5% or 7,460 of them holding a Bachelor’s degree or higher. In contrast to the national trend described in Section 2.0 of this report, this percentage for Central South Etobicoke was slightly lower than the 42% of all recent immigrants to the country with the same qualifications. However, the 37.5% of recent immigrants in Central South Etobicoke were more highly educated than 15.8% of Canadian-born populations in the country (Martin Prosperity Institute, 2009).
- iv. **Income:** Statistics show that recent immigrants in Central South Etobicoke suffer economically. Out of the 17 neighbourhoods in the LIP catchment areas, Kingsway South and Runnymede-Bloor West Village, are the only two neighbourhoods in which recent immigrants had an average income above \$30,000 per annum. However, these incomes are still considered extremely low



in comparison to the average income of all populations within their respective neighbourhood. Recent immigrants in Princess-Rosethorn had the lowest average incomes; earning less than 10% of what all populations in that area earned (Table 2). In the meantime, the average census family's income in the Toronto was \$79,738 during the same period of time (Statistics Canada, 2010).

Table 2. Average Census Family Income in Central South Etobicoke in 2005

<b>Neighbourhood</b>	<b>Recent Immigrants Income</b>	<b>All Populations Income</b>	<b>% of All Populations Income</b>	<b>% of Average Toronto Income</b>
Alderwood	\$19,142	\$86,651	22%	24%
Edenbridge-Humber Valley	\$28,831	\$104,731	28%	36%
Eringate-Centennial-West Deane	\$19,953	\$79,945	25%	25%
Etobicoke West Mall	\$19,662	\$71,751	27%	25%
Humber Heights-Westmount	\$23,246	\$86,757	27%	29%
Islington-City Centre West	\$22,836	\$88,605	26%	29%
Kingsview Village-The Westway	\$19,757	\$72,616	27%	25%
Kingsway South	\$32,722	\$266,213	12%	41%
Lambton Baby Point	\$28,147	\$174,428	16%	35%
Long Branch	\$22,394	\$81,101	28%	28%
Markland Wood	\$25,069	\$126,164	20%	31%
Mimico	\$22,882	\$91,380	25%	29%
New Toronto	\$21,417	\$73,466	29%	27%
Princess-Rosethorn	\$18,635	\$213,489	9%	23%
Runnymede-Bloor West Village	\$33,493	\$114,255	29%	42%
Stonegate-Queensway	\$21,636	\$111,461	19%	27%
Willowridge-Martingrove-Richview	\$20,687	\$86,312	24%	26%

Source: City of Toronto (2008).





### 3.3.3 Businesses, Community Services and Service Providers

According to the Scott's business directories online, there are approximately 1,700 businesses registered to operate in Central South Etobicoke. The types of businesses include automotive, finance & Insurance, hospitality, health, manufacturing, retail, and sales/service. The Etobicoke Labour Market Study 2008 conducted by North Etobicoke Revitalization Partnership (Zizys, 2008) indicates that the three main business groups in the Central South Etobicoke are 1) Business Services and Head Offices, 2) Manufacturing and Warehousing, and 3) Retail and Tourism (Table 3). In combination, these three groups have over 3,500 establishments and employ over 69,000 workers.

Architects, Engineers & Planners and Management Consultants are the two major industries in the Business Service and Head Offices grouping, they are also the fastest growing industries, with the former achieving 15.6% and the latter having a 10.3% growth between 1997 and 2007. Food Processing and Warehousing are the largest industries in Manufacturing and Warehousing group, followed by Chemicals (1,450), Research and Development Labs (1,246), and Vehicles and Parts (1,026). In terms of the Retail and Tourism group, the study points out that Restaurants and Taverns, Food Retailing and Wholesaling employ the greater number of people. Although Retailers in Clothing and Shoes are not among the largest industries, it is the fastest growing industry (6.35% between 1997 and 2007) in this group.

Table 3. Industries in Central South Etobicoke

Groups	Establishments	Employees	Major Sub-Categories	Employees
Business Services and Head Offices	1,245	27,006	Architects, Engineers & Planner	5,109
			Management Consultants	2,940
Manufacturing and Warehousing	503	18,733	Food Processing	3,923
			Warehousing	3,315
Retail and Tourism	1,807	23,667	Restaurant and Tavern	5,544
			Food Retailing	3,237
			Wholesaling	2,732

Source: Etobicoke Labour Market Study 2008 (Zizys, 2008)



In addition, the area also provides different community services to its residents. Based on the data collected through various sources - including 211, yellowpages, and settlement.org - there are approximately 300 organizations in the area, providing services relating to child & family services, education, employment, religion, food & clothing, health, housing, literacy, and youth services.

Other than the above businesses and services that serve the general populations in Central South Etobicoke, there are also agencies/organizations set up to provide settlement services specifically for immigrant populations. Currently, there are about ten settlement agencies in the area providing settlement, language, employment, health, and youth services specifically to immigrant populations. In addition to these immigrant-focused settlement agencies, there are several other organizations that provide supplementary services for immigrants. For example, immigrants can also access to settlement services and language training through Humber collage, Toronto Public Library, Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board; while agencies such as PTP Adult Learning and Employment Programs, JobStart and VPI Inc. provide both universal services to the general public as well as specific programs for newcomers. Most of these services are located at places that are accessible by public transit. For instance, agencies such as Ukrainian Canadian Social Service, CUIAS Immigrant Services, and Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services are on the Yonge/Bloor Subway line; others are at locations that can be reached by Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) buses.

### *3.4 Sample Selection*

From the city of Toronto neighbourhood profile data and census data, we are able to understand the main population structure of Central South Etobicoke. However, identifying the population characteristics for newcomers within the prescribed catchment area during 2010 was a challenge, considering that the most recent population data was collected 4 – 5 years previously<sup>11</sup>. Furthermore, other sampling techniques would have been time and cost prohibitive for this study. As a result the

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<sup>11</sup> Due to the lack of updated data on immigration trends during the 2006 – 2010 time periods, it was not possible to use ethnic, linguistic, country/region of origin profiles for 2006 to create a profile for the newcomer characteristics in 2010.



selection of participants from the Central South Etobicoke catchment area was based upon a purposive sampling design<sup>12</sup>.

The purposive sampling method was used within the catchment area with the assistance of service providers in identifying individuals who fell within the specifications of the population. The use of non-probability sampling<sup>13</sup> was necessary due to the time and cost constraints associated with attempting to adequately identify the population for a probability sampling technique.

The key informant population consisted of individuals who had volunteered with organizations serving newcomers in the Central South Etobicoke area for several years. One volunteer had been active in assisting newcomers at an employment services agency for several years, while another volunteered within a community service based organization. Another volunteer participated as a mentor for newcomers in the same professional field for over 2 years. Key informants were selected based upon the recommendations of LIP members, selecting volunteers who were highly experienced from within LIP member organizations.

Respondents for both the staff and executive service provider surveys were drawn from community non-profit / governmental organizations, including LIP member agencies. The various service provider staff, who were recommended by LIP Leadership Council members to participate in bi-weekly strategic planning work groups, also served to provide greater context to issues brought out in newcomer focus groups, as well as those issues documented in the Central South Etobicoke LIP's proposal to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

Employer participants for interviews in Stage 1 were referred from job development staff at the employment services agencies within Central South Etobicoke. In Stage Two, employer participants for the one-on-one interviews and surveys were chosen randomly from the Scott's Directory of employers in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

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<sup>12</sup> Purposive sampling involves the purposeful selection of participants based on specific pre-determined groups using guidance from the research questions.

<sup>13</sup> Non-probability sampling does not involve random selection of participants. The results of such studies therefore cannot be generalized to the larger population.



### *3.5 Data Collection Techniques*

A variety of Focus Group question guides were used to identify themes relevant to each group dependent on characteristics such as gender, education and/or employment level, and language skills. The profile for each distinct focus group and corresponding question guides can be reviewed in Appendix B. A questionnaire, consisting mainly of closed-ended questions, was administered to focus group participants in both Stage One and Two, with the primary objective being to gather basic demographic information. In Stage Two additional questions were also posed regarding service provision. Clarification and additional information from participants in Stage One was collected through assistance from service providers in the community. The questionnaires used for both stages can be found in Appendix C.

Two surveys were administered to service providers within the LIP catchment area. The first, administered electronically and in print, to organization staff, is found in Appendix D. This survey solicited information regarding staff needs and views regarding service provision for newcomers using both closed ended and open ended questions. The second survey, administered to organization executives collected information regarding organization capacity, programming and perceived barriers or gaps in service provision. This questionnaire was administered both electronically and in print using closed and open ended questions and is found in Appendix E. As well, one in-depth interview has been conducted with a settlement service trainer to find out issues concerning the effectiveness of services available to newcomers. In order to collect data regarding employer perspectives on newcomer employees, five individual interviews were undertaken in Stage One of data collection. A questionnaire, administered to employers in the Central South Etobicoke region was distributed in the month of August. The questionnaire included both closed and open ended questions related to company capacity, hiring strategies and needs and perceptions related to hiring newcomer employees. The employer questionnaire can be viewed in Appendix F. Additionally, 10 in-depth interviews were undertaken in Stage Two with employers to gain more in-depth information related to hiring practices and needs related to employment of newcomers. The question guides for these interviews can be found in Appendix G.



### *3.6 Ethical Issues*

To ensure the success of this research project certain ethical obligations were addressed throughout the duration of the project. It was imperative to the success of the project that all participants felt free from coercion. As such, all participants were duly informed of their freedom to decline to participate as well as their right to withdraw their participation at any time. Due to the sensitive nature of the information that respondents were asked to divulge, guaranteeing their anonymity was essential. To ensure their privacy, proper informed consent procedures were followed in interactions with respondents. Information was disseminated to potential respondents regarding the following issues: purpose of the research, procedure to be followed, any risk involved, voluntary participation, and to whom questions regarding the research should be addressed. All participants were asked to confirm in writing their understanding of the information provided in the informed consent form before they proceeded with the focus group. Accommodations were provided for those with low English and/or low literacy levels to ensure that proper informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Both during and after the data collection process, collected information was handled in a manner that once again ensured anonymity of respondents, avoiding the use of names and other identifying information. No identifying personal information was asked of participants, and they have been discussed only as a group avoiding discussion of the results of individual respondents. Data was handled and stored in a secure manner to ensure that the rights of the participants were respected. These procedures ensured that no parts of the study results were used in any way to identify participants, be it purposefully or accidentally.

### *3.7 Limitations of the Study*

The study was inherently limited by the availability of data. Due to the difficulty in accessing the population, only a limited, non-probability sample was obtained. The use of purposive sampling techniques to select individual respondents indicated that a representative sample would not be attained. The lack of a representative sample limited the study in that the findings of the research cannot be generalized. Staff turn-over created a particular challenge in maintaining consistency both in research technique and procedures. The study was also limited by time, as the time frame in which the study was conducted was not adequate for a thorough investigation of the topic. Lack of participation



by local area employers in the study also limits the extent to which issues of employment can be addressed within the study.



## 4.0 *Presentation of Data*

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This section presents findings from the different populations consulted while investigating newcomer experiences with settlement and integration in the Central South Etobicoke area. The section is organized into four sub-sections according to the different groups from which data was collected. While the Section 4.1 provides biographical details on newcomer focus group participants, Section 4.2 offers more descriptive information regarding important aspects of the newcomer experience, according to newcomers themselves and key informants volunteering in the newcomer services sector. Section 4.3 focuses on service provider capacity, insight on newcomer needs and service delivery gaps. Section 4.4 begins by presenting a brief demographic overview of employers interviewed and continues on to explore employer perceptions and information needs regarding employment of newcomers.

### 4.1 *COMPOSITION OF NEWCOMER FOCUS GROUPS*

Unless otherwise noted newcomers who participated in Focus Groups for this study had been in Canada for 3 years or less, are adults between the ages of 24 and 59, and live, go to school or work within the catchment area of Central South Etobicoke LIP.

The following are the profiles used to determine newcomer eligibility to participate:



Figure 2. Profile Groups for Study Participants

Profile 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have post-secondary education (college or university)</li> <li>▪ Employed or unemployed</li> <li>▪ Speak conversational English</li> </ul>	Profile 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 60 years of age or older</li> <li>▪ Any level of education</li> <li>▪ Employed or unemployed</li> </ul>
Profile 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have high school education only or less</li> <li>▪ Employed</li> <li>▪ Speaks conversational English</li> </ul>	Profile 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have post-secondary education (college or university)</li> <li>▪ Employed</li> <li>▪ Participated in a Mentorship or Internship program</li> </ul>
Profile 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have high school education only or less</li> <li>▪ Unemployed</li> <li>▪ Speaks conversational English</li> </ul>	Profile 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have low literacy abilities</li> <li>▪ Employed and unemployed</li> <li>▪ Conversational, little or no English speaking ability</li> </ul>
Profile 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Any level of education</li> <li>▪ Employed or unemployed</li> <li>▪ Little or no conversational English ability (require translations services)</li> </ul>	Profile 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women</li> <li>▪ Any level of Education</li> <li>▪ Employed or unemployed</li> <li>▪ Conversational, little or no English speaking ability</li> </ul>
Profile 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 5 years or less in Canada</li> <li>▪ 14 – 24 years of age</li> <li>▪ Any level of education</li> <li>▪ Employed or unemployed</li> <li>▪ Speaks conversational English</li> </ul>	Profile 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Men</li> <li>▪ Any level of Education</li> <li>▪ Employed or unemployed</li> <li>▪ Conversational, little or no English speaking ability</li> </ul>

Compiled biographical details developed from participant characteristics within each group are not available at this time due to missing information on several participants.

#### 4.2 *Newcomer Focus Group Discussions: Major Themes*

Newcomer participants in focus group discussions displayed a strong pre-occupation with employment related settlement issues, especially those who had arrived within the previous six month period. However, many newcomers with more Canadian experience expressed regret in not fully exploring all aspects of settlement and integration early on in their immigration process. The information in the following sub-sections is organized according to major themes which were evident through the many discussions with newcomers and key informants working within newcomer communities. Each theme area discusses relevant issues, some relating directly to general settlement services while others are more specific to employment related programs. At the end of each sub-section the evident needs, trends and/or issues within each section are summarized. The major themes discussed within this section are as follows:





- 4.2.1 Employment Access: Pre-Arrival Preparation
- 4.2.2 Employment Access: Targeted and Practical Employment Services Post-Arrival
- 4.2.3 Employment Access: Canadian Experience
- 4.2.4 Employment Access: Networking
- 4.2.5 Information Dissemination
- 4.2.6 Access and Coordination of Services
- 4.2.7 Mental Health and Wellness
- 4.2.8 Language Training
- 4.2.9 Financial Concerns

Three sub-sections which discuss the needs of specific newcomer target groups are included at the end of this section. They are:

- 4.2.10 Seniors
- 4.2.11 Parents
- 4.2.12 Youth

#### **4.2.1 Employment Access: Pre-Arrival Preparation**

Without question - regardless of the immigration status, age, educational level or employment status - access to employment opportunities was the overwhelming concern of all newcomer participants in focus groups. Employment was considered the key to successful settlement by the majority of newcomers who participated in this study. As one participant described, employment would determine all other decisions in the settlement process.

*“It affects everything. It affects where you live, how much you spend, even if you have \$50,000 or \$100,000, whatever. You’re still not going to spend because there’s no long term plan. It affects your psyche, not having the right job. If you had a proper job in your field then there is so much more that this country has to offer which would affect you in a lot of different ways...actually it affects all your life...”*



The majority of newcomer participants who immigrated to Canada as foreign-trained professionals<sup>14</sup> revealed that they did do some amount of internet research on the Canada and its job market prior to entering the country. However, a clear theme that emerged in focus groups was that newcomers, who entered Canada under the skilled worker, sponsorship or refugee class of immigration programs, experienced a sharp disconnect between the high expectations they had prior to leaving their home country, and the reality that faced them in trying to access the Canadian job market. With regards to professional newcomers this disconnect between expectations and reality was particularly disconcerting to them because, they had not only applied for permanent residence under an “high-demand” occupational category “needed” in Canada<sup>15</sup>, they had also passed CIC’s point system that uses six selection factors<sup>16</sup> to “test’ the suitability of skilled worker applicants. Similarly, newcomers under the other immigration categories wished they had been directed to explore or research the provincial or city employment market by Canadian government or embassy officials. As a result, many became susceptible to questionable job market advice.

*“The only direction that I got is a lot of our friends who came here, family, etc. were saying that once you get here, you’ll get a job virtually immediately like inside the first week. Here I am...still struggling to get work so I don’t know whether there was a communication problem or whether the market has changed. I don’t know but it’s definitely a little more tougher than what I expected it to be...”*

Those newcomers, who had gained some familiarity with the Canadian job market after entry into the country, expressed that labour market information needed to be made available pre-arrival, during the visa approval process, and that this information should be specifically linked to the characteristics of a provincial and/or a city. In fact, when asked what do they wish they knew prior Being that the wait for

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<sup>14</sup> Professional newcomers usually immigrate to Canada under CIC’s (Federal) Skilled Worker or Canadian Experienced Class Programs.

<sup>15</sup> Per CIC, “Federal skilled worker immigrants are selected based on their ability to become economically established in Canada. *Canada needs* (emphasis ours) federal skilled workers because they have the right mix of skills, education, and experience to meet the current and long term demands of the economy. They also have the transferable skills to adapt to a changing labour market. *Frequently Asked Questions: Skilled workers and professionals*. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/faq/immigrate/skilled/changes-fsw-faq01.asp>

<sup>16</sup> The six selection factors foreign nationals need to pass to qualify for Skilled Worker Status are: Education; Ability in English and/or French; Work Experience; Age; Arranged Employment in Canada; and Adaptability.



a visa is usually a lengthy one, some expressed that this “waiting period” could be better used by being directed to sources that could help them plan and prepare for their expected relocation to Canada.

In addition to being directed to province or city-specific labour market information during the pre-arrival process, the majority of newcomer participants recommended that foreign nationals have access to the reality of considerations that must be made when relocating to Canada. For instance, one female newcomer explained that only her husband could develop his career when they immigrated because the city that had numerous jobs in his field, had very in her vocational interest. Another newcomer explained it in this manner:

*“Put it this way, you have a partner who is into...a medical doctor for example and you are for an example in IT, there are possibilities of the medical person getting a job here in Toronto. There are possibilities of an IT person getting a job in Saskatchewan. So who is going to move for the other? That is a very, very big family problem. That is a very big change that you have to think about.”*

In essence, along with city specific labour market information, newcomers expressed a desire to be given a realistic view of the challenges and compromises they may face in their new country.

#### *Themes*

- Pre-arrival, foreign nationals in the process of immigrating to Canada require direction/resources that provide them provincial and/or city-specific labour market information
- Established newcomers suggest new arrivals would settle more successfully if they had knowledge of the challenges and compromises they may need to make when migrating to Canada

#### **4.2.2 Employment Access: Targeted and Practical Employment Services Post-Arrival**

Overall, newcomers who participated in government-funded employment programs were satisfied with the services they received. Most were very detailed in explaining the information that they learned in order to obtain employment. A short summary of the most prominent job search tools and activities they found useful include:

- i. Direction obtaining a Social Insurance Number (S.I.N.) card;



- ii. Instruction in preparing job search documents, such as two page resumes, cover letters and thank you letters;
- iii. Making cold-calls;
- iv. Practice and guidance at job interviews;
- v. Access to the internet, fax and photocopying machines;
- vi. Workshops that explain Canadian Work Culture;
- vii. Understanding the importance of “soft” skills; and
- viii. Personal references from employment agency staff

A few newcomers also noted that employment workshops provided them the “freedom” to change their careers, since the government in their country-of-origin apparently chose their vocation for them.

While most employed newcomers recommended that their peers should seek out access to employment agency services immediately upon arrival to Canada, they also noted that the services of these local agencies could use some fine tuning.

*“I would like to have more guidance in terms of professional career paths. As a professional, I need to know what steps I’m supposed to do to get my certification”*

One theme made evident in focus groups was that both employed and unemployed newcomers desired to have access to personalized employment services or additional programs that provided career direction specific to their chosen professional field. Especially for those in designated “high-demand” professions, newcomers articulated a desire to have additional access to employment services by a staff person trained in the specifics of their industry. This, they believed would better assist them in successfully navigating the job market, and would subsequently help them secure rewarding employment within their career field. Similarly, some non-professionals felt that additional access to courses tailored specifically to their vocational interests would be a good follow up to more general information about resume development and interview skills.

It should also be noted that some newcomer participants perceived there to be a direct link between the lack of specificity in the career services they received and the seeming lack of knowledge some employment services staff had about the characteristics, employers and even career programs within



the local labour market. Two of the employed newcomer focus group participants explained it in the manner detailed below:

*“The (employment) centre I go to is based in (a major retailer name). (Another major retailer) is on one end, and a (third name of major retailer) is at the other end. They’re asking for people. They’re advertising for people, and the (employment) office is there! I had to come to the job developer and said, “Did you know that they are asking for people?”...It’s not that I’m saying that this job developer is bad or that... I feel that they don’t have a direction.”*

*“There’s some good things (about) agencies funded by the government. But they don’t guarantee you to get a job. They help you prepared to look for a job. So that I had no result after this.”*

Another major theme expressed by newcomers with regards to employment services was the need for there to be greater emphasis placed by employment agencies on the creation of tangible opportunities to gain relevant career experience through volunteer or internship programs. While participants acknowledged the importance of pre-employment training, Canadian workplace orientation and job search skills, the majority also felt that a concrete connection to actual job opportunities was severely lacking. As such, those participants who had completed employment-related training often placed greater importance on those activities they felt were more practical in nature - such as mock job interviews – than information from generalized employment workshops.

Employed newcomers who had participated in mentorship or bridging programs, which facilitates volunteer placements in their industry, felt this experience was directly related to their later success in finding employment.

*“[The] coop program helped me find a volunteer bookkeeping job and from that I was able to find other related paid employment. I got a Canadian reference from the volunteer job and I think that was what helped me the most (in addition to the Canadian work experience that I got)”.*

While the primary motivation for participating in mentorship programs was to gain first-hand knowledge from someone well-versed in the specifics of the mentees desired-industry, participants also viewed a



mentor as the beginning step in creating an essential network for seeking employment, advice and credibility within their desired field.

On a whole, newcomers also expressed a need for there to be greater access to formal mentorship programs that paired incoming newcomers with volunteers (preferably in a similar career path). The key informant interviewed described a mentor's role as providing guidance in specific career paths. Specifically, he explained that mentors were responsible for *"providing information depending on what [the mentee] wants to do with regards to education or employment and available options"*. Key informants interviewed also saw mentors as providing opportunities to build the confidence of newcomer job seekers, as well as providing advice in job seeking strategies, and in negotiating job offers. Those newcomers who had participated in mentorship programs were apparently satisfied with the assistance of their mentors. However when asked directly who would make a good mentor, newcomer participants added that they desired mentors who would be sensitive to those issues and needs newcomers faced in accessing and succeeding in the job market. Some put forward that the more effective mentors would be other newcomers who were more experienced in the Canadian work world.

Despite the importance placed upon mentorship programs, the majority of newcomers participating in focus groups felt it was extremely difficult to register in such programs. In fact, several had divulged that they had been waiting for extended periods of time to be connected with a mentor in their relevant field. One participant also expressed frustration with the lack of follow-up and accountability regarding mentorship programs. The newcomer, matched to a mentor within the same professional field, was never able to successfully make contact with their mentor. The organization coordinating the program apparently did not perform any follow-up activities to ensure that the match was indeed successful.

#### *Themes*

- Employment services are essential to the settlement process, and newcomers should be directed to it immediately upon arrival
- Current employment programming provides a solid foundation for providing newcomers assistance that is useful and appreciated
- Employment programming should offer personalized and/or additional targeted services in order to meet the needs of different groups based on career paths or professions



- Targeted career guidance services should be accessible to working newcomers outside of regular business hours
- There is a large demand for additional employment services that provide opportunities to gain practical work experience and make tangible labour market connections
- Mentorship programs are in high demand; the process for determining program satisfaction by applicants and graduates should be regularly reviewed to promote continuous improvement and positive brand recognition

#### **4.2.3 Employment Access: Canadian Experience**

The term *Canadian Experience* in relation to employment is elusive both in its definition and attainment. *Canadian Experience* was a central theme in all focus group discussions with newcomers, especially in relation to employment attainment. This term goes hand in hand with the pre-occupation most newcomers felt towards finding employment as quickly as possible. In the words of one newcomer participant:

*“First of all, when I go to put out a resume, if I talk to the manager, the manager asks, do you have Canadian experience? I say if you give me a job, then I have experience otherwise I don’t have any experience.”*

*Canadian Experience* was cited as the most significant barrier for a newcomer in obtaining employment. Highly qualified and experienced professionals reported being told that, while they were a strong candidate for a position, their lack of Canadian work experience was the reason why they were passed over during the job selection process. This apparent devaluation of foreign experience and education has created a sense not only of frustration, but offence. Professional newcomers expressed feelings of shock that their qualifications and experience, which were highly valued in their home countries and in many cases in other migrant receiving destinations such as Europe, the U.S. or Dubai, were considered virtually useless when they arrived to Canada. Added to this sense of shock was a sense of disillusionment and feelings of deception that their foreign professional experience was the very attribute that gave them high scores towards obtaining their permanent resident status.



For instance, one respondent felt it was better to provide a newcomer professional with similar work in their field rather than a survival job, as a survival job would also lead to loss of skill competencies over time. *“It is better to give them a simple job according to their background, according to their certificate”* explained this newcomer. *“It’s not good to eliminate, to refuse completely their background or their certificate. It is not fair”*. Other professionals felt they required more direction regarding the specific steps necessary for them to practice in their field, a theme discussed more thoroughly in the subsequent section.

Further frustration was evident in discussions about how to actually attain this elusive *Canadian Experience* deemed essential for entering the workforce. Newcomers felt confused not only as to why such experience was necessary but also how it was to be obtained. Several examples were discussed in which a newcomer with a professional designation was told they were under-qualified for a management position due to lack of *Canadian Experience*, but over-qualified for more entry level positions which would allow them to gain such experience. As a result, many newcomers who participated in discussions were working within what was termed a “survival job”<sup>17</sup>.

However, this in itself created more complex problems in that most newcomers who were currently working in or had experience in having a “survival job” reported that such employment actually inhibited their search for more professional positions in their desired fields. The long and irregular hours they often worked in these “temporary” positions to meet basic needs, led newcomers to feel trapped and unable to break free into a job more in line with their professional career aspirations. Furthermore, the hours of such work often competed with accessing employment programs, which are usually conducted within regular business hours. Some newcomers also explained that, though they felt they required continued assistance to obtain employment within their field, they did not feel as if continued career guidance from employment agencies was available to them once they had obtained employment. Some participants in these positions conveyed feelings of depression and hopelessness. Thus, “survival” work not only competed with their ability to find within their career field that could provide for their personal financial security, and that of their family; it also threatened their personal and emotional well-being. *“You lower your standards but they are never quite low enough”* remarked one participant.

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<sup>17</sup> Survival job refers to employment undertaken solely to provide for the individual or family on a temporary basis until more suitable employment is found.





## Themes

- Newcomer applicants are being disqualified from both in their professional career field and more junior positions based upon the very foreign qualifications and experience that made them eligible for immigration to Canada
- Newcomers (including Professionals) often work in survival jobs that subsequently, create additional barriers to finding more suitable employment in their desired field

### 4.2.4 Employment Access: Networking

Networking was another theme which ran central to all discussions with newcomers. Networking was overwhelmingly understood to be the most effective and significant strategy in successfully navigating both the settlement service system and job market. While newcomers agreed that training related to resume preparation and interview skills are useful, most considered networking about employment opportunities to be the key to finding employment. Employed newcomers agreed that networking was often (though not always) vital not only to finding employment but also to continued advancement within their chosen career. While identified as a key tool in job searches, networking was also perceived to be one of the greatest barriers. Newcomer job seekers felt distinctly disadvantaged due to their lack of networks or connections not only within professional fields but the general job market. Participants expressed a need for more networking opportunities and skill development to be offered, especially for those in professional fields.

While newcomers placed importance upon networking primarily for employment, volunteers felt social networking opportunities created through group training programs had far reaching benefits. *“They need somewhere where they are meeting other immigrants and where there is structure to exchange ideas and even miseries”*, explained one key informant. Numerous examples of situations in which newcomers who had undergone a training or information session together had remained in close contact for months or at times even years were cited. These groups are, according to volunteers, the beginning of the newcomers’ new social support network within the new environment. Newcomers also recounted the sense of belonging and informal support they received when placed in a positive and inviting group for training/orientation.



## Themes

- Networking is perceived as a key strategy in obtaining employment
- Group oriented training programs often provide opportunities to build social support networks
- Lack of networking skills and connections put newcomers at a disadvantage when competing for jobs

### 4.2.5 Information Dissemination

*“... everything is by chance, nobody is helping. Everything is very...you know you just find it by luck...”*

Information dissemination refers to the way in which relevant information is produced and distributed to its intended audience. In this regard, the overall distribution of information intended for newcomers to the Central South Etobicoke area appears to be inconsistent at best, according to participants. Whether information is provided prior to departure to Canada, upon entry or later in the settlement process, newcomers described the information they received as haphazard, and at times confusing and overwhelming. This sentiment was confirmed by volunteers indicating *“it needs to be easier for [newcomers] to find the right information”*. Commonly reported ways in which newcomers learn about the services available to them include: advice from friends and family, an airport information package; going to the library, internet blogs of other newcomers or simply because they walked by the service provider’s organization.

As a result of relying on informal newcomer networks to gain information about services, many newcomers did not find the services specific to their needs for extended periods of time. Participants indicated that they would prefer to learn about the services available in the Central South Etobicoke area in a well organized, comprehensive and accessible manner, such as a information directory or booklet, or through personal connections (by phone or in person) made with an individual who is able to provide them with comprehensive information and advice on what services specific to their needs are available. One newcomer participant concisely summarizes this problem when he explained:



*“So the first problem I had with the bureaucratic system – in London you could go anywhere – one person could give you enough information. But here, it’s like you have to go to different offices and different places. It makes it so hard to get simple information.”*

As was detailed earlier, at the pre-departure stage, participants indicated that they felt the information they received from officials, friends and relatives before departing to Canada was incorrect or incomplete. For instance, one focus group participant explained that the Canadian embassy in their home country provided them with information on lakes and rivers in Canada which was not useful and in the respondent’s opinion a waste of time and money. Overall, participants in discussions felt very strongly that newcomers should be provided with more accurate and realistic information regarding employment in Canada before leaving their home country, as well as direction regarding degree and certificate evaluations and opportunities to improve English skills prior to moving to Canada. In addition, various participants indicated the need for there to be more information on cost of living indicators, which will be discussed in a subsequent section of this report.

Volunteers felt that the onus was upon Canadian officials and organizations to ensure that more accurate information be provided pre-departure. Both volunteers and newcomers felt that if more realistic information was provided to potential candidates for immigration that people would make more informed decisions, and those whose prospects of employment were low would most likely not apply, thereby creating shorter wait times for those with the experience and education required to succeed.

*“People need to know how to get their education and diplomas recognized fast. It took me three years to learn what the rules of the game are for people in my occupation here. I had to change my occupation because of this”*

Upon arrival some participants reported receiving useful information packages with information on settlement services and different government programs aimed at assisting newcomers. *“I came to Canada at Fort Erie and I received a large orientation to Canada package. Fort Erie has a lot of services for newcomers”*. Others who arrived at a similar port of entry at similar times did not receive this information. However, those who received the information packages reported that - while they contained *“helpful information”* - the sheer amount of information was overwhelming. Several participants admitted to simply putting the package aside until much later rather than face the daunting task of sorting through the large amounts of information contained within. One newcomer’s response



to the amount of information he received upon arrival echoed those of other respondents. *“I was overwhelmed. I didn’t know where to begin”*. As such, the valuable information contained within the package often went unused for months.

Overall, participants expressed frustration with the lack of coordination of information even within the same service provider. One participant registered for a general employment program only to find out months later that the same organization had programs specific to her profession. The newcomer only learned of this more suitable program after completion of the original program from another newcomer - not from the organization’s staff. Examples such as this indicate poor communication and information dissemination regarding the variety of services available. In the end, many newcomers felt they did not receive reliable and up to date information on the availability of the services they wished to access.

One further barrier discussed to accessing available information is the inconsistent use of translated documents. Many newcomers reported that while some organizations provide documents translated into a variety of languages, others do not. Several newcomers, especially seniors felt this limited their knowledge and use of available services, remarking *“give us the information, we will use it”*. In several instances participants made reference to a desire to have a specific program developed, only to realize that the program already exists. This shows that marketing of programs by service providers must be improved in the future to reach all newcomer demographic groups.

### *Themes*

- Insufficient information is available during the pre-arrival stage to adequately allow newcomers to prepare for the realities of immigrating to Canada, including job market trends and cost of living data
- While there is a lot of information material developed regarding available services, it is not strategically marketed/ packaged for ease of use by newcomers or service providers making referrals
- Information is not organized in a manageable manner preventing repetition
- Information is not consistently available in other languages or formats which make it accessible to all individuals, including those who do not speak official languages or have low literacy rates.



#### 4.2.6 Access and Coordination of Settlement Services

*“I think they make a real impression that they really work hard to get you over here but once you’re here it’s like okay, welcome, so long! Find your way, we’ve got a gazillion agencies but spend your time finding out which one can help you and then waste time quite often going to the wrong one first...”*

Participants were asked several questions related to their expectations prior to arrival to Canada, as well as the challenges they face and the services which they accessed regularly. Questions were posed both in focus group discussions as well as through completion of questionnaires to better understand access and coordination of services for newcomers in the Central South Etobicoke area.

Overall participants were satisfied with the amount and quality of services available to them in the Central South Etobicoke area. However, services were often perceived to be disorganized and competitive in nature. Several examples were cited in which participants felt their time had been wasted in accessing services which they later found they were ineligible to use, and/or were not of use to them, while they remained unaware of the services that would have benefited them. Many participants perceived this situation to have occurred due to competition between agencies in which getting their “numbers” were important. As a result, many newcomers who had this experience felt that they were often not referred to a program that would have been more beneficial to them until after their currently chosen agency made its “number”. Even some youth newcomers perceived when staff members felt pressured to get their numbers. One youth stated, *“If I register here so they show the government that we have a lot of people. So (the government will) provide more money for food, to provide the students’ events, if the student comes here or not”*. During work group consultations with service providers, the sensitive subject of directing newcomers to recognizably ill-suited services was broached, and it was commented that, in the end, funders should re-evaluate the unintended results caused by a programmatic focus on meeting only contractual “numbers”, without a similar focus on the quality of satisfaction of the service to participants.

In terms of access, participants identified location of a service as the key determining factor in their use of the service or not. When services are located within a short distance (especially walking) from a participant’s residence it was agreed that this would negate many barriers to access, such as available transportation. Newcomers focus group participants also noted that less expense TTC passes or the provision of tokens, would increase access to services; especially since finding the “right” service is often



a continuous hit or miss activity. Finally, for the primary care giver in the family, the most common barriers discussed in relation to accessing services included availability of childcare, and the hours at which programs were held being incompatible with holding employment, even of a part-time nature.

#### *Themes*

- Lack of referral/evaluation system directing or confirming that newcomers are in the most suitable programs for their needs at other organizations or within the organization
- Lack of daycare options for primary caregivers who are seeking work
- The majority of programs are held during business hours making participation difficult for primary caregivers, under-employed newcomers, and newcomers seeking and networking for employment during these same business hours
- Little long-term follow-up is performed by organizations to evaluate if the program met the stated program outcomes and/or was helpful to the newcomer, especially with regards to employment programs

#### **4.2.7 Mental Health and Wellness**

*“I can see how many people are isolated here and how really lonely they feel. They don’t have too many people to speak to and share information”*

A common concern expressed within all focus group discussions pertained to addressing the emotional and mental well-being of newcomers throughout the settlement process. Long standing volunteers within the sector also expressed anxiety over the emotional stress that many newcomers experienced, especially those who arrived without family. While both settlement and employment services do have strategies to address these issues, participants perceived them to be either inadequate or insincere. One participant commented, *“For those newcomers who arrive in Canada alone, the isolation and depression experienced is at times intense.* One volunteer remarked that the depression can be visibly detected on some newcomers faces *“the sadness of not talking to anyone for 3 days”* when programs close for weekends or holidays. For newcomers who arrive with family, the pressure to provide for one’s family causes the most concern and emotional stress.



Several participants expressed frustration that few if any services existed which allowed them to use computers to maintain personal connections with friends and family in their country of origin.

*“I think it’s a trivial point but it’s important for me. When I came to Canada I needed to talk with my family... many employment centers have computers but they use it...it’s only for job search. I think it’s important for newcomers to talk with their families”.*

While newcomers expressed appreciation for available services, they often perceived a lack of opportunity to express their frustration with finding employment or more general frustrations. This concern was echoed by key informants who suggested that newcomers have nowhere to “vent” and to share their experiences or struggles. One volunteer felt this process of sharing experiences was a very valuable one, which helped newcomers to realize that they are not alone and that their difficulties are not isolated. Another volunteer indicated that newcomers experienced extreme pressure to stay in Canada even if job opportunities were scarce because of the shame and failure associated with returning home unemployed, especially as many skilled newcomers have left good jobs in their home countries only to come to Canada and take up “survival jobs”.

#### *Themes*

- Newcomers to Canada often experience isolation and depression during the settlement process
- Organizations frequently restrict use of computers to job search, making it difficult for newcomers to find space and time to contact relatives and friends at home, leading to further isolation
- Lack of understanding by non-medical service providers on how to encourage mental wellness during the settlement/integration periods, or how to identify the key indicators of mental health issues in order to make appropriate referral
- There are a lack of “safe places” or opportunities to allow newcomers to unburden frustrations further leading to internalization of negative feelings

#### **4.2.8 Language Training**

*“Full day English classes will help people integrate into employment – most programs are only 2 hours per day – not enough hours to learn fast.”*



Within the context of language training, newcomer needs pertained primarily to increasing such opportunities. This included provision not only of English language training but also French language training. Several participants in the professional category<sup>18</sup> indicated that attaining skills in a second official language would increase their overall professional skills and ability to attain employment, especially within government sector jobs. Participants of all language backgrounds and education levels indicated lack of language skills as a major barrier in achieving employment within their preferred field(s). Moreover, some newcomer participants noted that their general well being is highly dependent on their ability to speak in one of the official languages. During one focus group, a participant explained that she stayed at home alone for most of the week, because “I don’t talk to (my neighbours), because I can’t communicate with them.” In another focus group, a newcomer with serious health issues divulged an often unrecognized fact through a translator:

*“Today he had a visit from his family doctor but there were no interpretive services available and he couldn’t communicate. How can the doctor communicate with him about serious medical issues and there’s no interpreter? The best health that you can offer him is to teach him English, help him to learn English.”*

Another key issue for participants in focus groups for low-English skills with regards to language training was to improve the practical aspects of language programs. Participants remarked that while language training was useful, it was theory heavy and even after several months (or years) of courses their language skills were still not at a functioning level. Participants suggested that this was because language training did not provide practical links to English use on a daily basis or practical components which allowed them to use the skills gained in classes in their everyday life.

Another major area of concern for newcomers with low English or literacy skills pertained to the vacation periods between sessions. There were some newcomers who were enrolled in LINC or other ESL programming that expressed apprehension about being without language training for several weeks, due to the coming holidays or during the summer school vacation period. Their main anxieties related to losing knowledge and “going backwards” without daily reinforcement and opportunities to continue improving their English. For those seeking to complete a LINC program to improve their opportunities for employment, this gap in language training also created a significant delay in the time in which they expected to enter the workforce.

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<sup>18</sup> These participants possessed high English skill levels





## Themes

- The need to increase programs or have a referral system for learning English prior to arrival in Canada
- Few opportunities for newcomers to learn French, which limits job opportunities in many professional fields
- English language training has few practical or hands on aspects, and related support/practice materials are not regularly accessible online
- The holiday/vacation time between programs is perceived to be too long and newcomers learning English are not referred to any conversation or alternative English language learning programs, which unnecessarily delays newcomers in reaching their language acquisition goals
- Limited English conversational skills and inadequate translation services often leads to senior newcomers relying on their relatives to interpret often confidential personal health information

### 4.2.9 Financial Concerns

*“How do you have a credit history when you’ve just arrived in the country? In many cases they don’t accept your bank accounts from your home country so you’re quite wealthy in your country, you pay your bills on time and so on but that doesn’t matter here so you’re erasing your past”*

A final theme related to newcomer services is that of financial obligations and concerns. When asked what types of services or training participants might require in the future, the most common response pertained to services and training opportunities for basic financial literacy<sup>19</sup> skills such as budgeting and how to balance finances into the future. Several participants indicated that systems of credit, including credit cards were not widely available in their home country and the importance and limitations of credit cards and other means of financial credit are confusing and even overwhelming.

*“You have to live on very tight budgets you know, I wasn’t working and things like that so you know they give you the credit card, you’re so happy now I have a credit card but it’s not about owning it, it’s about managing it so managing debt”*

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<sup>19</sup> Financial literacy definition



Newcomers from all socio-economic and educational backgrounds also expressed surprise at how expensive housing, food and other basic needs were in Toronto, and showed obvious concern of how they would survive financially – especially since by and large they were still seeking employment. As stated earlier, information on cost of living basics, such as average rental, heat, food, transportation, and other costs were not readily available prior to arrival to Canada. One respondent expressed frustration with the housing market upon arrival, indicating *“you actually have to face this one year rental and sometimes people ask you for six months down payment or something like that because you’re unemployed, you’re a newcomer and everything else”*. Such experiences in finding housing were common among focus group participants, who expressed lack of knowledge surrounding the legalities and responsibilities for both tenants and landlords.

#### *Themes*

- Newcomers lack access to basic knowledge or systems in which to start/improve their credit rating. For example, they lack financial references for housing or loans
- Need for basic information and training regarding financial planning and balancing a limited family budget
- Information regarding rights and responsibilities with regards to key issues such as affordable housing are not widely known
- Some existing programs are not culturally relevant for some newcomers (i.e. loan programs are not accepted for some faith groups)

#### **4.2.10 Seniors**

*“It is very difficult to depend on your kids, always”*

Major concerns and challenges for senior newcomers pertained primarily to their social integration into the community. Participants felt particular concern with their dependence on family members, especially children. The lack of independence or autonomy on the part of senior newcomers was cited for creating bouts of depression, loneliness and loss of self-worth. Senior newcomers expressed frustration with having little to no personal income while at the same time feeling unwelcome in the job market, even with respect to part-time positions. Without personal income, seniors felt unable to



participate in many activities, or even to explore their new neighbourhoods without creating an unwanted burden on their family. A key area for program development highlighted by participants included programs which connect senior newcomer communities with local senior programs, allowing them to gain new networks.

English language acquisition was also of interest to senior newcomers who expressed similar sentiments with regards to overall ESL language program participants. This target group felt even more strongly that English language training should be focused primarily on everyday usage of common English. One participant recommended programming which would include field trips into the community such as to the local grocery store to would provide seniors with the practical language skills necessary to visit a local store and complete their shopping independently.

Seniors respondents also conveyed a need for the development of programs which allowed them to gain basic computer skills, especially with regards to social networking and internet phone communication applications such as SKYPE. The basic motivation being that obtaining skills for basic computer use would allow them to keep in better contact with relatives and friends in their home countries and therefore feel less isolation and stress in their new home.

One final but significant area of trepidation for senior newcomers was in regards to accessing the healthcare system. Numerous participants recounted experiences of feeling confused and ill informed regarding either their personal healthcare or that of their spouse. Health practices in Canada are often different from those in the newcomer's country of origin, and little (or at times no) explanation regarding treatment regimes and options are given to newcomer seniors. A system in which patients must be referred to different specialists with very limited knowledge led to confusion and increased costs for transportation. Participants in focus groups indicated that they relied primarily upon their adult children when accessing the health care system, especially in terms of language barriers. This led to a loss of privacy and confidentiality, and in turn the ability at times to make fully informed decisions regarding their health. Senior newcomers were considerably concerned about their future health care needs and ability to adequately navigate the confusing system of specialists they may need in the future.

#### *Themes*

- Seniors feel intense sense of isolation and dependency due to lack of financial autonomy



- General settlement services are not adequately advertised to members of this demographic group, especially with regards to employment
- Language programs are often not targeted to the practical needs of senior newcomers
- Newcomer seniors lack connections to their local peer group and find it extremely difficult to create a new network outside their own ethnic or language group
- Limited English conversational skills and inadequate translation services often leads to senior newcomers relying on their relatives to interpret personal health information, which creates a lack of confidentially accessing health services, difficulties in navigating the health system and being fully informed about health issues

#### 4.2.11 Parents

*“I don’t know about the education system in Canada. It is very different from my country”*

Overall the experience of newcomer parents is expressed as one of confusion and disorientation. All parents interviewed expressed frustration with understanding the Canadian school system, including lack of awareness of the rights and obligations for students as well as parental responsibilities and the responsibilities of the school itself. This sense of confusion was more acute for parents with low English language skills. One parent remarked, *“I feel the school here in Canada has no responsibility for the students”*. This comment pertains to an incident in which the parent received a letter from the school regarding a child’s participation in sporting activities. The parent was confused with the purpose or actual intent of the letter and felt frustration related to the lack of explanation provided by the school. Another parent encountered a similar situation in which a letter was sent home with the child indicating the need for the child to see a mental health professional before returning to school. This caused serious concern within the home. However little explanation was given and in both instances parents felt somewhat powerless to seek advice or clarification. Parents with the ability to communicate effectively in English noted that school officials appeared to only want to communicate via written letters, even though they passed by or went to the school on a daily basis. Those parents that did not have a strong or even basic command of the English language expressed extreme frustration in understanding even the most basic concepts related to their children’s schooling.



Parent respondents were not provided with official information regarding the school system in Canada and rely mainly on friends or other newcomers within their communities to provide advice and guidance. Newcomer parents who participated in the study were unfamiliar with parent teacher associations or other support services for parents offered through their children's school. Even when services do exist, for example, provision for translation and interpretation by the Toronto District School Board, newcomer parents were unaware of these services. One newcomer parent expressed frustration that, *"every time I want to talk to my child's teacher, I have to take somebody and ask them to interpret for me and they will see, find out how my daughter's doing"*. The lack of knowledge regarding such services had led to situations in which parents must rely upon their children or outsiders for translation and interpretation, creating a lack of privacy and in some cases a clear conflict of interest.

For those parents with teens or pre-teens parents indicated they felt ill-equipped to deal with many of the issues their children faced both in school and their social life. Newcomer parents are not accustomed to or familiar with the education provided to their children regarding issues such as sex and drug use. For many newcomer parents, information on these subjects was provided only in English making it difficult for them to fully comprehend. The same barrier was experienced with regards to support programs or information for parents who wish to address such issues with their children themselves. The majority of this information is not culturally relevant or not available in different languages; as such newcomer parents feel a sense of isolation and fear in dealing with such topics.

For those parents with younger children, the main obstacle experienced is finding appropriate and affordable daycare for their children. *"We need full access to day care as we learn English and prepare for work – some courses offer day care and others do not."* Newcomer parents expressed disappointment in the lack of subsidized daycare available. Many parents did not qualify for such daycare programs until after employment, yet found it difficult on many occasions to attend job interviews if they had young children to care for. In many instances one parent within the family chose to remain at home initially while the second parent obtained employment. One family with a young child recounted frustration with their experiences in accessing the health care system, both in terms of language and also the confusing process of referrals to specialist doctors.

#### *Themes*

- Newcomer parents do not receive adequate information regarding the Canadian school system, including their rights as parents and the rights of their children



- Awareness of services for those with language or other barriers is low, and is not readily offered when they can be made available. Families supporting sponsored newcomers or refugees often have great difficulty with finding inexpensive services
- Newcomer parents feel ill-equipped to deal with the serious issues their children face as teens and pre-teens and support in this regard is not accessible for parents who do not speak English
- Access to affordable daycare is insufficient preventing participation in many training programs and creates missed opportunities for employment

#### 4.2.12 Youth

Youth respondents generally described their transition as being easier than that of their parents or other relatives. In discussions, the majority of youth participants attributed their easier transition to only having to navigate school life, whereas their parents were dealing with a loss of career identity, job searches, making ends meet, adapting to a different culture, and, if necessary, learning English.

*1<sup>st</sup> Respondent: But the most difficult is for...for our parents. We (can) find a job anywhere, but our parents....*

*Interviewer: Right. Hmm, hmm.*

*1<sup>st</sup> Respondent: Because they don't know how to speak too much English.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Respondent: Yeah.*

*1<sup>st</sup> Respondent: And we can learn easily.*

*Interviewer: Hmm, hmm.*

*1<sup>st</sup> Respondent: And they didn't*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Respondent: We can go to school.*

*1<sup>st</sup> Respondent: They find a job in a factory, but it's not their age group...*

*Interviewer: Right.*

*1<sup>st</sup> Respondent: Unless even, even if to like, even if they want to look for a job cleaning...*

*Interviewer: Hmm, hmm.*

*1<sup>st</sup> Respondent: They have to know English, like that happened to my mom.*



While some youth newcomers did struggle with language issues, overall the general opinion expressed was that language skills were much more easily and quickly acquired by young newcomers, than their parents or grandparents.

However, being able to more easily transition to living in Canada did not mean that youth were devoid of problems. On the whole, newcomer youth participants expressed circumstances that greatly increased their stress levels and often overwhelmed them. For instance, the majority of youth participants were able to vividly describe the dilemma their parents experience when they leave professional positions in their home country and accept survival positions not relevant to their chosen career fields in Canada. Some youth internalized this issue to the point where they become part of their parents' experience. One youth in describing her parents' experience, exclaimed "When we applied for, everybody here applied for factory (jobs). Why (do) we apply for factory (jobs)? We are educated. My dad was a legal manager there, okay?"

Along with internalizing their parents' employment struggles, most youth newcomers also described the stress of having heightened responsibility within their family structure. Due to their easier transition into the Canadian system there was a clear reliance by many parents on their children as interpreters, not only of language but also in navigating complicated legal or social support systems. At times a considerable burden was placed upon some youth newcomers to communicate with government and other service providers on behalf of the family and to assist parents in daily activities. Youth newcomers even found themselves helping their parents complete their English (ESL and LINC) homework. Subsequently, this has led to a situation in which the roles of both child and parent have evolved and it is unclear what the repercussions of this shift in responsibility are both parties.

One further important aspect of youth acting as the primary "interpreter" for the family is that they themselves receive less guidance and direction, particularly in regards to education and even career choices. As already discussed, parents find the school system difficult to understand, and often feel unprepared to discuss important issues with school administrators, and, as such, are unable to help their children navigate their career paths. As a result, many youth were misinformed or uninformed regarding potential careers and educational paths in the future. Opportunities for educational funding, for example, were not well known and many youth were unable to clearly articulate their future goals with regards to education and employment. In many instances, it was friends, family and those service providers not connected with the school system (with the exception of ESL teachers) that helped direct their educational and career choices.



Often, such direction was predicated on the ability of youth to clearly articulate what they wanted. For instance, youth described how school administrators did not provide them with information “if you don’t ask the **particular** question. She’s just looking at me and waiting for a question”. In some instances, fortunate newcomers are introduced to an ESL or settlement worker who is more proactive in lessening gaps of information. Many youth also expressed that their lack of English fluency hindered their ability to develop needed social connections. One youth expressed this situation, saying “It was hard to communicate with friends and make friends because when I talk, they don’t understand what I’m saying...” As such, many solved their desire for peer companionship by socializing mostly with other youth within their language or ethnic circle, and remaining reluctant to integrate with others outside of this circle.

In general, youth focus group participants did not express knowledge of how to alleviate the stress they face as newcomers. As has been discussed above, youth focused the discussion on issues regarding sympathies for their parent’s newcomer experiences, finding a job, navigating the school system, their heightened responsibility within their family unit, and the difficulty of making new Canadian friendships. However, the experience of one youth respondent in becoming more involved with their Canadian peers, points to the positive effects that shared activities between Canadian and newcomer youth can have.

*“I now play sports or something. For myself, I found – like – I love sports. So I get – like – I got into it. So, I’m – like – participating in some activities and it really helps me because – like – when you play sports for example, it’s also (for) Canadians, right – who are born here....So I think – like- if there will be more – like – activities, maybe even – like – writing by youth organizations...Involving not only newcomers...Maybe – like, you know – almost some volunteers in Canada, (it would) be – like – volunteers hours for (school)... It’s like very...so you can get to know some people.”*

### Themes

- Youth face both their specific issues, as well as internalize the various problems faced by their parents which greatly increases their level of stress
- Youth assume role of responsibility within the family through aiding parents in navigating the Canadian system





- Many youth are ill informed regarding opportunities for future education or career paths
- Burden placed upon youth to take a more senior role within the family is challenging the roles and relationship between parent and child
- Youth require more information on ways of meeting other youth in social / recreation settings as well as alternative means (healthy outlets) to encourage a healthy balance in their lives

### 4.3 *Service Provider Environmental Scan*

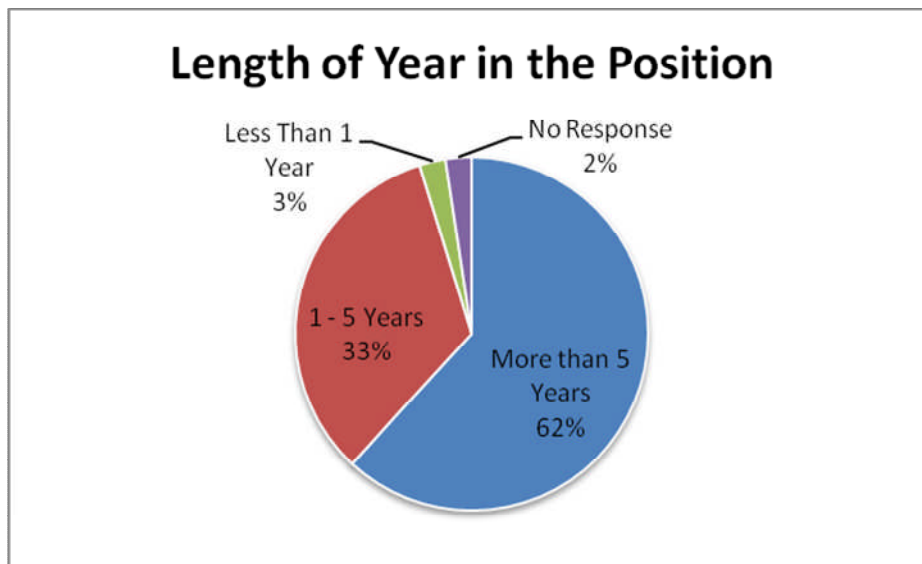
As explained in the Section 3.0 (Methodology), two separate self-administered surveys and an interview with a settlement service trainer, were conducted to find out the experiences of service providers. A total of 84 service provider staff members responded to the first survey (Appendix D), which consists of 11 closed and two open- ended questions relating to their work duties and roles as well as their perceptions of newcomer needs. Nine service provider executives responded to the second survey (Appendix E), which contained 24 questions regarding their agency’s organizational capacity, programming and perceived barriers or gaps in providing services. The following is a summary of the results of these studies.

#### 4.3.1 Staff Survey Responses

- i. **Length of Service:** Overall responses indicate that participants are dedicated, well educated and bring considerable experience to their current positions. The majority (61.9%) of participants were employed in their current position for more than 5 years; an additional 33.3% of respondents had been in their current position for 1 to 5 years; 2.4% for less than 1 year, and the remaining 2.4% did not answer this question (Graph 3).



Graph 3. Length of Year of Service



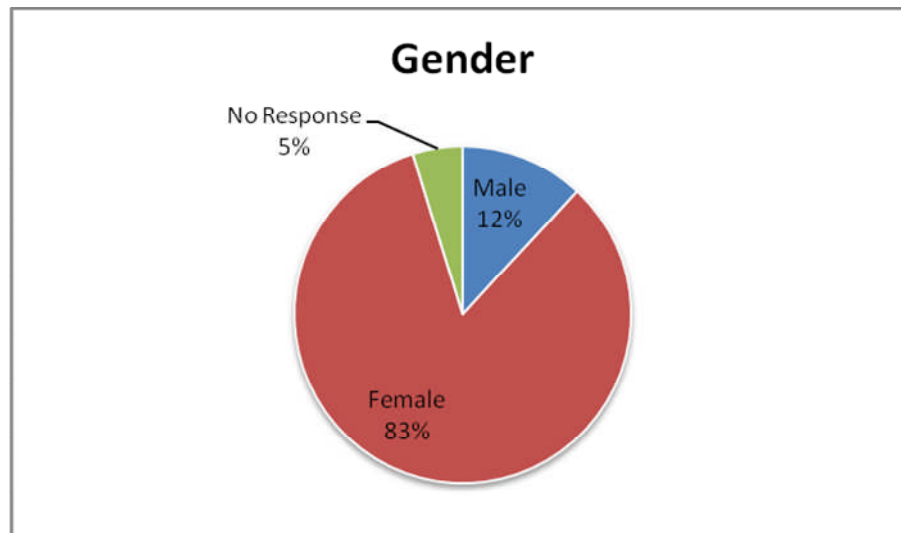
- ii. **Job Satisfaction:** In terms of job satisfaction, 45 out of 84 participants (53.6%) responded that they are satisfied with their job; with 18 (21.4%) being very satisfied and 14 (16.7%) said somewhat. Only 1 participant (1.2%) was not satisfied and the rest (6 participants or 7.1%) did not response to this question (Graph 4).

Graph 4. Level of Satisfaction



- iii. **Gender of Respondents:** Service Providers who responded to this survey were overwhelming female at 83.3%. Males constituted 11.9% of respondents and 4.8% of respondents did not answer this question (Graph 5).

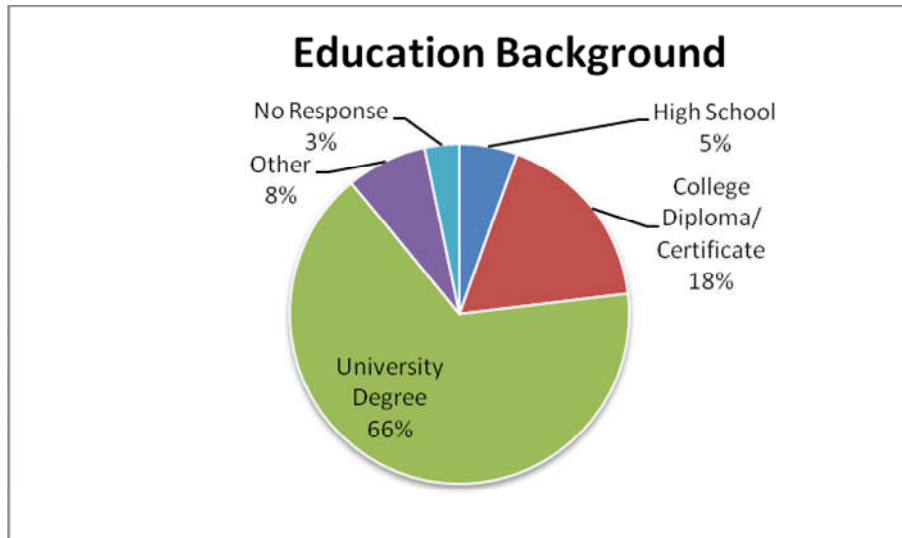
Graph 5. Gender



- iv. **Educational Background:** With regards to education levels, again the majority (65.9%) were either in the process of completing or had completed a university degree, while 17.6% held college diplomas or certificates and 5.5% held high school diplomas. 3.3% of participants had skipped this question and 7.7% answered "other" which includes post graduate degree, immigration consulting program, and post graduate diploma (Graph 6).



Graph 6. Education Background



- v. **Type of Services:** Respondents were asked to indicate the type of services they provide in their current position. The following general categories were provided for them to choose from: General Settlement Services, Employment/Job Development Services, Language Training, Literacy Basic Skills, Community Information & Resources, Manage/Oversee Day-to-Day Operations and "Other". It should be noted that multiple choices are allowed in this question. The most frequent response was Community Information & Resources (66.3%), followed by Employment/Job Development Services (52.5%) and General Settlement Services (41.3%). 21 respondents (26.3%) indicate "Other" which includes but not limited to "All of the above", Financial Assistance, and Providing Training.
- vi. **Current Position:** In the question "In what capacity do you provide these services?" the most frequently selected options are: Information Specialist (31.9%), Employment Counsellor/Job Developer (29%) and Management Staff (23.2%). Most of the respondents who selected "Other" (40.6%) indicated that they were either Social Service Case Workers or Settlement/Work Search Counsellor<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Multiple choices are allowed in this question.



- vii. **Top Three Work Activities:** The survey asks the participants to identify three work activities that they spent the most time on. The options provided in the survey are: Client Intake/Assessment, Providing Referrals, Maintaining Client Records and Case Notes, Writing Reports, Participation in Staff Meetings, Case Management, Outreach, and “Other”.

The majority (51.2%) selected Maintaining Client Records and Case notes, followed by Client Intake (48.8%) and Providing Referrals (47.6%). The least activity that the participants spent on was Participating in Staff Meetings (10.7%). In addition, 21 participants (25.0%) chose “Other”, some of them explained that they were at managerial levels and spent most of their time on duties such as building partnership, providing training, planning events, and reporting to CIC (Citizenship and Immigration Canada).

- viii. **Needs for Future Training:** Results of the survey clearly indicate that despite considerable commitment and experience in their field, staff felt the need for additional training on newcomer issues. The settlement service trainer also expressed the same view; suggesting that there should be a course designed specifically for settlement workers to improve their services. For service provider staff, an overwhelming 76.2% of respondents felt they needed additional training for their current position. Several different areas for training were identified, and the majority of respondents indicated a need for training in more than one area. While training needs focused primarily on issues relating to employment, broader areas for improvement were also highlighted. The most common response with regard to training needs was for more information regarding Professional Licensing and Regulatory Bodies, with 51.2% of respondents selecting this option and 39.3% indicating a need for information on Canadian Immigration Law and Immigration Classes. Additionally, 36.9% of respondents indicated a need for further training both on Crisis Identification & Counselling and Employment and Labour Market information respectively. Respondents also highlighted Education Programs (33.3%), Information Needs Assessment and Referral (32.1%), Housing Options and Availability (31%) and Labour Laws and Worker Rights (27.4%) as further areas for training. Finally Multiculturalism (19.0%) and Childcare Programs and Availability (13.1%) were identified as areas in which further information and education would be of benefit. The strong response and variety of areas identified for training provide strong justification for creation of inter-agency training programs that will help address this need.



- ix. **Quantity of Services:** When the respondents were asked to select whether there are “Too many”, “Enough”, “Not enough” or “Too few” services provided to newcomers in Etobicoke, the majority (60.5%) of them believed that there are “Enough” services provided in the area; none of them felt that there are “Too many” services. 36.8% answered “Not enough” and 1.3% responded “Too few”. It is important to note that despite the fact that the majority of the survey participants indicated that there are “Enough” services provided in Etobicoke, they claimed that some services may not be effectively utilized by newcomers because the newcomers are unaware of the services available to them. The followings are some of the direct quotes from the participants:

*“I think Etobicoke does have the services, (but) people are unaware they exist and how to access them”.*

*“Services are provided but the newcomers are sometimes unaware of them because of the language barrier”.*

*“Many newcomers are not aware of what is out in the community. They may go to an organization which may not refer them to another organization or service that may meet their needs”.*

While the lone service trainer interviewed stated that there are many service providers offering similar services; some survey participants were of the opinion that in some way services in the area should be more centralized, and there are also needs for a better coordination among the service providers in Etobicoke.

- x. **Quality of Services:** The results indicate that almost all of the participants in the survey believed that the quality of the services provided to newcomers in Etobicoke are either good (64.3%), very good (15.5%), or excellent (3.6%). Only seven participants (8.3%) felt that the services are not very good and the rest 8.3% did not response to this question. The followings are some of the positive responses from the participants:

*“I find that generally people are well trained and genuinely willing to put efforts towards newcomers.”*

*“Most clients who have accessed the services that are available here have commented that they are happy with the service they received.”*



*“The service providers in this area have been here for many years. Their staffs are experienced. The fact that they are receiving funding continuously speaks to the good service that they are providing.”*

In spite of the positive feedbacks on the service quality, participants have also identified the needs for improvement such as, more in depth service, ongoing support for newcomers, and a more accessible and coordinated service should be available to newcomers who live in lower income areas.

**xi. Greatest Challenges for Newcomers:** This is one of two open-ended questions that have been included in the survey. In this question, participants were asked to list four of the greatest challenges they felt newcomers face when settling into their new environment. Various challenges have been raised. However, the top four challenges identified were as follows:

- **Employment related issues:** Almost all participants who responded to this question (7 out of 84 did not respond) point out employment related challenges. These include, finding jobs in their trained professions, lack of Canadian work experiences, credential recognition, and understanding of Canadian work culture.
- **Language barriers:** This is the second most identified challenge. Language barriers include not only the ability to speak the language but also the knowledge of sector specific language skills, as well as finding an appropriate language class.
- **Service related challenges:** The survey suggests that newcomers are facing challenges in accessing, as well as understanding the services available to them, they also have problem getting connected to services provided in their first language.
- **Financial difficulties:** Financial barriers have limited newcomers’ ability in accessing basic needs including housing, food and transportation, as well as services provided to them. Furthermore, although less prominent, adjusting to a new culture and society, and learning the Canadian way were also mentioned as one of the challenges faced by newcomers. Similarly, in service trainer’s view, “employment” is always the biggest issue, she has seen newcomers going through many employment resource centres but still are not able to get employment.



- xii. **Key Elements of a Good Newcomer Service Worker:** The second open-ended question asked the participants to suggest three things that, in their view, would make an individual a good worker in the field of newcomer services. The two most frequently mentioned words in this question were “Knowledge” and “Understanding”. The most required “Knowledge” in the participants’ view was the knowledge of the services and programs available to newcomers, and the knowledge of immigration legislation and process. In addition, according to the survey, a good worker must also possess a good understanding of needs and issues relate to settlement, the barriers and issues facing newcomers, as well as the culture diversity. Other key elements mentioned by the participants were compassion, empathy, patience, and passionate about helping others. A worker with a good listening skill and an open minded was also perceived as a good worker.

#### 4.3.2 Survey Responses of Service Provider Executives

The questionnaire of the survey is divided into two parts: A) Organization Description and B) Funding, Accessibility and Perceived Gaps.

##### A) Organization Description:

- i. **Services Provided & Service Target Groups:** More than half of the executives replied that their organization provided service in Employment Assistance, Social Support Services, Needs Assessment and Referral and Housing Services. Only one responded Health Services and three had Language Training. Five executives replied that they offered services other than above which include Settlement Services, Food Assistance and Counselling. Between six and eight executives mentioned that they served a wide range of groups including Females, Males, Families, Seniors, Children, Youth and Newcomers. Two replied that they also provided services to LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender), Homeless and Women who have experienced violence. Eight executives responded yes to the question whether their agency provided settlement/integration services to newcomers to Canada; only one responded no to this same question.
- ii. **Program Design:** The executives were asked to provide information on the criteria they use to develop or enhance programs. The highest response was Organizational Mission/Goals,





followed by Funders Objective, Community Consultation, and Identified Priority Needs. Other responses include Capacity and Client Needs.

- iii. **Community Linkages:** All nine executives indicated that they have community linkages or partnerships, and links with similar organization in other cities for information sharing. These linkages include agencies and/or organizations located in Mississauga, Scarborough, London, Montreal, Thunder Bay, and etc.
- iv. **Client Referral System:** All but one executive pointed out that their organizations have adequate information available to client about other services available in the area. Again, seven responded that their organizations refer clients to other organizations, one executive was not sure about this question and another one indicated that they do not monitor referrals. The agencies highlighted the following methods in monitoring client referrals and ensuring clients have received relevant and up to date information:
  - o Follow up with clients on a regular basis (annual client satisfaction surveys).
  - o Collaboration among staffs/agencies.
  - o Provide staff training in the referral system.

## **B) Funding, Accessibility and Perceived Gaps**

- i. **Funding Source:** The survey asked the respondents to rank (1-7) on the importance of funding source their organization received. Four respondents pointed out that they received the most funding from the Federal Government. However, not all respondents received funding from this source. The second and third important sources of funding were form Provincial and Municipal Government. All nine surveyed organizations received funding from Charity and Community Foundations although this is not the major funding source in their organization (Table 4).



Table 4. Funding Source

Rank	Federal Government	Provincial Government	Municipal Government	Charity and Community Foundations	Private Donations	Corporate Sponsorship	Other*
1)	4	1	2	0	1	1	0
2)	0	4	0	2	0	1	2
3)	1	0	4	2	2	0	0
4)	0	0	1	3	2	1	1
5)	0	2	1	1	3	0	0
6)	1	1	0	0	0	5	0
7)	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>

\*Includes United way of Greater Toronto and fee for services.

- ii. **Service Location and Barriers Restricting Clients from Accessing the Services:** Six organizations indicated that they have office across the GTA, the rest of the three only based in Etobicoke. The majority of the respondents highlighted Transportation, Childcare, Time when Service is Available, and Awareness of service as the major barriers clients' face in accessing services. Financial Cost and Language appeared to be least important factors. This is most likely because most programs are funded by governments and other organizations and therefore, no fee is required for receiving services. Also, many ethnic specific settlement agencies provide services in clients' first language which helps ease the barrier in accessing the services due to language.
- iii. **Top Three Gaps in Service Delivery and Strategies to Close the Gaps:** Each executive was asked to provide three gaps that they see in service delivery in the community; they were also asked to provide suggestions to close the gaps. Table 5 summarizes their responses:



Table 5. Gaps and Strategies in Service Delivery

	Service Delivery Gaps	Strategies to Close the Gaps
1.	Lack of awareness of existing services	Outreach
2.	Accessibility of the services	Relocate or open new agency
3.	Lack of Supports in the following areas - Mental health issues, youth, women, refugees and seniors Lack of culturally appropriate outreach strategy	Advocacy; Coordinate with other teams to engage with isolated groups
4.	Lack of collaborations among agencies	Build partnership with other agencies; Develop processes that will ensure information sharing among agencies
5.	Lack of funding (to increase services)	More funding to deliver programs; increase the amount of social assistance to address hunger and poverty.
6.	Lack of Volunteers Available	(No strategies provided)
7.	Funders' objectives – Number based as opposed to outcome based	Focus more on outcomes than numbers

- iv. **Outreach Strategies and Implementation:** The most commonly used outreach strategies by these organizations are: 1) creating promotional materials (flyer, brochure); 2) media (local newspaper, magazines); 3) creating a website; 4) attending community events/fairs; 5) collaboration with other services providers; 6) door-to-door outreach and word of mouth. Most agencies rely on dedicated staffs (paid and/or volunteer) to implement and achieve outreach strategies.
- v. **Follow-up Process:** Two questions were asked in term of the agencies' follow up process with clients. The first one asked the executives to explain if they have any step taken after the initial service with clients. Among the five given answers (two participants skipped this question, one did not understand the question and one replied not applicable), one agency would ask the clients to fill up an evaluation/survey form, another four agencies would follow up with clients (three month after, as needed, call weekly). The second question asked about the time frame the organizations provide follow-ups. Most respondents said that they provide follow ups depending on the situation (client need, staff and volunteer availability, program). Two agencies



follow up with their client every three months. In addition, the follow-ups are usually provided up to six months to one year after the initial service.

- **Anticipated Outcomes and Program evaluation:** All nine executives provided clear anticipation on the outcomes of the services they provide:
  - Clients become independent and self-reliance (in finding housing, food, employment and other basic needs)
  - Clients learn to speak English
  - Clients understand and participate in the community programs, services and resources that are available to them
  - Clients develop networking skills
  - Clients learn and practice their right and freedoms

In terms of their program evaluation methods, two agencies pointed out that they have specific framework for evaluation. The other six agencies evaluate their programs by getting feedbacks from clients and staffs (surveys, interviews and focus groups, feedback forms). One agency did not respond.

- vi. **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats to Organization:** The last four questions in the questionnaire asked the executives to describe top two Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat to their organizations. The main findings are summarized into following points (Table 6). It should be noted that most of the weakness and threats in this section have also been mentioned as “Gaps” in service delivery (see Top Three Gaps in Service Delivery).



Table 6.SWOT

<b>STRENGTHS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Excellent program and services</li> <li>▪ Human assets: Selfless volunteers, and motivated and highly educated staffs</li> <li>▪ Multiple locations, multiple sources of funding and rich resources</li> <li>▪ Responsive to clients’ needs</li> <li>▪ Community engagement</li> </ul>
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of administration/Overloaded staffs (staffs are taken away to complete intensive paper work for “accountability”)</li> <li>▪ Insufficient space/size</li> <li>▪ Limited programs/resources due to lack of funding</li> <li>▪ Fundraising ability</li> <li>▪ Internal communication/Coordination with the organization</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Services expansion (serving new population/changing demographics, more programs)</li> <li>▪ CIC Modernization</li> <li>▪ Training opportunity</li> <li>▪ Creating partnerships with other service providers</li> <li>▪ Fee for service</li> <li>▪ Fundraising</li> <li>▪ Understanding community needs</li> <li>▪ Emerging Technologies</li> </ul>
<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding cuts</li> <li>▪ Lack of resources and space (high costs)</li> <li>▪ Lack of support from government</li> <li>▪ Increasing reporting and accountability by funders impacting service delivery and admin</li> </ul>

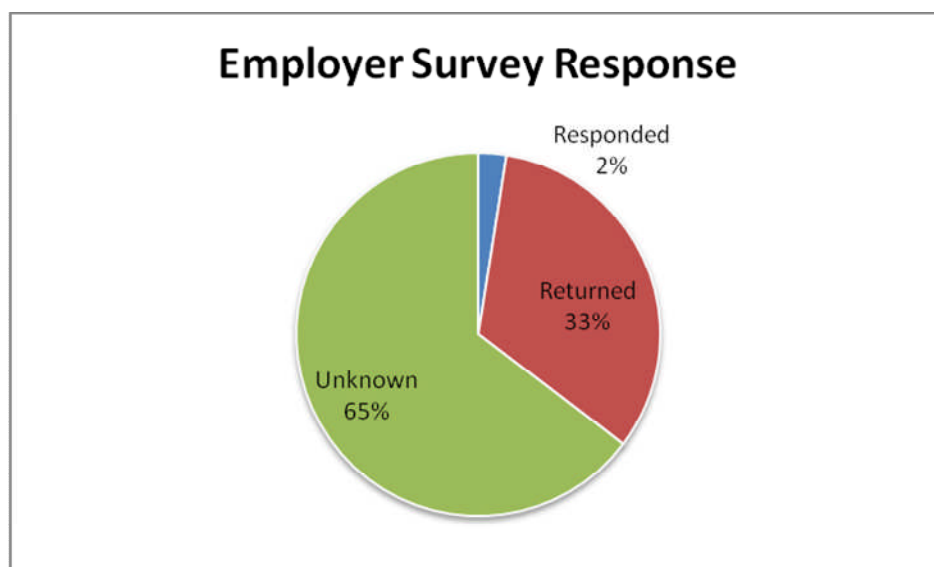


## 4.4 Employers Perspectives

### 4.4.1 Employer Surveys

A questionnaire (Appendix F) contains 15 closed and open-ended question, which were administrated on-line and in print to 201 employers in the Central South Etobicoke area. However, only 5 employers (2%) responded to the survey, 66 surveys (33%) were returned because the addresses could not be identified. The status of the rest of the 130 surveys (65%) is unknown because they were neither responded to nor returned (Graph 7).

Graph 7. Employer Survey Response



Looking at the above results, we recognize that there is a close relation between employer's perspective on hiring immigrants and the reality of the labour force participation of immigrants. For this reason, further in-depth studies on this area are required. In the meantime, we also acknowledge that the insights of the five responded surveys are important to the study. Therefore, based on these survey results, this section will explain the employer's hiring strategies, needs and perceptions related to hiring newcomer employees.

- i. **Background Information:** four employers were private sector and one belongs to public sector; three were in healthcare industry and two were in food service; three of the respondents in the survey were owner of the company, one held a HR representative and one was Supervisor. The



size of these firms were between 10 and 2500 employees (including full time and part time). The employers were also asked to identify the type of company and organization they belong to under the following categories (multiple choices are applied in this question): 1) Corporation (two replies), Small Business (two replies), Mid-size Business (no reply), Government Funded Organization (one reply), Non-profit (one reply), Education institution (no reply), Other (one reply – Limited Partnership).

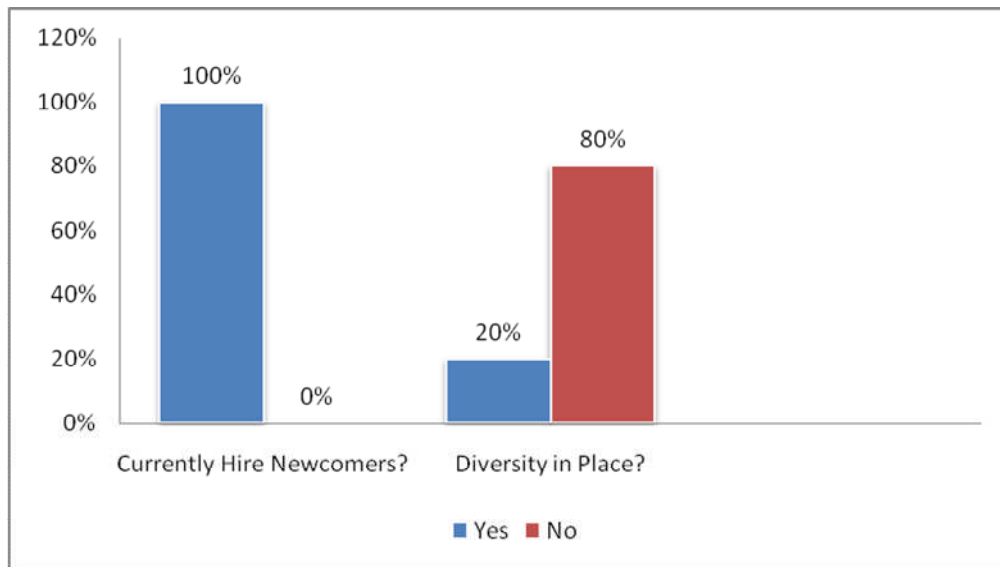
ii. **Hiring requirement:** The employers were asked to explain their priorities when hiring new staff. One employer skipped the question and the rest of the four employers stated:

- *“Experience, compassion, patience, education, empathy, reliability, punctuality, organizational skills, and able to work independently”.*
- *“Experienced, loyal, responsible, flexible, and good attitude in times of difficulties”.*
- *“Punctuality, persistence (training takes 3 months) ability to multi task, and ability to deal with people”.*
- *“Training/accreditation, relevant (to the work) experience, cross-cultural experience (personal or professional) and familiarity with the community”.*

iii. **Hiring Newcomers:** All employers replied that they were hiring newcomers at the time when the survey was conducted. However, only one stated that they hired newcomers because there was a diversity strategy in place in the organization (Graph 8). When employers were asked about the concerns they had in hiring newcomers (multiple choice are applied in this question), all of them mentioned “Communication Skills”, four selected “Language Level”, two chose “Lack of Relevant Experience” and “Unsure of Educational Credentials”, and one had concern about “Difficulty in Contacting and/or Checking References”.



Graph 8. Hiring Newcomers and Diversity



iv. **Interest in Working with Newcomers:** The questionnaire asked a few questions relate to employers' interest in working with newcomers in the future. However, the results show that most of the respondents showed no interest in this regard. The followings are the summary of these questions :

- When the employers were asked to list down the information they would like to receive regarding newcomers to Canada, one replied Not Applicable, another one mentioned Not Sure and the rest of three did not response to this question. Nevertheless, what is unclear is whether the employers were not interested, or they were reluctant to tell what they were interested in the survey.
- Only One employer showed interest in participate in an internship or career matching program that provides internationally trained newcomers with Canadian and/or volunteer experience. Two employers said No, and another two answered unsure to this question.
- Again, only one employer was interested in getting more information about the Central South Etobicoke LIP and how employers can get assist by its member agencies in meeting their hiring needs. Two employers replied No, and another two replied Unsure.





- Four employers answered that they were not interested in getting any workshops and/or services supports in addressing any concerns regarding hiring newcomers. One employer selected Yes in this question. However, when asked to provide details, the employer list “Spreadsheets” and “Word Processing” which do not directly relate to hiring newcomers.
- v. **Training Required for Newcomers:** We asked employers to select from the following options on the type of training or skills development that would better prepare newcomers for employment in their industries: 1) Language Training - Four employers have selected this option. In fact, as outlined in the earlier section, same number of employers have mentioned Language Level as one of the concerns they have in hiring newcomers, showing that language ability is a crucial factor in newcomers’ success in the labour market. 2) Orientation to Canadian Job Culture – two replies on this option. 3) Computer Skills – two employers believed that newcomers need training in this field. 4) Customer Service Skills – no employer has this option. 5) Other – one employer chose this option and explained that newcomers should have training on Cooking and Food Manufacture in order to be prepared in the industry.

#### 4.4.2 Employer Interviews

In total 15 employers participated in in-depth structured interviews via the telephone. Five interviews were completed during the month of March and an additional ten in August of 2010. Of the fifteen employers interviewed, eight were within the service section two in manufacturing, two in retail, one from hospitality, skilled trades and IT respectively. Participants were asked several questions related to their hiring practices and experience in working with newcomers. The following section is organized according to the general trends which emerged from these interviews, beginning with perceptions regarding newcomer employees, and continuing with hiring practices including challenges present and future.

In general, the employers who participated in the study were open to the idea of hiring newcomers within their industry and organization. Overall attitudes of newcomers were positive with newcomers described as ‘dedicated’, ‘hard working’, and ‘motivated’. Newcomer employees were also seen to have strong initiative for improvement and described by one employer as “the best employee they have”. Of the 15 employers interviewed, 11 had hired newcomers within the past 2-3 years. Their motivation for hiring newcomers ranged considerably. However, the most common explanation was that the



newcomer simply met the hiring criteria for the job posted, and that their status as a newcomer was not considered in the process. One employer who had not hired a newcomer also highlighted that the reason for this was because they had not received an application from a newcomer with the required skills.

Overall challenges in hiring included having too few qualified candidates but also in some cases too many overqualified candidates. Employers highlighted this challenge as a disconnection between labour market needs and availability of appropriate skills in the workforce. Several employers reflected upon the difficulty inherent in selecting a candidate from a pool of over-qualified applicants. One employer identified the need to find committed workers who would remain within the position for a sustained period of time, or someone able to grow in their position. Over-qualified candidates are often viewed as unlikely to continue in a lower level position and are therefore less enticing candidates according to employers.

With regard to challenges or barriers to hiring newcomers, employers felt that orientation, English language training and communication skills were important issues to address. One third of those interviewed felt that the following three services would allow newcomers to make an easier transition into the local labour market.

- Training with regards to inter-personal skills, allowing for improved job interview skills
- Orientation with regards to cultural references<sup>21</sup> and cues to allow a better understanding between both customers and colleagues.
- Workplace trial period<sup>22</sup>

An additional suggestion for overcoming barriers in hiring newcomers included creation or improvement of third party organizations which are able to assess and verify technical skills. This was seen as a time

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<sup>21</sup> Cultural References in this instance is referring to many aspects of daily life, whether preparation for winter weather or developing an understanding of sporting activities in Canada. Employers felt that with better cultural orientation newcomers would be more likely to participate in small talk and more easily understand what customers and colleagues are referring to in such conversations.

<sup>22</sup> The idea of a workplace trial refers to the idea of allowing a one or two week trial period in which an employer “hires” an employee, and pairs them with a “trainer” within the company. Employers felt this would help them to better assess the candidate’s skills and also for the employee to understand the expectations, demands and workplace culture of the company.



saving process for the employer which would have the added benefit of creating confidence in their skills for the newcomer.

Of the hiring practices identified by employers, the most common method used by all employers in advertising open positions within their business was word of mouth. Use of internet to publicize job openings was also highly favoured, with the use of various websites including: the employer's own website, Service Canada Job Bank, Craigslist and Kijiji. Other less frequently used methods included advertising on site, or directly recruiting qualified candidates via local schools and advertising in city newspapers. Those working within the service sector also noted that potential employees often contact them directly seeking employment. These results highlight the importance of networking as essential to finding and attaining employment.

With regard to hiring levels, over half of these employers indicated that they did not expect to be hiring staff within the next 6 to 12 months. This was attributed to slow economic conditions without any foreseeable growth in the near future. One employer, within the skilled worker class indicated that the organization had been attempting to hire a suitable skilled worker for several months but had been unable to find an appropriate candidate with both hard and soft skills. One employer indicated that due to high staff turnover the organization hired on an ongoing basis. Those occupations which employers expected to hire for in the future included; restaurant/bar server, kitchen staff, cabinet or furniture maker & designer, bilingual customer service attendants (call centre), painters, skilled auto body staff, sales, drivers, project managers, estimators, and cleaners.

Overall, employer attitudes toward hiring of newcomers remain quite positive. All employers interviewed had either employed or would be willing to employ a newcomer so long as they possess the relevant skills and qualifications for the position. By addressing issues regarding cross-cultural communication employers felt this would greatly improve the ability for a newcomer to be hired and integrate into their workplace. However, it is important to note that in conducting this research it was difficult to find employers willing to participate in this study. While the employers who participated in this study relay positive attitudes and outlooks, this cannot be taken to represent the overall labour market. Lack of interest in participating in this study by the majority of employers in the area may indicate the general lack of priority given to newcomer issues and/or a lack of understanding of how newcomer employees can benefit their particular business. Though it is clear that those employers with experience and interest in working with newcomers have important and positive feedback, it remains unknown what the opinions and perceptions are of those employers who do not have such an interest.



Further research involving wider participation from local area employers will be necessary in any future research undertaken.



## 5.0 Discussion

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Placing the focus on Central South Etobicoke, this research has looked at newcomers' settlement experiences from three aspects: employers, service providers and newcomers themselves. The findings suggest that all three groups are responsible for, and have their own unique roles in ensuring the social, economic, and cultural integration of newcomers.

### 5.1 Employment Access Considerations

Employment is of primary importance to newcomers. As mentioned previously, 86% of newcomers intend to work after arriving in Canada. As a result, finding employment is seen as a major step to newcomer's integration, and it can be said that settlement and integration of newcomers is unlikely to occur without positive employment outcomes. The findings explain that for newcomers from the Central South Etobicoke catchment area, lack of "Canadian Experience" appears to be their biggest concern. Previous studies have indicated that the requirement of Canadian experience by employers does not merely mean technical skills required for work but it also implies the need for soft communication skills. The requirement of soft skills is to ensure that newcomers will be "culturally fit" and "being immediately productive" after joining the organizations (Liu, 2008, p. 11). Also, in many occasions, employers' request for Canadian experience is due to the unfamiliarity with immigrants' foreign experiences and credentials; they view the hiring of newcomers as a "burden" and will only consider it as an option if they cannot find any candidate from other sources.

Interestingly, the research findings in Central South Etobicoke actually contradict the stereotypical perception of employers towards newcomers. In general, employers who have experience in hiring newcomers in the study expressed that they were satisfied with newcomers' working attitudes, they used words such as "hard working", "motivated" and "dedicated" to describe newcomers they hired. In the meantime, it is worthwhile to mention that the decision of employers to recruit and hire newcomers is based purely on their business needs; they did not consider whether a potential candidate was a newcomer or not. This shows that if newcomers are given an equal opportunity, their chances of getting employed will increase and in most cases, they will perform well in their assigned duties. These findings indicate two primary points. First, there is a need for employers to get more information on the benefits of hiring newcomers. The more knowledge employers obtain about immigrants and immigration - including the type of immigrants to Canada every year, their qualifications, type of work



they perform and how their experiences relate to the Canadian standard - the more comfortable they will feel in recruiting newcomers. Second, employers require more supports in helping newcomers integrate into the Canadian work force once hired.

While large enterprises often have the resources to develop internal programs that help newcomer professionals integrate into the Canadian business culture, small and medium-sized enterprises often do not have the same level of resources to accomplish this undertaking. Considering that between 2006 and 2031 the foreign-born population of Canada is projected to increase approximately from 9.8 to 12.5 million, which constitutes an increase from 20% to 25% and 28% (Statistics Canada, 2010), employers will likely require such resources in order to meet their hiring needs. Furthermore, with an increase in foreign-born Canadian residents will also create both a business challenge and opportunity to market to a new customer base. Again, a plan to assist businesses in both understanding and meeting the coming realities of a more global business environment via the newcomer human resources within Canada, will be of benefit to both employers, service providers and newcomers.

Besides the above three parties, the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government has an interest in increased understanding and resources being made available to accommodate newcomers in order to effectively meet labour market needs. In 2008, in order to reduce the backlogs and the wait times of Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) applicants, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) reduced the eligibility criteria for FSW to 38 occupations, which was further cut down to 29 Occupations in 2010 (Table 7). While the federal government explains that these occupations were selected based on labour market demands, these occupations do not meet the high demand jobs reflected in the Greater Toronto Area. Specifically, among the 29 Occupations identified as occupations with “good” prospects in Toronto region by LMI, only seven of them were listed in the list of the eligible occupations for federal skilled worker program by CIC. In Table 7 which follows, those seven corresponding occupations in both the FSW occupation list and GTA high demand job list, are reflected in bold.



Table 7. Comparison of 29 FSW Occupations with GTA High Demand Jobs

Eligible Occupation for Federal Skilled Worker Program (by CIC)		Occupations with Good Prospects Toronto Region (by LMI)	
NOC Code	Occupation	NOC Code	Occupation
0631	Restaurant and Food Service Managers	0112	Human Resources Managers
0811	Primary Production Managers (Except Agriculture)	0213	Computer and Information Systems Managers
1122	Professional Occupations in Business Services to Management	1121	Specialists in Human Resources
1233	Insurance Adjusters and Claims Examiners	1433	Customer Service Representatives – Financial Services
2121	Biologists and Related Scientists	1453	Customer Service, Information and Related Clerks
2151	Architects	2131	Civil Engineers
3111	Specialist Physicians	2173	Software Engineers
3112	General Practitioners and Family Physicians	<b>3113</b>	<b>Dentist</b>
<b>3113</b>	<b>Dentist</b>	<b>3131</b>	<b>Pharmacists</b>
<b>3131</b>	<b>Pharmacists</b>	3143	Occupational Therapists
3142	Physiotherapists	<b>3152</b>	<b>Registered Nurses</b>
<b>3152</b>	<b>Registered Nurses</b>	<b>3215</b>	<b>Medical Radiation Technologists</b>
<b>3215</b>	<b>Medical Radiation Technologists</b>	<b>3222</b>	<b>Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists</b>
<b>3222</b>	<b>Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists</b>	4121	University Professors
3233	Licensed Practical Nurses	4131	College and Other Vocational Instructors
4151	Psychologists	<b>4152</b>	<b>Social Workers</b>
<b>4152</b>	<b>Social Workers</b>	4211	Paralegal and Related Occupations
<b>6241</b>	<b>Chefs</b>	4212	Community and Social Service Workers
6242	Cooks	6231	Insurance Agents and Brokers
7215	Contractors and Supervisors, Carpentry Trades	<b>6241</b>	<b>Chefs</b>
7216	Contractors and Supervisors, Mechanic Trades	6261	Police Officers (Except Commissioned)
7241	Electricians (Except Industrial and Power System)	6411	Sales Representatives – Wholesale Trade (Non-Technical)
7242	Industrial Electricians	6453	Food and Beverage Servers
7251	Plumbers	6471	Visiting Homemakers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations
7265	Welders and Related Machine Operators	6474	Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers
7312	Heavy-Duty Equipment Mechanics	6611	Cashiers
7371	Crane Operators	6622	Grocery Clerks and Store Shelf Stockers



7372	Drillers and Blasters – Surface Mining, Quarrying and Construction	6641	Food Counter Attendants, Kitchen Helpers and Related Occupations
8222	Supervisors, Oil and Gas Drilling and Service	6651	Security Guards and Related Occupations

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011; Labour Market Information, 2010

As stated earlier, Toronto is the most popular destination for immigrants and every year, about 40% of new immigrants choose to settle in this city. It cannot be expected that the Federal Skilled Worker’s occupations correspond to every regional economic market in Canada. However, realising that there can be a general mismatch between the occupations of those who are admitted to work in Canada, and the high demand jobs within regional areas, it is essential that service providers dealing with newcomer employment issues provide newcomers and employers with strategies that will allow both to overcome this hurdle for the benefit of all parties

The research reveals that there is a clear connection between employers’ perspectives on hiring newcomers and newcomers’ labour market experiences. As already explained, the LIP research team faced significant challenges in getting employers to participate in the study. While the research team managed to recruit about 120 participants in the focus group discussions and obtain 84 responses from server provider staff members, the team only received 19 responses from employers (four surveys, 15 individual interview responses). This suggests a lack of interest or understanding of the importance and implications of hiring immigrants to meet business needs. Since it remains unclear from this study the exact reasons employers showed a lack of interest in responding to questions relating to hiring newcomers, additional consultation on a one-on-one basis is recommended to engage more employers and integrate their needs, towards meeting the mandate of Central South Etobicoke LIP.

## 5.2 Service Needs

It should also be acknowledged that, although all newcomers seem to share similar settlement experience in general, they all have different requirements when it comes to settlement needs. As such, care should be given that newcomers’ needs are not addressed with generalized program options, but should be addressed and dealt with on either an individual or thematic/issues basis. For example, language training has been highlighted as one of the crucial services by newcomers in the focus group discussions. However, it is important to understand that not all immigrants with language barriers will





benefit from the LINC/ESL programs, as is. Professional immigrants will want to get language training in their specific fields while seniors may have needs in learning conversation skills that will help them in their daily life, and youth will need help in language training that will fast track them in integrating into the Canadian school system.

Lack of coordination among service providers is a major concern addressed in this study by both the service providers and the settlement service trainer. As discussed earlier, service providers often feel pressure to achieve their “number” of clients served in order to secure funding. This has, directly and indirectly, created competition among service providers. Survey respondents also perceived that agencies tended to create similar program within the same geographical area, which also increased the competitive tension between agencies for clients. As the settlement service trainer commented in the interview, *“Why they are there on every corner? Are they doing anything special?”*, *“So what’s the difference?”* Indeed, being able to illustrate the difference in programs offered between agencies could highlight the uniqueness of settlement programming options, and may event assist in marketing programs to the wide range of newcomer clients. The appearance of duplication may actually be a lack of clarity of exactly what each program offers, which will cause confusion to newcomers and prevents them from navigating the services available to them effectively.

Based on the above discussions, it is clear that the “number” based settlement approach can have a negative impact on newcomers’ integration process. On the one hand, service providers have to ensure that they provide effective and useful services to newcomers; on the other hand, they are required to maintain the number of the clients they serve in order to continue their ability to serve newcomers. It is not difficult to imagine that when agencies are struggling with getting the required “number” by the funders, they may be reluctant to refer their clients to other agencies, even if they are aware of the more appropriate programs available to their clients, until they hit their “number”. Therefore, it is suggested that the performance criteria of funders continues to promote cross referral and documentation of as many programs as are needed to assist in the settlement and integration of newcomers. Furthermore, once such data is collected and summarized, both program planners and funders will have actual data to base future programmatic changes that meet newcomer needs in different catchment areas.

There is also a great need for a greater range of information that is well organized and clear to be made available to newcomers. In general, the newcomer focus groups participants stated that information they received about Canada at pre-departure and post-arrival stages was insufficient, unorganized, and



inconsistent. Newcomers who have reasonable expectations of their new life will have smoother transition periods in Canada (International Organization for Migration (IMO), n.d.). IOM states that because many new immigrants are not informed accurately about the society and culture in Canada, they tend to have “unrealistic expectations” about life in Canada (n.d., p.1). For example, many immigrants, especially those with high education, good language skills, and with professional working experiences, often think that they will be able to find a job in their field within a short period of time after arriving in Canada. These kinds of uninformed expectations create extra stress to newcomers, in addition to other adjustments that they have to deal with in a new environment. During the interview with the settlement services trainer who had also worked with newcomers, she explained that she provided the following comment to one of her clients who became frustrated in her work search experience:

*“I tried to explain her one side that she needs to be patient...It’s now only the fall of work, not at all. Many times it’s on people’s side. They may think that “I sent four, then resumes, and how come no one invited me for the interview”, so for every job posting comes up to 500 resumes. That’s a lot so they need to understand and they need to have realistic expectation...”*

Knowing exactly what to expect after arriving in Canada will help to alleviate an uneasy feeling of newcomers and make their transition into the new life faster. Therefore, accurate and sufficient information that also provides explanations about different facets of Canada should be provided to newcomers in a well-organized manner starting at the pre-departure stage. This should also include updated labour market information for different regional areas, as well as the knowhow of the common practices in the Canadian work forces, to avoid newcomers in becoming frustration in their work search experiences due to the unrealistic expectations.

Last but not least, integration of newcomers is not a one-way street, with help only from settlement and service provider agencies and employers. For this process to really work, Canadian society at large, namely long-term residents and citizens of Canada must be engaged to assist in these efforts. The discussion with parents, seniors and youth made clear that greater avenues for participation *with* local residents makes for a much smoother transition and will likely decrease the need for future programming assistance. As such, increased education about the benefits of newcomers to many aspects of Canadian society (such as the economy, arts, culture) and avenues for volunteerism to assist in the settlement and integration process is a major initiative that should be promoted by all entities active in newcomer services.



In conclusion, significant progress has been made in relation to the initial objectives of the research component of the Central South Etobicoke LIP. As would be expected this period has also been marked by LIP staff developing a detailed understanding of the inherent challenges in working with the unique communities in this area. These lessons are invaluable to the long term objectives, sustainability and growth of the Central South Etobicoke LIP. While the first data collection stage was more general, the second stage entailed more specific objectives, targeting newcomers perceived to have particular needs, such as seniors, women, and those with low literacy and low English levels. The linkages established throughout both phases of the research project with both service providers and community employers are a significant achievement in terms of the program's recognition and value by outside bodies. As the Central South Etobicoke LIP progresses it will be essential to incorporate past challenges and successes into planning and encourage more community involvement and ownership at all stages.





## 6.0 Central South Etobicoke LIP

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### 6.1 Vision

Central south Etobicoke will be a community in which all newcomers achieve their integration goals and become actively engaged in Canadian society.

### 6.2 Mission

To create a cohesive and responsive network of service providers in Central South Etobicoke where all newcomers can successfully navigate the service delivery network to access the services they need.

### 6.3 Benefits

There is a common interest across many stakeholders in building an effective LIP to improve service delivery to newcomers in Central South Etobicoke. The LIP Leadership Council sees the following benefits accruing to an effective Partnership:

- Higher quality of life of newcomers
- More inclusive and equitable community that is more informed, engaged and empowered
- Safer and healthier community for all to enjoy
- Greater community capacity and the ability to respond to service gaps through collective action
- Better deployment of limited resources, thereby meeting commitments to funders in a cost0effective way
- Recognition of the Service Providers' network and its organizations as essential services in Central South Etobicoke



## 6.4 *Strategic Priorities*

1. Promote improved inter-agency collaboration to enhance newcomer accessibility to appropriate programs and services for users in Central South Etobicoke
2. Encourage a community-wide newcomer information and dissemination system that:
  - User clear English without the use of acronyms,
  - Is specific about the service being offered,
  - Encourages inclusiveness and accurate information
  - Is easily accessible
3. Engagement with the broader community – which includes education and increasing awareness of programs and services – to improve newcomers’ access to opportunities
4. Identify gaps and support the development and delivery of programs and services to address them
5. Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Local Immigration Partnership on Central South Etobicoke, and incorporate findings to improve current practices
6. Diversify and increase sources of support to promote the sustainability of the LIP initiative beyond current sources of CIC funding



## 7.0 References

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## 8.0 Appendices

### Appendix A – Schedule of Consultations

1.	Date	Participant Profile	Location of Consultation	Number of Participants
2.	March 13, 2010	Profile 1	JobStart - Chauncey	8
3.	March 18, 2010	Profile 1	JobStart - Chauncey	9
4.	March 19, 2010	Profile 4 & 6	JobStart - Chauncey	2
5.	March 22, 2010	Profile 2 & 3	JobStart - Chauncey	8
6.	March 24, 2010	Profile 2 & 3	JobStart - Chauncey	5
7.	March 24, 2010	Profile 5	Microskills	8
8.	March 25, 2010	Profile 5	CUIAS	6
9.	March 26, 2010	Profile 4	Arab Community of Toronto	5
10.	March 26, 2010	Profile 4	Madbakh Women's Initiative	6
11.	March 27, 2010	Profile 2 & 3	JobStart - Chauncey	5
12.	March 30, 2010	Profile 5	CultureLink	14
13.	March 31, 2010	Employer	Conference Calls	3
14.	April 8, 2010	Employer	Conference Calls	2
15.	April 8, 2010	Key Informant	Settlement I&R Training – Old Mill Inn	1
16.	July 29, 2010	Profile 9	JobStart - Chauncey	5
17.	August 4, 2010	Profile 7	JobStart - Chauncey	3
18.	August 9, 2010	Profile 7	JobStart - Chauncey	5
19.	August 11, 2010	Profile 7	JobStart - Chauncey	6
20.	August 11, 2010	Profile 10	JobStart - Chauncey	6
21.	August 12, 2010	Profile 4	Toronto Public Library - Mimco	3
22.	August 12, 2010	Profile 2	Toronto Public Library - Mimco	5
23.	August 13, 2010	Profile 6	LAMP	10
24.	August 13, 2010	Profile 4	Arab Community of Toronto	5
25.	August 16, 2010	Profile 7	JobStart - Chauncey	1
26.	August 19, 2010	Key Informant	JobStart - Dufferin	1
27.	August 23-30, 2010	Employers	Conference Calls	10
28.	August 24, 2010	Key Informant	LAMP	1
<b>TOTAL NEWCOMER, KEY INFORMANT &amp; EMPLOYER CONSULTATIONS</b>				<b>148</b>



## Appendix B – Focus Group Discussion Guide - General

### THEME 1 –First Experiences in Canada....

Think back to the first few months after your arrival in Canada...and tell us a bit about your experiences...  
What sort of expectations did you have? What challenges did you face?

- 1) If your friend told you they were planning to move to Canada what advice or information would you give them?

### THEME 2 - Service Providers and Information

There are a number of service providers in the area who specialize in helping newcomers and also others who offer services to both established residents and newcomers. We are interested to hear your opinions on what makes a “good” service provider, in other words what sort of experience are you looking for from a service provider? What is important for you as a client...?

- 1) Are there services that you need or would help you but are not available?

### THEME 3 – Integration

Now that some time has passed since your arrival in Canada, how do you feel about settling into Canadian culture and your new community? (Do you feel you are integrating into the community?)

- 1) If you are having difficulty integrating, what do you think is causing these difficulties, what are the barriers?
- 2) What would make you feel more involved in or part of your community?

### THEME 4 – Mentorship Program Specific Themes

Everyone here is a graduate of a mentorship or training program...could you tell us a bit about the program and what you feel you gained from it?

- 1) What strategies have you used for finding employment?
- 2) If YOU could design services to help newcomers with settlement and employment, what would they be?

### THEME 5 – After Employment

So you have all successfully completed a training or mentorship program and hopefully you are now all employed in your desired field, so what’s next? Is there still need for further support and training services?

- 1) What kind of services do you need or see your-self needing in the future?
- 2) When you look back, how do you think that your focus on finding employment affected your progress with other aspects of settlement?



**Appendix C – Focus Group Participant Questionnaires**

Central South Etobicoke Local Immigration Partnership  
*JobStart*

**Focus Group Participants: Demographic Data**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Location:**

**Facilitator:**

Please, answer the questions below. Check mark only the category that applies to you:

**Name:** (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

**Country of origin:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Education:** Baccalaureate Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Master Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Ph.D. \_\_\_\_\_  
College Diploma \_\_\_\_\_ College/University Certificate \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment:** Currently unemployed \_\_\_\_\_ Currently employed \_\_\_\_\_  
Temporarily employed \_\_\_\_\_ On internship \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital status:** Married \_\_\_\_\_ Not married \_\_\_\_\_ Married without children \_\_\_\_\_  
Married with children \_\_\_\_\_

**How long have you been in Canada?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Immigration status:** Permanent Resident \_\_\_\_\_ Refugee \_\_\_\_\_ Citizen \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_





### *Focus Group Participant Questionnaire*

Please answer the questions below, marking only the category which *best* applies to you:

#### **Biographical Details**

1. Name (**optional**) \_\_\_\_\_

2. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)

3. Gender: Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your country of origin? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How long have you been in Canada? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your current marital status?

- Single/never married
- Married
- Divorced
- Cohabiting
- Separated
- Widowed

7. Do you have children?

- No (move to next question)
- Yes (please answer questions 7a and 7b)

7a. How old are your children? \_\_\_\_\_

7b. Are your children here with you in Canada?

- Yes
- No

8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- None
- Primary
- Secondary/High-school
- College Certificate
- Post-secondary (Bachelors)
- Graduate Degree (Masters/PhD)

9. Are you currently employed?

- Yes [**Please indicate your current occupation**] \_\_\_\_\_
- No



**SERVICE PROVIDER USE**

10. How often do you use services in your area for settlement and integration?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Occasionally
- Never

11. What type of services do you use?

- Employment related services
- Literacy skills development
- General Settlement Services
- Language Support Services
- Services offering financial support
- Training programs
- Other [please specify] \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do any of the following barriers (problems) stop you from using services?

- Transportation
- Childcare
- Financial costs
- Language
- Awareness of services
- Time that services are available
- Other [Please specify] \_\_\_\_\_

13. In your view, are services provided to newcomers in Etobicoke...

- Too many
- Enough
- Not enough
- Too few

14. How would you rate the quality of services provided to newcomers in Etobicoke?

- Poor
- Not very good
- Good
- Very good

**THANK YOU!**





## Service Provider Survey

The Central South Etobicoke Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is a collaboration of local service providers, residents and employers, whose mission is to create a cohesive and responsive service delivery network that all newcomers can successfully navigate.

In doing this, we envision that Central South Etobicoke will be a community in which all newcomers can achieve their integration goals and become actively engaged in Canadian society.

Towards this end, we are asking for your participation in giving us a clearer picture of services being used by newcomers and your needs as a service provider.

**The attached survey is anonymous and confidential.**

**We do not require your name or the agency name.**

**The information you provide will not be used for any other purpose other than determining how we can improve newcomer services in Central South Etobicoke.**

### Directions:

1. You can complete the survey by hand, typed or online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QYXFXXZ>.
2. Return typed or hand written responses using the provided self-addressed envelope, or mailed to:

Denise Randell,  
Central South Etobicoke LIP,  
41 Chauncey Avenue,  
Toronto, ON, M8Z 2Z2.

3. This survey expires Wednesday July 14, 2010.
4. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact:  
Riley Dillon, LIP Researcher  
at 416-231-2295 ext. 3250.

**Thank you for your participation!**





## Service Provider Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

**1. What newcomer services do you provide in your current position? (Check all that apply)**

- General Settlement Services
- Employment / Job Development Services
- Language Training
- Literacy Basic Skills
- Community Information & Resources
- Manage / Oversee Day-to-Day Operations
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**2. In what capacity do you provide these services?**

- Information Specialist
- Employment Counsellor / Job Developer
- Administrative Staff
- Management Staff
- Language Instructor
- Literacy Basic Skills Instructor
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**3. How many years have you worked in this position?**

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 5 years
- More than 5 years

**4. Gender:**

- Male
- Female

2



## Service Provider Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

**5. Highest level of education:**

High School

College Diploma/Certificate

University Degree

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What do you feel are the biggest challenges for newcomers?**

a) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. In your view, are services provided to newcomers in Etobicoke:**

1  
Too many

2  
Enough

3  
Not enough

4  
Too few

**Please explain.**

3



## Service Provider Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

8. How would you rate the quality of the services provided to newcomers in Etobicoke?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Not very good	Good	Very good	Excellent

Why do you think so? Please comment.

9. Do you feel you would benefit from further training related to your job?

- Yes
- No

10. If yes, what additional training would assist you in your current position? *(Check all that apply)*

- Employment / Labour Market Information
- Educational Programs
- Professional Licensing and Regulatory Bodies
- Housing Options and Availability
- Child Care Programs and Availability
- Canada's Immigration Law and Immigration Classes
- Labour Laws and Workers' Rights
- Multiculturalism
- Information, Needs Assessment and Referral
- Crisis Identification and Counselling
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



## Service Provider Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

**11. Please list 3 things that, in your view, make an individual a good worker in the field of newcomer services:**

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Please, check the top 3 work activities on which you spend the most time.**

- Client Intake/Assessment
- Providing Referrals
- Maintaining client records and case notes
- Participating in staff meetings
- Case Management
- Outreach
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**13. In general, are you satisfied with your job?**

- |    |          |     |      |
|----|----------|-----|------|
| 1  | 2        | 3   | 4    |
| No | Somewhat | Yes | Very |

**Additional/Other Comments**

- Writing reports
- Case Management
- Outreach
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**14. In general, are you satisfied with your job?**

- |    |          |     |      |
|----|----------|-----|------|
| 1  | 2        | 3   | 4    |
| No | Somewhat | Yes | Very |

**Additional/Other Comments**

**Thank You!**





## Service Provider Executive Survey

The Central South Etobicoke Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is a collaboration of local service providers, residents and employers, whose mission is to create a cohesive and responsive service delivery network that all newcomers to Canada can navigate quickly and successfully.

**Your involvement is considered vital** in achieving this mission because, as a service provider, you:

- Create the positive environment for newcomers that forms the foundation for their successful settlement and integration into the area;
- Provide valuable input for the improvement of services in this area; and
- Have a direct impact on newcomer settlement and integration.

For the above reasons, we appreciate your willingness to complete this short survey. We will use the information gathered in the development of newcomer and employer services.

**The attached survey is anonymous and confidential.  
We do not require your name or the name of your organization**

### Directions:

1. You can complete the survey by hand, typed or online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QYXFXZ>.
2. Return typed or hand written responses using the provided self-addressed envelope, or mail to:  

Denise Randell,  
Central South Etobicoke LIP,  
41 Chauncey Avenue,  
Toronto, ON, M8Z 2Z2.
3. This survey expires Tuesday August 31, 2010.
4. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact :  

Avril White, LIP Manager  
at 416-253-2709

**Thank you for your participation!**



## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

### A. Organization Description

1. Which of the following services does your organization provide? (mark all that apply)

- Employment Assistance
- Social Support Services
- Health Services
- Needs assessment and referral
- Housing Services
- Language Training
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Would you describe your organization as one that provides settlement/integration services to newcomers to Canada?

- Yes
- No

3. Does your organization have a specific target group for the services you provide? (mark all that apply)

- Females
- Males
- Families
- Seniors
- Children
- Youth
- Newcomers
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2



## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

**4. What does your organization base its program development and/or enhancement on?**

- Community Consultation
- Funders objectives
- Organization mission/goals
- Identified priority needs
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Does your organization have community linkages or partnerships?**

- Yes
- No

**6. Do you have links with similar organization in other cities for information sharing?**

- Yes (please describe below)
- No

**7. Do you feel your organization has adequate information available to them about other services available in the area?**

- Yes
- No

**8. Does your organization refer clients to other organizations?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure



## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

9. How do you monitor client referrals and ensure clients have received relevant and up to date information?

### B. Funding, Accessibility and Perceived Gaps

10. On a scale from 1 to 7, please rank the importance of the following types of funding for your organization (where 1 = most important source of funding and 7 = least important source of funding).

Rank (1-7)	Source of Funding
	Federal Government
	Charity and Community Foundations
	Private Donations
	Municipal Government
	Provincial Government
	Corporate Sponsorship
	Other (please specify)

11. Where are your services located?

4





## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

**12. Do any of the following barriers restrict clients from accessing your services?**

- Transportation
  - Childcare
  - Financial cost
  - Language
  - Time when service is available
  - Awareness of service
  - Other (please specify)
- 

**13. Please list and explain the top three gaps you see in service delivery in the community**

1.
2.
3.

5



## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

**14. In your opinion what would you suggest to close these gaps?**

**15. What outreach strategies have your organization used to increase awareness and access to your services?**

**16. How do you encourage implementation of these outreach strategies?**

6



## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

17. Please describe the follow-up process (if any) used for clients after they have completed their initial service.

18. In what time frame does your organization provide follow-up?

19. What is the anticipated outcome(s) of the services provided by your organization?

7



## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

20. How is the effectiveness of services evaluated at your organization?

--

21. Please list and briefly describe the top two strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to your organization?

<b>STRENGTHS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION</b>	
1.	2.
<b>WEAKNESSES OF YOUR ORGANIZATION</b>	
1.	2.
<b>OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION IN THE FUTURE</b>	
1.	2.
<b>THREATS TO YOUR ORGANIZATION IN THE FUTURE</b>	
1.	2.

8



## Service Provider Executive Survey

Central South Etobicoke LIP

If you are interested in participating further or learning more about the Central South Etobicoke Local Immigration Partnership please provide the following optional information. This information will remain strictly confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than to contact you regarding upcoming LIP initiatives:

CONTACT INFORMATION		
Name:	Organization:	
Address:	City:	Postal Code:
Telephone:	Fax:	Email:

THANK YOU!





## Employer Survey

The Central South Etobicoke Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is a collaboration of local service providers, residents and employers, whose mission is to create a cohesive and responsive service delivery network that all newcomers to Canada can navigate quickly and successfully.

**Your involvement is considered vital** in achieving this mission because, as an employer, you:

- Create the positive employment results for newcomers that forms the foundation for their successful settlement and integration into the area;
- Provide valuable input for the design of employment programs, **that directly benefits employers in their hiring and retention efforts**; and
- Have direct impact on both the local and Canadian economy.

For the above reasons, we appreciate your willingness to complete this short employer survey. We will use the information gathered in the development of newcomer and employer services.

**The attached survey is anonymous and confidential.  
We do not require your name or the name of your business.  
The information you provide will not be used for any purpose other than determining  
how we can improve employment services in Central South Etobicoke.**

### Directions:

1. You can complete the survey by hand, typed or online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QYXFXZ>;
2. Return typed or hand written responses using the provided self-addressed envelope, or mail to:  

Denise Randell,  
Central South Etobicoke LIP,  
41 Chauncey Avenue,  
Toronto, ON, M8Z 2Z2.
3. This survey expires Tuesday August 31, 2010.
4. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact:  

Avril White, LIP Manager  
at 416-253-2709

**Thank you for your participation!**



## Employer Survey

**1. Is your organization/company part of the private or public sector?**

Private

Public

**2. Please indicate the type of company or organization you represent (mark all that apply).**

Corporation

Small business

Mid-size business

Government funded

Non-profit

Educational institution

Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. What industry is your company/organization in?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. What is your role in the organization/company? (mark all that apply)**

Owner

Hiring manager

HR representative

Supervisor

Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. How many employees does your company or organization employ?**

Full time employees \_\_\_\_\_

Part time employees \_\_\_\_\_

2.



## Employer Survey

**6. What are your priorities when hiring new staff? (please list and explain)**

**7. Does your organization/company currently employ newcomers to Canada (persons in Canada for 5 years or less)?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**8. If your organization employs newcomers, is there a diversity strategy in place?**

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

**9. What concerns, if any, do you have in hiring newcomers? (mark all that apply)**

- Language level
- Communication skills
- Lack of relevant experience
- Difficulty in contacting and/or checking references
- Unsure of educational credentials
- No concerns
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3.





## Employer Survey

**10. What information regarding newcomers to Canada would your organization be interested in receiving?**

**11. What type of training or skills development for newcomers would better prepare them for employment in your industry? (mark all that apply)**

- Language training
- Orientation to Canadian job culture
- Customer service skills
- Computer skills
- Other (please specify)

---

**12. Would workshops and/or other services supports be of interest to your organization in addressing any concerns regarding hiring newcomers?**

- Yes
- No

**If yes, please list the topics or support types you would like to be made available to you:**

4.



## Employer Survey

**13. How would you like to be provided with information on the topics you listed above?**

- Half / full day workshop
- On-line workshop delivery
- Mail / email
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Not applicable / not interested at this

**14. Would your organization like to participate in an internship or career matching program that provides internationally trained newcomers with Canadian and/or volunteer experience?**

- Yes
- No
- No

**15. Would you or someone in your organization be interested in getting more information about the Central South Etobicoke LIP and how its member agencies can assist you in meeting your hiring needs?**

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

CONTACT INFORMATION		
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Company:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	<b>City:</b>	<b>Postal Code:</b>
<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>

**THANK YOU!**

5.



## Appendix G – Employer Interview Question Guide

### Central South Etobicoke

### Local Immigration Partnership

### DRAFT Questions for Employers (to be conducted via telephone interviews)

August 19, 2010

*Explanation about the LIP project and its goals.*

*Confidentially clause -- All of the information I discuss with you today is **completely confidential**. No names or identifying information from this interview will be used in any way.*

1. How does your company currently recruit and hire new staff for your workplace?
2. Have you hired any newcomers in the last few years?
  - If you have hired newcomers, can you give one or two reasons why you chose to hire a newcomer?
  - What have been the results of hiring a newcomer?
3. What positions in your company are you currently hiring for?
  - a. What positions are you hiring for in the next 6 months?
  - b. What positions are you hiring for in the next year?
4. Many employers say that they need employees that have good soft skills including communication skills, listening skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills, negotiating and customer service skills.
  - a. Do you agree with this?
  - b. What is missing from this list of essential workplace skills?
5. What are the top hiring challenges that you face?
6. What would make your hiring processes for newcomers easier (i.e. resume screening, workplace English language training, knowledge of newcomers supports near your workplace, understanding international education/credentials, language levels etc.)
7. Are there any comments or questions that you have for me?

**Thank you for taking the time to give me feedback.**



LIP Partners

Lead Agency:



The Arab Community Centre of Toronto  
مركز الجالية العربية في تورنتو



2383 BLOOR ST. WEST, 2ND FLOOR, TORONTO, ON M6S 1P6  
www.guias.org T: 416.767.4595 F: 416-767-2658



Hormood  
Community Services of Canada



- VESA -  
Vital Enrichment  
Services Association



Central South Etobicoke Local Immigrant Partnership



**Central South Etobicoke  
Local Immigration Partnership**

**41 Chauncey Avenue  
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M8Z 2Z2**

**416-231-2295 ext. 3257**

**Email: [info@etobicokelip.ca](mailto:info@etobicokelip.ca)**

**[www.EtobicokeLIP.ca](http://www.EtobicokeLIP.ca)**



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