



IMMIGRATION  
**PARTNERSHIP**  
Settle. Work. Belong.

# Collaborating in Research: Waterloo Region *“Immigration Matters”* survey of immigrants

P2P 2019 LIP Preconference  
October 30, 2019

INSPIRING  
IMMIGRATION  
CONNECTIONS  
IN WATERLOO  
REGION





**1. Collaboration is critical in research.  
We need collaboration because we  
can't do as much as we want to on  
our own.**



# Waterloo Region Immigration Profile



## Service Use: Languages & Countries of Origin

This profile provides an overview of the languages and countries of and refugees accessing services in Waterloo Region in 2018. Data from seven service providers that support newcomers.<sup>1</sup> It is meant to assist and groups in planning services to respond to demographic shifts in the newcomer population.

### Top Languages of Service

While each of the seven local organizations served different types of immigrant, refugees, refugee claimants, etc.) there was overlap in the top languages of service requested by their clients.<sup>2</sup> The most common top languages of service or intake organizations were:

1. Arabic
2. Tigrinya
3. Spanish
4. Amharic
5. Farsi/Persian
6. Somali
7. Mandarin

Other languages mentioned were: Punjabi, Turkish, Serbian, Dari, Swahili, Kurdish, Vietnamese, Gujarati, Burmese, Ojibwa, Afar, Belarussian, French, Korean, Chinese languages were spoken by anywhere from several hundred clients who spoke Arabic organizations to a handful of clients that spoke some of the latter languages.<sup>3</sup>

The 2018 Immigration Partnership (IP) Partner Survey also asked about top languages almost 40 local organizations shared a similar list of the top languages requested. The top seven languages were the same, with the remaining languages including noted above as well as Cantonese, Korean, Nepali and Shona.

According to the 2016 Census, there were over 120,000 residents of Waterloo Region who are not English or French. While many of them have also learned one of the languages, there were more than 9,000 Waterloo Region residents who were not in English or French. The languages with the largest number of individuals in Waterloo Region who did not



## Partner Survey 2018 Final Report

The Immigration Partnership of Waterloo Region collaboratively develop and implement integration of immigrants and refugees. Our public sector representatives, employers, and address organizational, systems, and policies in our community.

This report outlines findings from the IP Partner Survey Evaluation Strategy, which aims to understand the experiences of refugees in Waterloo Region and how the Partnership can better support them.

### Summary of Findings

In 2018, partners were quite committed to the integration of immigrants and refugees. Partners experienced many benefits from being engaged, more collaboration was occurring and immigrants and refugees in 2018 compared the persistent challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees that we continue to engage in through the IP.

- **High Engagement:** Partners are highly engaged in their involvement in IP was a source of success and challenges.
- **Affirmation of Immigration Partnership:** Partnership is focused on the critical issue of integration of immigrants and refugees and a catalyst for effective change and a valuable resource.
- **Increased Knowledge:** Partners are consistently increasing their knowledge of immigrant/refugee needs and available resources.
- **Increased Collaboration:** There was significant collaboration between partners and received more support and resources.
- **Increasingly Meeting Needs:** The majority of refugees have been better met in the last year, they are somewhat less likely to suggest more programs. This had changed somewhat from where employment and skills training programs.

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## Public Perceptions of Immigration in Waterloo Region

### Background

In June 2018, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada in discussion with Local Immigration Partnerships across Canada delivered the presentation "Support for Immigration: Public Opinion and How it Informs Our Approach."<sup>1</sup> It was discussed that around the world, Canadians remain among the most accepting of immigrants.<sup>2</sup> It was noted that in current public opinion research public views on immigration in Canada continue to be mostly positive but that some polarization of opinion is taking place; in particular a decrease in the perceived positive impact of immigration as scope narrows from all of Canada to one's neighbourhood.

The Environics Institute for Survey Research report "Focus Canada – Spring 2019: Canadian public opinion about immigration and refugees" states: "Overall, Canadians' views about immigrants and refugees have held remarkably steady since last fall, and in a few cases have become more positive. As before, there is no public consensus on the presence and impact of immigrants and refugees, with significant segments of the population holding opposing views [...]. Opinions are more evenly divided when it comes to concerns about too many immigrants not adopting the right values and some refugees not being legitimate; but in these cases the balance of opinion has held steady if not improved slightly in the past six months."<sup>3</sup>

To better understand local opinions, the Immigration Partnership commissioned research on public perceptions of immigration in Waterloo Region. Data was gathered through the 2019 Waterloo Region Matters Survey, a mixed-mode survey conducted by the University of Waterloo's Survey Research Centre.<sup>4</sup> Results present a snapshot of public opinion at this time and may change.

### Survey Results

Results show similar trends in Waterloo Region as have been seen in Canada-wide surveys on public perceptions of immigration. Opinions tend to be quite positive related to questions focused on the community conditions and benefits of immigration, whereas they become less positive related to questions focused on the actions of immigrants and refugees and supports to them.

<sup>1</sup> Presentation on file with the Immigration Partnership.

<sup>2</sup> Gallup, World Poll 2016.

<sup>3</sup> See: [https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/focus-canada-spring-2019/environics-institute-focus-canada-spring-2019-survey-on-immigration-and-refugees-final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=8dd2597f\\_2](https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/focus-canada-spring-2019/environics-institute-focus-canada-spring-2019-survey-on-immigration-and-refugees-final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=8dd2597f_2).

<sup>4</sup> See: <https://uwaterloo.ca/survey-research-centre/>, DOCS#3007975

May 2019

# “Immigration Matters” survey

- Demographics
- Use of local services  
*(settlement, interpretation, English language learning, housing, employment, health, legal, small business/entrepreneurial supports, etc.)*
- Sense of belonging, isolation, discrimination
- Top challenges, what was most helpful, top suggestions to better support the settling, working and belonging

# Immigration Matters Waterloo Region Survey

We want to hear from you about the welcoming, integration and wellbeing of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.

This survey is intended for any immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region. This includes people living in Waterloo Region who are Canadian citizens, permanent residents, temporary residents or foreign nationals.

The Immigration Partnership will use the survey results to guide how organizations work together and improve services to best support immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.

Please complete this survey by July 9. It will take about 10-15 minutes. You can return it to the Immigration Partnership, (235 King St. E., 6th floor, Kitchener, N2G 4N5) or [ImmigrationPartnership@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:ImmigrationPartnership@regionofwaterloo.ca).



All the information you provide in the survey will remain anonymous and confidential. Only the survey staff will have access to the information. You do not have to provide your name or any contact information to fill out this survey. People who complete this survey can choose to enter their name and email address into a draw for a prize. If you provide this information, your name and email will remain confidential and will only be used for the draw. They will not be connected to your survey answers. Completing the survey is voluntary and you can skip any question you do not want to answer.

## Section A: Basic Information

### 1. Which of the following best describes you?

- ☐ I immigrated to Canada as an economic-category immigrant
- ☐ I immigrated to Canada as a family-category immigrant
- ☐ I immigrated to Canada as a government assisted refugee
- ☐ I immigrated to Canada as a privately sponsored refugee (including BVOR – Blended Visa Office Referred)
- ☐ I am currently in Canada as a temporary resident (refugee claimant)
- ☐ I am currently in Canada as a temporary resident (international student)
- ☐ I am currently in Canada as a temporary resident (on a temporary work visa)
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_





# Top challenges for immigrants

	% responses
Finding work	46%
Finding affordable housing	29%
Making friends or social connections	26%
Learning English	23%
Learning where and how to do things	20%
Transportation	15%
Accessing health care	13%
Making sure my kids are okay at school and in the community	13%
Discrimination/racism	10%
Receiving public or social services	9%



# What helped immigrants most?

	% responses
<b>Making friends</b>	40%
<b>Having family support</b>	37%
<b>Finding work</b>	24%
<b>Volunteering</b>	23%
<b>Community programs and services</b>	21%
<b>Belonging to a religious group</b>	19%
<b>Being involved in a cultural association or connection with others that share your background or language</b>	17%
<b>Settlement worker</b>	13%
<b>Other community group</b>	5%

## **2. Collaborating is valuable and enables us to start several steps ahead**





## SLIDO POLL:

Has your LIP recently been involved or do you anticipate being involved in research with any of the following?

- A. Immigrants
- B. LIP partners or organizations serving immigrants
- C. Employers
- D. General public
- E. None of the above
- F. Not sure

# **3. What more could we do? What could facilitate further research collaboration between LIPs?**

# SLIDO POLL: How could you best benefit from other LIPs research experience?

- A. Templates of similar survey/interview questions
- B. Final report examples to see how similar data was analyzed/reported or to compare with your findings
- C. General advice/tips (planning, promotion, analysis, use of the findings, etc.) from others that have done similar projects
- D. Having others who have done similar projects provide feedback on your tools, plans, findings, etc.
- E. NONE of the above would be very useful for me



To access any of our reports:  
[www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/factsheets](http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/factsheets)

Dan Vandebelt  
[dvandebelt@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:dvandebelt@regionofwaterloo.ca)

