

2020 Partner Survey Reference Report

The Immigration Partnership of Waterloo Region (IP) is a collective of community partners that collaboratively develop and implement strategies to create the conditions for immigrants to succeed and help build a welcoming, dynamic community. Over 100 community service, business, municipal and post-secondary organizations and Waterloo Region residents are engaged to address organizational, systems and policy issues that affect immigrants in our community.

This report outlines findings from the IP Partner Survey conducted in October 2020. It is part of IP's Evaluation Strategy, which aims to understand the settlement and community integration of immigrants in Waterloo Region and how the collaborative work of the Partnership is contributing to their success.

Summary of Findings

- **IP is representative of the community in many areas but not all:**
 - There were 87 respondents that well-represented IP Council, all three steering groups and action committees.
 - 40% of respondents were born outside of Canada.
 - Respondents were at least as prevalent as in the general population for various racial/ethnic groups, including: Black, Southeast Asian and Latin American – but not for White, Chinese, South Asian and several smaller groups.
 - 6% of respondents identified as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and 6% were living with a disability or chronic illness.
 - Respondents were at least as prevalent as in the general population for Muslim and Sikh faith communities and for those that are not a member of a faith community.
 - Survey responses were disaggregated to understand how responses differ or not for immigrant or for racialized respondents. Many differences were found, but further exploration is needed to understand trends and underlying reasons. This is a step in our continuous process of collaborative learning and action.
- **High engagement and collaboration, but there are cracks – significantly influenced by the current pandemic:**
 - Partners remain highly engaged in and committed to the Immigration Partnership. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in upheaval, overwhelming demands and required new ways of relating and this has resulted in some strains. In many areas measured over the last few years, partners did not express as strong motivation, connectedness to others, awareness of services, or coordination as in 2019 before the pandemic.

- Two of the three top challenges for agencies serving newcomers were: serving clients virtually during the pandemic and being able to reach clients when in-person connections were not possible. Language barriers rounded out the top three challenges.
- Over the past year, immigrant-serving partners were more likely to have served fewer newcomers than in the past (though half of respondents still served the same number and a quarter of respondents served more clients). Looking forward, partners spoke of budget concerns, continued virtual service delivery challenges, and uncertainty about pandemic implications.
- **Partners affirmed Immigration Partnership directions:**
 - Partners remained convinced that the Immigration Partnership is focused on the critical issues for immigrants in Waterloo Region, and is a catalyst for effective change and a valuable source of information. There was a high level of affirmation that IP is achieving its mission.
- **Some but not all areas are increasingly meeting immigrant needs:**
 - The majority of partners felt that the needs of immigrants are increasingly being met – particularly in the areas of interpretation/translation, settlement services, education and English language learning programs. They are less likely to suggest that needs were better met in the areas of housing, legal services, other community services, and small business/entrepreneurial supports.
 - The pandemic was frequently mentioned as a contributing factor for either areas of strength or concern.
 - The pandemic resulted in many changes – different client needs, some seeing fewer new arrivals, or organizational changes to respond to new needs and norms.
- **Pandemic-related challenges are prominent – with variety of suggested changes:**
 - As in previous years, partners indicated that the top challenges for immigrants were finding work and accessing affordable housing. Being socially isolated was a new option this year and was recognized as the next most common challenge along with learning English – areas that cover the three pillars of Immigration Partnership focus.
 - Looking to the coming year, partners anticipate several additional or exacerbated challenges for newcomers - mental health/wellness struggles, economic/social disparity and difficulties with virtual service delivery.
 - Partners indicated that several critical changes that would help newcomers, including: more affordable housing options, a central place for employers and workers to find employment matches, educating employers on the value and ways of hiring and retaining immigrants, and helping improve social connectedness. In general, the top suggestions are similar to those suggested a year earlier.
- **Partners are taking action to address racism and IP leadership and support is welcomed in this area:**
 - With increased attention to anti-racism in IPs new Community Action Plan and across the community, the survey asked a number of questions in this area.
 - Almost half of respondents came from organizations/groups that had an anti-racism policy with a slightly smaller proportion being in the process of developing/updating one. Only 14% did not have an anti-racism policy.
 - Organizations were undertaking many other activities to address racism – from staff training/learning, a diversity committee or staff position, or focused outreach or support to diverse groups.
 - Partners look to the Immigration Partnership to lead and support them (including supporting training/resources), involvement in community-wide change, increased public awareness – as well as making the link between immigration and anti-racism.

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Detailed Data Analysis

- Data was collected in October 2020; a survey invitation was sent to all members of Immigration Partnership Council, Steering Groups and Working Groups, as well as subscribers to the Immigration Waterloo Region Weekly email updates. (Survey tool: <http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/partnersurvey2020>)
- 87 responses (an increase from 70 in 2019 and 61 in 2018).

The sections below include disaggregation of the survey results by immigrant status and racialized status where there were clear differences between total responses and immigrant-only or racialized-only responses (difference of >10%). Obvious differences were also noted between 2020 survey findings and those of similar surveys in 2017-2019.

Section 1: Demographics

1. What is your connection to the Immigration Partnership? (n=87¹)

- 75% - I am a member of the IP Council, one of the Steering Groups (Settle, Work or Belong) or subcommittees
- 13% - I am not a member of an IP committee but receive information from IP regularly
- 6% - I am an IP staff member
- 7% - Other, please specify (Responses included that they work at a local partner organization, friend of someone that is on IP committee, etc.)

2. What is your involvement with the Immigration Partnership? (Select all that apply) (n=70)

- When combining steering groups and their subcommittees² the total respondents involved in each pillar are:
 - 16 for Council and committees of Council
 - 21 for the Settle pillar
 - 18 for the Work pillar
 - 17 for the Belong pillar
- 7 respondents - Other
 - Overall, 37% of Council, Steering Group and Action Group partners were immigrants. This includes 25% of Council respondents, 57% of Settle, 44% of Work, and 18% of the Belong pillar. This compares to 23% of Waterloo Region's general population, according to the 2016 census.
 - Overall, 23% of Council, Steering Group and Action Group partners identified as a member of a racialized group. This includes 25% of Council respondents, 14% of Settle, 39% of Work, and 18% of the Belong pillar. This compares to 19% of Waterloo Region's general population, according to the 2016 census.

3. How long have you been involved with or had a connection with the Immigration Partnership?

(n=67, only asked of members of IP committees)

- 19% - Less than 1 year
- 21% - 1 to 2 years
- 22% - 3 to 4 years
- 37% - 5 years or more

4. Approximately how many Immigration Partnership in-person or virtual meetings have you attended in the past 12 months (steering group, action group, Council, etc.)? (n=68, only asked of members of IP committees)

- 0% - zero
- 15% - 1-2
- 25% - 3-4
- 46% - 5-9

¹ The "n=_" after each question indicates the total number of responses to that particular question.

² Involvement only includes committee members and not staff members that support those committees.

- 15% - 10+

5. Are you completing this survey as a...? Note: If you are part of the Immigration Partnership on behalf of an organization, group or business, please respond to this survey in that capacity. (Select all that apply) (n=68, only asked of members of IP committees)

- 47% - Service provider to immigrants, refugees, international students, refugee claimants, temporary foreign workers, etc.
- 13% - Government representative
- 4% - Private sector employer
- 19% - Public sector employer
- 7% - Community member
- 12% - Other, please specify (Responses included various organizations/affiliations that did not fit clearly into the other categories.)

6. Which of the following describes you? (n=85) *[All demographic questions were optional]*

- 60% - I was born in Canada
- 36% - I am a permanent resident or have become a citizen of Canada
- 4% - I am a temporary resident of Canada (international student, temporary worker, refugee claimant, etc.)
- 0% - Other, please specify
 - 70% of racialized respondents indicated they were immigrants

7. Which of the following best describes how you came to Canada? (n=31, only asked of those not born in Canada)

- 45% - I came to Canada as an economic-category immigrant
- 32% - I came to Canada as a family-category immigrant
- 0% - I came to Canada as a government assisted refugee
- 3% - I came to Canada as a privately sponsored refugee (including BVOR – blended visa office referred)
- 3% - I came to Canada as an international student
- 0% - I came to Canada as a temporary worker
- 13% - I came to Canada as a refugee claimant
- 10% - Other, please specify
 - While there is not a data source which consistently brings together local data on permanent and temporary immigration for comparison to survey responses above, according to the Census, 42% of permanent residents arrived as economic immigrants, 29% as family category immigrants and 28% as refugees between 1980 and 2016.

As part of the Immigration Partnership's [Anti-Racism Commitment](#), we collected data to more fully understand the degree to which the Immigration Partnership reflects the diversity of our community and the degree of alignment between the feedback of immigrant/racialized respondents and non-immigrant/racialized respondents.

8. Which racial identity best describes you? (Select all that apply.) (n=85)

- 5% - Black (compared to 3% of the overall population in the 2016 census)
- 0% - Arab (compared to 1%)
- 0% - West Asian (compared to <1%)
- 2% - Chinese (compared to 3%)
- 0% - Filipino (compared to <1%)
- 0% - Japanese (compared to <1%)
- 0% - Korean (compared to <1%)
- 2% - Southeast Asian (compared to 2%)
- 9% - Latin American (compared to 2%)
- 1% - South Asian (compared to 5%)
- 70% - White (compared to 79%)
- 0% - Indigenous (compared to 2%)

- 12% - Other, please specify³
- An additional 4 respondents indicated “Prefer not to answer”

In total: 26% of respondents were racialized (i.e. not White) with 66% White and 8% unknown

- 47% of immigrant respondents indicated they were from a racialized group
- The census included <1% of the general population that indicated multiple racial identities in a separate category, and had a much smaller “other” or not otherwise specifically noted category (<1%). As a result, a direct comparison is not possible but the comparisons listed above provide fairly accurate and useful contextual information.

9. Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community? (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning) (n=85)

- 6% - Yes
- 91% - No
- 4% - Prefer not to answer
 - It is difficult to compare these figures to the general population as there are widely varying estimates of the LGBTQ+ population depending on the data source and research method. The [Canadian Community Health Survey by Statistics Canada \(2014\)](#) estimated 3% of Canadians 18-59 years old consider themselves to be homosexual or bisexual. The [LGBT+ Realities Survey by Fondation Jasmin Roy \(2017\)](#) estimated the prevalence of LGBT communities at 13% of the general adult population. A recent article (Waite & Denier, 2019)⁴ reviewed US and Canadian research and population-based surveys and suggested the prevalence is between 2.3% and 5.8%, while highlighting significant research challenges with determining prevalence.

10. Are you living with a disability (physical or mental) or a chronic illness that limits your activity? (n=85)

- 6% - Yes
- 92% - No
- 2% - Prefer not to answer
 - According to the [Canadian Survey on Disability \(2017\) by Statistics Canada](#), 22% of Canadians age 15 years and older had one or more disabilities that limit them in their daily activities.

11. If you are a member of a faith community, please share which one: (n=84)

- 36% - Christian (compared to 68% in [Statistics Canada's National Household Survey \(2011\)](#))
- 10% - Muslim (compared to 4%)
- 0% - Jewish (compared to <1%)
- 0% - Hindu (compared to 1%)
- 1% - Sikh (compared to 1%)
- 48% - I am not a member of a faith community (compared to 25%)
- 6% - Prefer not to answer
- 2% - Other, please specify (Responses included additional details about faith connections)
 - Immigrant respondents were more likely to indicate they were part of a Muslim faith community (21%) and less likely to indicate they were not part of a faith community (36%)
 - Racialized respondents were more likely to indicate they were part of a Muslim faith community (21%) and less likely to indicate a connection to a Christian faith community (18%) or they were not part of a faith community (36%)

³ Q8 used the 2016 census by Statistics Canada to build the question response options. Responses included more detailed identity descriptions, and one comment about how the question options themselves were interesting.

⁴ Waite, S., & Denier, N. (2019). A Research Note on Canada's LGBT Data Landscape: Where We Are and What the Future Holds. *Canadian review of sociology = Revue canadienne de sociologie*, 56(1), 93–117. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cars.12232>

Section 2: Partner Engagement and Impact

12 & 13. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements as relates to your work with immigrants in Waterloo Region. (n=76)

In the past 12 months, as a result of our connection or collective work through the Immigration Partnership my organization or I ...

Questions 12 and 13 had a 5-option scale, including “A great deal”, “Quite a bit”, “Somewhat”, “A little bit” and “Not really”⁵. For comparison purposes, the table below includes those that agreed with each statement – totaling both the “A great deal” and “Quite a bit” responses for each item. The table compares 2020, where possible, to responses from past partner surveys. The table also disaggregates responses from immigrant and racialized respondents in 2020.

Partners that agree that in the past 12 months, as a result of their connection or collective work through the Immigration Partnership, they...	Historical Trends				2020 Immigrant Responses	2020 Racialized Responses
	2017	2018	2019	2020	Immigrant	Racialized
	Question 12					
Am committed to the success of the Immigration Partnership	n/a	98%	95%	93%	93%	90%
Have aligned our vision or activities with those of the Immigration Partnership	n/a	58%	75%	74%	65%	83%
Feel motivated to contribute and follow-through with actions of the Immigration Partnership	n/a	85%	93%	85%	83%	91%
Have aligned internal policies with those of the Immigration Partnership	n/a	51%	50%	44%	46%	63%
Have an increased awareness of the services offered in the community	62%	82%	92%	76%	79%	86%
Have increased knowledge of newcomer needs and service pathways	58%	74%	84%	73%	71%	90%
Make more or better referrals to other organizations	45%	68%	71%	56%	54%	71%
Receive more or better referrals from other organizations	29%	38%	34%	29%	42%	60%
Have entered new formal agreements with partners to better serve immigrants	n/a	37%	39%	25%	24%	46%
Have developed informal agreements with partners to better serve immigrants	n/a	50%	44%	34%	26%	50%
Work better with settlement agencies	42%	49%	65%	47%	57%	64%
Get better feedback about our services and programs from immigrant clients	41%	49%	51%	29%	32%	50%
Have implemented specific initiatives to support newcomer welcoming and inclusion	55%	71%	67%	41%	40%	69%
Work more collaboratively with other organizations	56%	74%	75%	63%	61%	68%
Have greater communication with other partners about immigrant needs/issues	60%	75%	83%	68%	64%	80%
Have greater coordination around immigrant needs/issues	48%	64%	72%	57%	46%	69%

⁵ See appendix B for detailed responses to questions 12 and 13.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	Immigrant	Racialized
Have acquired stronger abilities and tools for welcoming and responding to newcomer needs	48%	69%	67%	48%	38%	61%
Have promoted the Immigration Partnership in our networks	63%	83%	86%	76%	72%	90%
Have made changes to our organization that are positively impacting immigrants	45%	60%	67%	46%	33%	69%
Have made changes to our organization that are positively impacting the broader community	47%	66%	67%	48%	38%	60%
Question 13						
The Immigration Partnership is focused on the critical issues for immigrants in our community	n/a ⁶	98%	97%	88%	80%	95%
The Immigration Partnership is a catalyst for effective changes that help immigrants reach their full potential and help create and sustain a thriving community for everyone	n/a	92%	89%	84%	80%	90%
The Immigration Partnership is a valuable source of information about local needs and supports, in respect to immigrants	n/a	97%	97%	89%	83%	91%
Overall, we are achieving the IP Mission (“We work together to create the conditions for immigrants to succeed and help build a welcoming, dynamic community.”)	n/a	n/a	n/a	78%	83%	91%

- As seen in the above table, immigrant or racialized partners were less likely (in red) or more likely (in green) to note several challenges when compared to all respondents in 2020

Section 3: Anti-Racism Efforts

14 Does your organization have an anti-racism policy? (n=58 ⁷)

- 47% - Yes, we have an anti-racism policy
- 41% - My organization is currently developing or updating an anti-racism policy
- 14% - No, we don't have an anti-racism policy
 - Immigrant respondents were more likely to indicate their organizations had an anti-racism policy (59%) and less likely to say their organization is currently developing or updating the policy (32%)
 - Racialized respondents were more likely to indicate their organizations have an anti-racism policy (63%) and less likely to say their organization is currently developing or updating the policy (31%)

15 What other actions is your organization taking to combat racism, if any? (open-ended, n=43)

- Staff training/learning (17 responses)
- Diversity committee (10 responses)
- Hiring someone to coordinate/focus efforts (6 responses)
- Actively outreaching to and supporting diverse clients/groups (6 responses)
- Diversity audit/review or planning next steps (4 responses)
- Anti-racism commitment (4 responses)

⁶ Some questions were not asked, or not asked consistently, in previous years. Trends are not noted for these statements.

⁷ An additional 15 respondents noted that they were not sure or the question was not applicable.

- Supporting broader collaborative initiatives (3 responses)
- Hiring processes or census (3 responses)
- Data collection (3 responses)
- Board/strategic conversations (2 responses)
- Policy review/development (2 responses)
- Awareness campaign (2 responses)
- Diverse committees (1 response)
- Other (5 responses)

16 What would you like to see the Immigration Partnership doing to action its Anti-Racism Commitment? (open-ended, n=38)

- Lead and support IP partners regarding anti-racism, including training/resources (15 responses)
- Involvement in community-wide commitment/strategy/change (11 responses)
- Increase public awareness about anti-racism (9 responses)
- Increasing awareness of benefits of immigration and link to anti-racism (5 responses)
- Support local groups impacted by racism and working on anti-racism (5 responses)
- Other (4 responses)

17 How would your organization like to be supported in its anti-racism work by the Immigration Partnership? (open-ended, n=28)

- Learning, training, tools/resources (13 responses)
- Working collectively (3 responses)
- Ideas about how to respond (3 responses)
- Research and data (2 responses)
- Social media support (2 responses)
- Other (4 responses)

Section 4: Emerging Issues, Challenges and Solutions

18 Do you/your organization provide services to immigrants? (n=67)

- 68% - Yes
- 20% - No
- 3% - Unsure
 - An additional 7 respondents noted “Not applicable”

19 What is the estimated number of immigrant clients your organization served in the last 12 months? (n=67)

- 16% - 1-99
- 8% - 100-199
- 24% - 200-499
- 8% - 500-999
- 18% - 1000+
- 24% - Not sure or not applicable

20 In the last 12 months, has your organization served: (n=44)

- 23% - fewer immigrants/refugees, compared to past years
- 50% - about the same number of immigrants/refugees, compared to past years
- 27% - more immigrants/refugees, compared to past years
 - Immigrant respondents were less likely to indicate their organization served fewer immigrants/refugees in the past year (12%)
 - Racialized respondents were less likely to indicate their organization served fewer immigrants/refugees in the past year (10%) and more likely to say they served more immigrants/refugees (40%)

- **Trends:** In 2020, respondents were more likely to have served fewer immigrants/refugees (3% in 2019) and less likely to be serving more clients (57%)

21 Briefly highlight any significant change in the immigrant population served by your organization in the past 12 months (i.e. number of clients served, immigration category, countries of origin, languages, English knowledge, education/employment, etc.). (open-ended, n=25)

- Different client needs/questions (6 responses)
- Decreased arrivals or fewer people using services (6 responses)
- Different countries of origin or languages (4 responses)
- Organizational ability to respond/serve/outreach (4 responses)
- Seeing clients from different immigration categories (3 responses)
- Increased number of clients served (2 responses)
- Other (5 responses)

22 What is your biggest challenge in serving immigrants in Waterloo Region? (Select all that apply) (n=48)

Partners that agree that in the past 12 months, as a result of their connection or collective work through the Immigration Partnership, they...	Historical Trends		2020 Immigrant Responses	2020 Racialized Responses
	2019	2020	Immigrant	Racialized
Serving clients virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic	n/a ⁸	58%	47%	67%
Language barriers	53%	48%	41%	58%
Outreach to clients during the COVID-19 pandemic	n/a	46%	35%	58%
System issues	58%	38%	29%	42%
Complexity of client needs	45%	35%	47%	33%
Program eligibility restrictions (e.g. based on immigration status)	29%	29%	29%	33%
Workload	32%	29%	24%	25%
Racism/discrimination towards immigrants and refugees	32%	21%	12%	42%
Cultural barriers	34%	21%	18%	33%
Lack of funding	61%	21%	29%	17%
Lack of coordination between agencies	24%	21%	12%	17%
Lack of collaboration between agencies	26%	10%	12%	17%
Intercultural conflict	11%	2%	6%	8%
Other, please specify⁹	16%	4%	12%	8%

- As seen in the above table, immigrant or racialized partners were less likely (in red) or more likely (in green) to note several challenges when compared to all respondents in 2020
- **Trends:** In 2020, COVID related challenges were significant – two new challenges were added that specifically related to the pandemic and were near the top of the list. Language barriers also remained in the top three.

23 Briefly highlight any significant anticipated changes, demographic shifts, or emerging issues in the coming year. (open-ended, n=31)

- Employment challenges (6 responses)
- Decreased (or uncertain) number of arrivals due to pandemic, closed borders, etc. (5 responses)
- Budget concerns (5 responses)

⁸ Two new options related to the COVID-19 pandemic were added in 2020. As a result, comparisons to 2019 should be made with caution. The 2019 figures are included for contextual information to understand more general shifts only.

⁹ An additional 2 respondents noted "Not applicable"

- Mental health/wellness struggles (4 responses)
- More international students (3 responses)
- Increased discussion about racism, racialized communities (3 responses)
- Continued virtual service delivery challenges (2 responses)
- Increased economic/social disparity (2 responses)
- Other (10 responses)

24 Are the needs of immigrants in Waterloo Region being met better in the past 12 months compared to previous years, in the areas below? (n=57)

	2020 Total	2020 Immigrant Responses	2020 Racialized Responses
Interpretation/translation services (n=38)	84%	88%	82%
Settlement services (n=41)	83%	94%	92%
Health services (n=38)	76%	89%	83%
Education services (n=41)	74%	83%	85%
Other community services (including public services, community centres, arts and culture spaces, libraries, etc.) (n=45)	73%	89%	83%
Mental health services (n=38)	68%	71%	82%
English language learning programs (n=41)	68%	88%	69%
Employment and/or skills training programs (n=46)	67%	72%	69%
Small business/entrepreneurial supports (n=35)	63%	60%	50%
Legal services (n=34)	59%	69%	64%
Housing services (n=41)	49%	65%	55%

- As seen in the above table, immigrant or racialized partners were less likely (in red) or more likely (in green) to note several challenges when compared to all respondents in 2020. See Appendix B for all responses to this question.
- The areas where respondents were most likely to indicate that things were getting much better were in Interpretation/translation services (29% of respondents), Settlement services (29%), English language learning programs (22%), Education services (19%) and Employment and/or skills training programs (17%). On the other hand, the areas where respondents were most likely to indicate that things were getting worse were in Housing services (17%), Other community services (13%), English language learning programs (10%), Legal services (9%) and Employment and/or skills training programs (7%)
- Trends: In 2020, the question was revised to include “getting worse” so direct comparisons to 2019 findings are not possible. However, the most highly rated areas in 2019 were somewhat similar (Interpretation/translation, Settlement, and English language learning) as were the lower rated areas (Housing, Small business/entrepreneurial supports, and Legal Services).

25 If you have any comments or differentiating factors to share regarding the above question, please explain here. (open-ended, n=20)

- COVID made many areas more challenging (7 responses)
- Specific factors for individual sectors (4 responses)
- Collaboration (2 responses)
- Difficult to compare to past years or unsure (6 responses)

26 Do you think immigrants have more easily been able to contribute to creating and sustaining a thriving community in the past 12 months compared to previously? (n=61)

- 18% - No
- 69% - Not sure
- 13% - Yes. If yes, please share a specific example: (7 respondents shared examples – see Appendix for comments)

27 What are the top 3 challenges that immigrants currently face in Waterloo Region? (n=63)

	Historical Trends		2020 Immigrant Responses	2020 Racialized Responses
	2019	2020	Immigrant	Racialized
Finding work	79%	71%	82%	82%
Finding affordable housing	72%	62%	64%	59%
Being socially isolated	n/a ¹⁰	29%	27%	24%
Learning English	40%	29%	41%	29%
Discrimination/racism	19%	21%	18%	35%
Learning where and how to do things	9%	16%	9%	24%
Making friends or social connections	35%	14%	9%	12%
Accessing mental health care	14%	11%	14%	6%
Accessing health care	12%	8%	9%	6%
Receiving public or social services (e.g. settlement services, government services, etc)	5%	6%	5%	0%
Making sure my kids are okay at school and in the community	0%	6%	5%	6%
Accessing and using technology/internet	n/a	6%	14%	12%
Public opinion	0%	5%	0%	6%
Getting information they need in a language they understand	n/a	5%	0%	0%
Accessing relevant programming in local community centres, arts & culture spaces, libraries, etc.	2%	2%	0%	0%
Starting a new business	5%	2%	5%	0%
Transportation	5%	0%	0%	0%
Other, please specify¹¹	2%	5%	0%	0%

- As seen in the above table, immigrant or racialized partners were less likely (in red) or more likely (in green) to note several challenges when compared to all respondents in 2020
- Partners indicated that the top challenges facing immigrants in Waterloo Region related to finding work, accessing affordable housing, being social connected and learning English –spanning all three IP Pillar focus areas.

¹⁰ Some of the above options were new in 2020. Trends are not noted for these items.

¹¹ Respondents noted Other responses of: “all the above”, “finding work connected to the skill sets and training they bring”, and “one place to access all information”

28 What are the top 3 changes that could be made to enable immigrants to reach their full potential and help create and sustain a thriving community for everyone in Waterloo Region? (n=64)

	Historical Trends		2020 Immigrant Responses	2020 Racialized Responses
	2019	2020	Immigrant	Racialized
More affordable housing options	66%	63%	73%	65%
A central place for employers to find immigrant and refugee workers and where workers can find employment opportunities	23%	34%	45%	35%
Educate employers on the value and ways of hiring and retaining immigrants and refugees	25%	22%	9%	35%
Actions to improve the social connectedness of immigrants and refugees	25%	22%	23%	18%
Actions to reduce racism and discrimination towards immigrants and refugees	20%	20%	14%	18%
A central location where immigrants and refugees can receive many settlement and other services in one place	23%	19%	18%	24%
More ESL opportunities to help improve English skills	30%	17%	27%	29%
Funding for interpretation and translation	9%	11%	18%	6%
More effort by community services to better serve immigrants and refugees	9%	11%	9%	6%
ESL opportunities in workplaces	7%	11%	18%	18%
Actions to increase welcoming and acceptance of immigrants and refugees	11%	11%	5%	18%
Better internet/technology access and training	n/a ¹²	11%	14%	6%
More or better programs for immigrants and refugees to find work	16%	9%	9%	6%
Better coordination between service agencies	11%	9%	9%	6%
Better collaboration between service agencies	9%	9%	0%	6%
More relevant programming in local community centres, arts & culture spaces, libraries, etc.	2%	5%	0%	6%
Better coordination between levels of government	2%	3%	5%	0%
More funding for... (please specify below)	5%	3%	0%	0%
Other, please specify¹³	2%	5%	0%	0%

- As seen in the above table, immigrant or racialized partners were less likely (in red) or more likely (in green) to note several challenges when compared to all respondents in 2020
- Trends: In general, the top suggestions are similar to those suggested a year earlier, with “A central place for employers to find immigrant and refugee workers and where workers can find employment opportunities” ranked more highly in 2020 and “More ESL opportunities to help improve English skills” ranked lower.

¹² Some of the above options were new in 2020. Trends are not noted for these items.

¹³ Respondents noted Other responses of: “all the above”, “community-led initiatives and activities”, and “mental health services that are language specific and culturally appropriate, mental health interventions in the community to eliminate the need for police presence”.

29 If your organization hired in the past 12 months, what proportion of new hires were immigrants?
(n=34)

- Less than 10%: 41% overall [*30% among immigrants and 13% among racialized respondents*]
- 10-29%: 15% overall
- 30-49%: 6% overall
- More than 50%: 38% overall [*50% among immigrants and 75% among racialized respondents*]

30 Please share one story that highlights the impact of your involvement with the Immigration Partnership in the last 12 months. This will allow us to share stories with others to show the impact of our collective work. (open-ended, n=15)

- See the appendix for the stories that were shared.

31 Other comments. Feel free to share any ideas, suggestions or specific areas in which the Immigration Partnership should spend either less or more energy. (open-ended, n=5)

- Comments included appreciation for the support that IP provides, suggestions regarding anti-racism and indigenous connections, and small business connections. See the appendix for specific comments.

Appendix A: Detailed Responses to Qualitative Questions

Some responses included multiple distinct comments. These were broken up and included under multiple headings. With some, the response as a whole was needed to provide context and clarity. In these cases, the whole response was included under multiple applicable headings.

Q15. What other actions is your organization taking to combat racism, if any? Max 200 words

• Staff training/learning (17 responses)

- Training existing and new staff in anti-racism and anti-oppressive practice, mainly by utilizing OCASI training resources.
- My organization formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee in order to help in combating racism and develop a training plan for staff.
- Staff training and development in anti racism
- Have organized in-house training for staff in areas such as Positive Spaces and webinars on discrimination and racism.
- ...We are planning an anti-racism training for IP staff and community partners...
- ...events, seminars and professional development.
- We have a commitment to inclusivity and diversity. Through our core program, we offer anti-racism, unconscious bias, truth and reconciliation, and inclusivity and diversity training.
- Training and support for staff...
- Participation in anti-racism training at all levels of the organization...
- We have recently formed a diversity and inclusion committee, with an initial focus on staff education. We are also considering bringing in a consultant to undergo a diversity and inclusion audit.
- Group of staff from municipalities across the region working together to secure anti-racism training for staff and Councils...
- ...IP is working with other collaboratives, with the Region of Waterloo and others to build capacity, training, and collective action. Our staff team is reading a book about anti-racism together as a book club with bi-weekly discussions about what it means for our work/context/ourselves.
- Creating safe spaces for people to learn together.
- We have had open conversations about the topic...
- Staff training...
- We have held town hall meetings, focus groups and informal vehicles to encourage discussion as well as established a staff lead working group that is informing how we make change as an agency to ensure we address systemic and individual racism.
- ...Implicit Bias Training. Anti-Racism Training. Enhanced Review of Training, Hiring, Promotions and Transfers to address systemic discrimination

• Diversity committee (10 responses)

- Internal diversity committee looking at racism...
- My organization formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee in order to help in combating racism and develop a training plan for staff.
- Anti-racism community advisory committee and an internal Equity, Diversity and Inclusion working group of staff
- Diversity and inclusion committee formed
- We formed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee to plan for training staff on racism, oppression, diversity and inclusion...
- We have developed an internal working group that is passionate about anti-racism. Leadership is working with the committee and will be taking their recommendations forward to our senior leadership team...
- We have recently formed a diversity and inclusion committee, with an initial focus on staff education. We are also considering bringing in a consultant to undergo a diversity and inclusion audit.
- The Region of Waterloo is developing an advisory group and developing a policy and reviewing policies...
- ...We have an Equity Diversity and Inclusion committee Each department has formed their own Anti- racism committee too...
- ...established a staff lead working group that is informing how we make change as an agency to ensure we address systemic and individual racism.

- **Hiring someone to coordinate/focus efforts (6 responses)**
 - Hiring an inclusion & diversity coordinator
 - ...hiring a staff member to coordinate addressing racism in our service provision, internally within the organisation, and strengthening our connections with anti-racism groups in the community
 - Formation of an Anti-Racist, EDI and Indigenous Initiatives Division
 - Recently established a department committed to diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism
 - We have a service team to provide culturally responsive services to Indigenous families and have just hired an Indigenous Service Director to lead this work. We will be creating a newcomer team to ensure that our services are responsive to the needs of newcomers and in particular racialized families. We have four specialized positions to increase partnership in the community to service Black identifying and Indigenous children, youth and families.
 - ...Increase staffing in EDI...
- **Actively outreaching to and supporting diverse clients/groups (6 responses)**
 - Staff and volunteers embrace all diverse audiences - not sure there is something specific.
 - one on one advocacy support to victims of racism
 - ...Inform clients about their rights, obligations and advocate on their behalf on all issues of racism and discrimination.
 - There are no formal actions we are taking at this time. we have sought to be more inclusive when we do outreach and ensure we are connecting with as many workforce groups as possible.
 - ...Development of artistic programming with a diversity of voices and perspectives. - Push for change through a critical analysis of our Permanent Collection and proactively change the narrative through the inclusion of work by BIPOC artists, creating room through a deaccessioning process. - Engage in thoughtful collaboration with diverse communities to serve them in a meaningful way. - Create space for Black and Indigenous communities to have public conversations on issues such as decolonization, inequality and racism, and commit to financially supporting their participation in these conversations.
 - Supporting Black community-led grassroots initiatives and contributing supports to build capacity in areas they express the need for.
- **Diversity audit/review or planning next steps (4 responses)**
 - ...considering bringing in a consultant to undergo a diversity and inclusion audit.
 - Looking at ways to better platform marginalized voices, including those addressing anti-racist practice.
 - ...My organizations is exploring numerous options, none of which are ready to be shared publicly
 - ...We are in the process of planning next steps/actions
- **Anti-racism commitment (4 responses)**
 - We made public an Anti-racism commitment...
 - We have a commitment to inclusivity and diversity...
 - ...public statements on website and social media
 - Planning and implementing new anti-racism commitment.
- **Supporting broader collaborative initiatives (3 responses)**
 - ...we advocate and support a regional Anti-Racism strategy
 - Building a community collaborative to assist on our anti racism work
 - ...IP is working with other collaboratives, with the Region of Waterloo and others to build capacity, training, and collective action....
- **Hiring processes or census (3 responses)**
 - I have personally approached my HR department regarding our hiring tools and how we can update them so as to eliminate unconscious bias, and put more emphasis on skills related to an understanding of equity and inclusion. I work for the ROW, and recently equity and inclusion has become a bigger organizational priority.
 - I know our board is constantly working on a more diverse employee population and I see positive evolution in this respect.
 - Enhanced Review of Training, Hiring, Promotions and Transfers to address systemic dissemination
- **Data collection (3 responses)**
 - Collecting race-based data

- ...Data Collection Procedure... to address systemic dissemination
- ...We are also trying to access disaggregated data with respect to our programs.
- **Board/strategic conversations (2 responses)**
 - ...focus at the board level on new initiatives to address racism.
 - EDI Strategic Plan Launched...
- **Policy review/development (2 responses)**
 - The Region of Waterloo is developing an advisory group and developing a policy and reviewing policies...
 - EDI hires and reviews of the mission vision and strategy of the institution in line with EDI commitments.
- **Awareness campaign (2 responses)**
 - ...awareness campaigns and initiatives...
 - Respect campaign, events, seminars...
- **Diverse committees (1 response)**
 - We are working to make sure people of all ethnicities and faiths live safely and healthily in Waterloo Region. There are people from all faiths on our committees.
- **Other (5 responses)**
 - We are aligned with all policies from Canada Government in Diversity and Inclusion
 - Falls under our respectful workplace and non violence policy
 - ...strategic initiatives to address colonialism...
 - Do not belong to any organizations
 - No formal actions/internal planning at this time

Q16. What would you like to see the Immigration Partnership doing to action its Anti-Racism Commitment? Max 200 words.

- **Lead and support IP partners regarding anti-racism, including training/resources (15 responses)**
 - Guidance, policy samples etc.
 - ...train members of the council itself (anti-bias etc.)...
 - Continuing to share resources around anti-racism, and promoting connections between organisations to help us work collectively to address racism.
 - To create a position for anti-racism. This person can help in formulating an anti-racism training plan to train staff of all organizations partnering with IP and advocate for change in required areas.
 - Strong anti-racism focus across all areas of work. Support capacity building for partners to do anti-racism work. Strong focus on governance and accountability.
 - Include Anti racisms strategy in our work, start by reviewing the IP governance document Review the make up of our IP membership and insure inclusivity. Develop antiracism recruitment tools. Provide training to all the members of IP council and steering groups...
 - Provide language that allows people to clearly communicate about racism. Common terms and language so that we all know what we are talking about. Racism, discrimination, systemic racism, micro aggressions etc. *Once this has been established vehicles created to bring people together to discuss and make changes as individuals, organizations and systems.*
 - ...Provide resources for partners and organizations to engage in anti-racism work like training and workshops...
 - Supporting partners to measure anti-racism movement, understanding what ant-racism means, etc.
 - Provide new ideas on how to help, collaborate with various sectors
 - Identify concrete tools and actions that can be taken to highlight those attributes that make you an ally.
 - ...Find a role for public education on anti-racism.
 - Continue to share resources with the community.
 - Community wide training, support for organizations speaking out about racism.
 - Challenging organizations on their hiring and recruitment policies - providing practical strategies and tips to eliminate where they can and promote blind hiring (removing of names/addresses).
- **Involvement in community-wide commitment/strategy/change (11 responses)**
 - Engage with the work of the anti-racism working group that the Region is putting together

- Opportunity to be a leader, and drive region-wide change.
- ...to ideally participate in a regional anti-racism strategy.
- Focus on systemic level
- Invite members from the minority community to be a part of the Anti-Racism Committee.
- Training made available to the broader community
- ...Support the work of the region and other organizations around the topic.
- Education and advocacy.
- Create a space to bring organizations together, identify goals, gaps, and a plan forward with identified outcomes and milestones.
- Asking Regional Council and City Councils to develop an anti-racism lens for policy making and budget decisions
- Affecting change in the police force- meeting with the police force regularly. Providing guidelines for modelling inclusivity.
- **Increase public awareness about anti-racism (9 responses)**
 - To continue to elevate awareness...
 - *Provide language that allows people to clearly communicate about racism. Common terms and language so that we all know what we are talking about. Racism, discrimination, systemic racism, micro aggressions etc.* Once this has been established vehicles created to bring people together to discuss and make changes as individuals, organizations and systems.
 - We need more discussion in Social Media and others channel about it. Some IP media to post opinions to share
 - To found a work group specifically for educating people about racism, diversity, inclusion etc
 - Keep placing the needs of all ethnicities and faiths in front of the government and residents in Waterloo Region. Report on how newcomers are doing economically and in terms of safety, housing, and feeling a part of the region.
 - public outreach and engagement through the partnership council member network
 - ...Promote anti racism among community organizations
 - Education and advocacy.
 - Create a public commitment in support of anti-racism...
- **Increasing awareness of benefits of immigration and link to anti-racism (5 responses)**
 - ...Provide solid links between Anti-racism work and welcoming newcomers, immigrants, and refugees. Find a role for public education on anti-racism.
 - I believe IP is doing an excellent job. I really like the public messaging that highlights the value of immigration from both an economic and cultural perspective. I believe that this will help change the narrative from immigration is a drain on the system and is a good thing to do for benevolent or humanitarian reasons -- to one where we all benefit from immigration and as a community we need to increase immigration.
 - I see the Anti-Racism Movement is overlapping the Immigration conversation. In my personal opinion, with the Black-lives-matters, and the Indigenous movements growing, there is no longer much room left for including the immigrants challenges and the racism that immigrants face as well. This is a challenge for the Immigration Partnership, advocating for Immigrants, yet not confronting the Anti-Racism, but expanding the scope of action and including immigrants as part of it. BIPOC, which stands for Black, Indigenous, People of Color, is not necessarily including Immigrants, and we need to be careful there, since there are many immigrants who are not people of color.
 - Promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion within its networks and partners...
 - Keep placing the needs of all ethnicities and faiths in front of the government and residents in Waterloo Region. Report on how newcomers are doing economically and in terms of safety, housing, and feeling a part of the region.
- **Support local groups impacted by racism and working on anti-racism (6 responses)**
 - Work directly with Black and People of Colour immigrant communities.
 - Support the work of multicultural groups focused on embracing diversity and inclusion
 - Follow the lead of black, indigenous and immigrant communities. Stand in uncomfortable territory with the BIPOC community in their calls for abolishing police or at the very least, defunding police. Immigrants are disproportionately affected by police violence and surveillance. If the IP cannot take that position and heed the strong calls from those

communities, then it must evaluate its funding structure and conflicts of interest in that regard.

- More anti-racism support for Asians during the pandemic in terms of educating about microaggression, outright anti-Chinese or belief that they're unsafe
- Community wide training, support for organizations speaking out about racism.
- **Other (4 responses)**
 - Working with local businesses and government offices to ensure that individuals are able to appropriately access services
 - Collect specific data on experiencing racism in Waterloo Region to focus our efforts on the gaps or main causes of discrimination...
 - Hire visible minorities and put visible minorities at the centre of the work
 - Not sure

Q17. How would your organization like to be supported in its anti-racism work by the Immigration Partnership? Max 200 words.

- **Learning, training, tools/resources (13 responses)**
 - With Education, Seminars and Webinars
 - We would like to continue to learn how to support the broader conversation on diversity and inclusion.
 - ...We also benefit from educational events we can share with our staff.
 - Training!
 - Training opportunities and resources.
 - sharing of resources tools best practices and any training that would be relevant and helpful to the sector
 - Perhaps we can develop tools and resources that could support other organizations
 - Partner on community training through our core leadership program.
 - Opportunities for dialogue, insight, input and stakeholder relations.
 - Learning opportunities for senior leaders in our organization.
 - Staff training in anti-racism and who to advocate on behalf of clients who are subject of anti-racism.
 - By sharing knowledge, training opportunities, providing support as needed.
 - By engaging staff in anti-racism training so settlement workers can be spearhead in teaching clients about their rights and know what to do when they face racism.
- **Working collectively (3 responses)**
 - We will work with Immigration Partnership - our role is to work with the faith communities. We will try to be part of IP programs and link faith communities to IP priorities - right now to decrease isolation and help all feel part of the Region as residents / citizens.
 - Support connecting with other immigrant serving agencies so we can develop a strong, cohesive anti-racism action plan as a sector.
 - Collaboration would be interesting and impactful.
- **Ideas about how to respond (3 responses)**
 - Share actionable ideas among partners
 - Continue to receive feedback and information on initiatives that can be undertaken and shared with staff that looks to address and speak about anti-racism
 - Consult on organizational projects to ensure that the needs of newcomers are being met
- **Research and data (2 responses)**
 - More statistics are always helpful.
 - Discussions around what works as per evidence already collected.
- **Social media support (2 responses)**
 - We benefit from being able to partner in social media campaigns.
 - Social media messages
- **Other (4 responses)**
 - Direct collaboration in bringing lived experience to the forefront and ensuring resources for the work of the communities as well as for the overall uptake in a range of sectors to ensure success and integration of contextual knowledge and direct experience.
 - Consultation on, and promotion of, the curatorial and public programming that aligns with the Gallery's goal for more inclusive offerings and more meaningful collaborations.
 - see above

- All of the above.

Q21. Briefly highlight any significant change in the immigrant/refugee population served by your organization in the past 12 months (i.e. number of clients served, immigration category, countries of origin, languages, English knowledge, education/employment, etc.). Max 200 words.

- **Different client needs/questions (6 responses)**
 - COVID has changed the questions we are asked, many more on benefits, COVID, health and safety
 - More need for support with CERB and Settlement support
 - People coming for counselling in heightened state of crisis
 - An increase in newcomer inquiries and small business consultations from Middle Eastern newcomers.. Some came as refugees and some through other classes. Another group is from Africa - Ethiopia and Eritrea. During the pandemic, I even had an Argentinian family attending our webinars and consultation from their home in Argentina, thinking to immigrate to Canada via the business class.
 - Collaboration between KWAG Youth Council and the Let's Talk group from Newcomer Youth from KW Multicultural Centre has allowed the Gallery to engage with approx. 50 newcomer youth toward the goal of informing their educational and professional goals.
 - There seemed to be more professionals coming to speak with us about volunteering as a lead into employment - this is where we need to work closely with the other pillar (work).
- **Decreased arrivals or fewer people using services (6 responses)**
 - COVID conditions have greatly impacted on the number of immigrants/refugees allowed into Canada even with the confusion over the safe third party agreement.
 - In my program specifically, we have only served 42% of our typical number of clients due to COVID19. The demographics of those clients has remained largely the same.
 - *COVID19 has made providing service more challenging and we served less clients due to lock downs*
 - *COVID has impacted our capacity to offer in library services like the Library Settlement Partnership services delivered through KWMC, English Conversation groups through the YMCA and our own in person programming.* Closures and reduced services has meant a decline in the number of people using our services.
 - Our waitlists have decreased
 - The statistical report are showing similar number of services provided to newcomers prior to COVID. Some clients find it easier to receive online services while others are demanding in-person service delivery model the changes we have seen are significant decrees in the number of new arrivals since March 2002.
- **Different countries of origin or languages (4 responses)**
 - An increase in newcomer inquiries and small business consultations from Middle Eastern newcomers. Some came as refugees and some through other classes. Another group is from Africa - Ethiopia and Eritrea. During the pandemic, I even had an Argentinian family attending our webinars and consultation from their home in Argentina, thinking to immigrate to Canada via the business class.
 - Because COVID19 we received every day more people who want to come to Canada from Latin America. Spanish. People with education
 - Since the shutdown, different languages are the most popular as are different countries of origin.
 - The number of clients we serve each year continues to increase. We have seen a large increase in immigrants from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Turkey. The top languages that we are seeing are Tigrinya, Amharic, Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, Turkish
- **Organizational ability to respond/serve/outreach (4 responses)**
 - COVID has made it challenging for us to engage in meaningful ways with immigrant/refugee population. Our services typically go where the people are, such as schools, community centres etc and we have had to find new and innovative ways to reach people. We are working through this process with our partners to better connect people to what is happening at our agency.
 - COVID19 has made providing service more challenging and we served less clients due to lock downs
 - COVID has impacted our capacity to offer in library services like the Library Settlement Partnership services delivered through KWMC, English Conversation groups through the

- YMCA and our own in person programming. Closures and reduced services has meant a decline in the number of people using our services.
- We started offering Immigration Law Services, so we have seen many more immigrants for their immigration-specific legal needs, as opposed to their housing and income needs.
- **Seeing clients from different immigration categories (3 responses)**
 - Temp residents (international students) and their families.
 - More clients with different immigration categories
 - An increase in newcomer inquiries and small business consultations from Middle Eastern newcomers.. Some came as refugees and some through other classes. Another group is from Africa - Ethiopia and Eritrea. During the pandemic, I even had an Argentinian family attending our webinars and consultation from their home in Argentina, thinking to immigrate to Canada via the business class.
- **Increased number of clients served (2 responses)**
 - We are seeing an increase in numbers however, this may reflect that we are getting better at documenting when we are serving newcomers. That said we still need to improve the collection of identity-based data and I believe numbers will grow even more.
 - The number of clients we serve each year continues to increase. *We have seen a large increase in immigrants from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Turkey. The top languages that we are seeing are Tigrinya, Amharic, Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, Turkish*
- **Other (5 responses)**
 - Serving coalitions and initiatives of communities coming together.
 - We offer conversation circles, and settlement supports, but during COVID much of this has gone online.
 - With the pandemic, our ability to open our doors and serve the community has been challenged. We are working with other organizations to review and come up with creative solutions to support the community.
 - We don't collect this data
 - Unknown

Q23. Briefly highlight any significant anticipated changes, demographic shifts, or emerging issues in the coming year. Max 200 words.

- **Employment challenges (6 responses)**
 - COVID and potential shortages in employment opportunities
 - COVID volunteering has erupted into a new issue for proper processes for all. Seniors were asked to NOT volunteer, we have therefore lost many longstanding and highly knowledgeable and experienced caring volunteers - to replace them with younger and less savvy ones is creating an issue for many charities as we PIVOT.
 - Labour shortages emerging due to closed borders and reduced immigrant flow - especially in industries that have historically hired immigrants. Health care is facing a PSW crisis - worse than ever before - especially in rural! Older workers - some are retiring due to health concerns during pandemic or taking care of grandchildren. Others have faced minor setbacks in savings and may continue working a bit longer. Change is the one constant - I think we will see lots of it this year and beyond.
 - ...Increased unemployment rate - social disparity...
 - From an employment perspective, I am anticipating increased demand for talent and an ever diminishing talent pool to access.
 - We will likely see a continued labour gap where reliance on refugee talent will continue.
- **Decreased (or uncertain) number of arrivals due to pandemic, closed borders, etc. (5 responses)**
 - All will depend on the pandemic and its impact on the arrival of newcomers to the region. We might see significant decrease to the number of arrivals, ultimately impact on decrease funding levels.
 - Increasing number of international students once borders open up - whenever that ends up being (whether that is this year or in a few years). Decreasing immigration in the short term because of the pandemic. Unsure of funding for many newcomer-serving organizations will be cut as numbers of immigrants temporarily decreases. ...The US political scene may have significant impacts on the Safe Third Country agreement and consequently for refugee claimant numbers/demographics...

- *Increasing number of international students once borders open up - whenever that ends up being (whether that is this year or in a few years). Decreasing immigration in the short term because of the pandemic. Unsure of funding for many newcomer-serving organizations will be cut as numbers of immigrants temporarily decreases...*
- *Significant decline in immigrant arrivals due to COVID-19 in 2020 and maybe 2021. Subsequent impact on local labour force and population growth. Potential sustainability of funding for settlement programs due to decreased immigration levels. Unknown impact on international student arrivals and knock-on effects on housing and economy.*
- *We expect our funding might decrease. We may still see fewer clients.*
- **Budget concerns (5 responses)**
 - *Concerns about how provincial and federal budgets in 2021 may impact social service delivery, particularly if either level of government moves forward with an austerity agenda.*
 - *Financial impact on all agencies due to pandemic...*
 - *Significant decline in immigrant arrivals due to COVID-19 in 2020 and maybe 2021. Subsequent impact on local labour force and population growth. Potential sustainability of funding for settlement programs due to decreased immigration levels...*
 - *Increasing number of international students once borders open up - whenever that ends up being (whether that is this year or in a few years). Decreasing immigration in the short term because of the pandemic. Unsure of funding for many newcomer-serving organizations will be cut as numbers of immigrants temporarily decreases...*
 - *We expect our funding might decrease. We may still see fewer clients.*
- **Mental health/wellness struggles (4 responses)**
 - *It is hard to anticipate what will happen in the upcoming year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are not sure exactly what to expect in terms of amount of newcomers entering Waterloo Region/Canada. Social isolation and mental health challenges as a result of COVID are impacting many people in our community, but especially impact on newcomers who were already isolated before the pandemic.*
 - *We are concerned about the impact of the pandemic. We know that many newcomers have fewer family supports. With less in person service available there will be an impact on families who are socially isolated. We provide child welfare services and pre-covid lack of social support is a factor in approximately 30% of families we work with.*
 - *Financial impact on all agencies due to pandemic. Increased unemployment rate - social disparity. Community Wellness*
 - *...Mental health will be a significant issue across the community - particularly with various levels of lockdown over the winter.*
- **More international students (3 responses)**
 - *As covid 19 protocols are put in place we will see more international students*
 - *Increasing number of international students once borders open up - whenever that ends up being (whether that is this year or in a few years). Decreasing immigration in the short term because of the pandemic...*
 - *One of the emerging issues is serving international students who completed postgrad studies and wanted to stay in Canada. There is a gap/need in this area, but due to funding restrictions, there is no service rendered to this category.*
- **Increased discussion about racism, racialized communities (3 responses)**
 - *BIPOC movement growing and not including Immigrants. Community members (government, companies, general public) supporting BIPOC & LGBTQ2S+ more and more. Immigrants being considered as part of those groups without a formal recognition. Conversation about immigrants losing terrain*
 - *I'm hopeful that the issues raised by the BIPOC community will help is to see a significant shift*
 - *The imperative to address racism and equity in more tangible ways*
- **Continued virtual service delivery challenges (2 responses)**
 - *We are struggling to bring people together and to help people understand each other in the midst of COVID. Our activities are through Zoom which is difficult for many.*
 - *...Technology access is emerging as a key issue for many recent immigrants as many programs/services/events/interactions go virtual instead of in-person...*
- **Increased economic/social disparity (2 responses)**

- Newcomers and refugees will continue to be most affected by the pandemic. They will need more support from community organizations and the community at large.
- ...Increased unemployment rate - social disparity...
- **Other (10 responses)**
 - Emerging Issues - impact of ongoing COVID19.
 - unknown due to Covid
 - Waiting to hear from IRCC on immigration policies
 - Higher needs in newcomers (health and other issues)
 - More want to come to Canada because the problems in their countries. For example:: Poverty, corruption and social persecution.
 - Next year we will be building our East Side Branch that will mean we will be able to bring service to east Waterloo in 2022
 - None known
 - Not sure when government will start sending GAR's at previous rates
 - not sure (x2)

Q25. If you have any comments or differentiating factors to share regarding the above question please explain here. Max 200 words.

- **COVID made many areas more challenging (7 responses)**
 - In many areas things have gotten worse - but not as a reflection of decreasing effort or effectiveness of community services but because the pandemic has decreased the ability for people to connect, hindered organizations from being there for newcomers in the same ways as in the past, eliminated employment, etc.
 - COVID has made everything more difficult
 - COVID-19 has pulled the attention away and has disrupted many activities related to Immigrants. It is understandable, but we need to come back to a revised plan.
 - As we increase immigration more funding is needed for settlement services. The pandemic has had an impact on my ratings.
 - Simply, I'm imagining that some of the demands of newcomers are likely gaining less traction as communities shut down and services are limited due to COVID
 - The impact on COVID on providing services of any type.
 - This is hard to judge because needs are changing and people are more isolated ... or must receive services through Zoom or telephone. For example, there is a high need for counseling and the agencies are working very hard, but are overwhelmed.
- **Specific factors for individual sectors (4 responses)**
 - Housing remains a huge issue in Waterloo Region, and feel like it is getting worse. It is getting increasingly difficult for our settlement workers to support clients with trying to find affordable housing.
 - I can only comment on the availability of housing available in all of the components of the housing spectrum. Providing safe, affordable and attainable housing is key for all members of our community, including newcomers. We must do better to address this need.
 - Clients are wanting in person English language classes
 - I think some immigrants do not have access to mental health services. Stigma about mental health could be an impediment! No free or affordable legal services for immigrants and where available sometimes very expensive for them.
- **Collaboration (2 responses)**
 - I think the sharing of resources is improving so much and the work of all the partnership is making inroads with more to do. Not sure of all services.
 - There is a lot of Agencies however there is not a Team work. Sometimes people get confused with a lot of information.
- **Difficult to compare to past years or unsure (6 responses)**
 - I am too unfamiliar with the topic currently to comment on the previous two questions.
 - I am unsure of how services were going prior beyond what I am hearing now having just returned to the community in the past year
 - I answered N/A to most questions because I really don't have a sense of where things are at with these services.
 - N/A
 - Selected N/A as don't provide the aforementioned services and don't have any data to compare

- Unsure of the changes over the past year

Q26. Do you think immigrants have more easily been able to contribute to creating and sustaining a thriving community in the past 12 months compared to previously?

- If yes, please share a specific example:
 - COVID 19 has negatively impacted this ability
 - I have met more refugees through my community involvement.
 - I hope so, based on the feedback we receive from clients, they continue to contribute to developing a thriving community. However, I am aware this might not be reflective to everyone's experience.
 - Many front line workers in healthcare of immigrant/refugees
 - Many immigrants have been coming together to support BLM and using their voices to contribute to addressing systemic racism in our community.
 - Some immigrants started their own business. Example are ethnic restaurants and grocery stores throughout the region.
 - Yes, because immigrants are trained with problems and challenges, furthermore, they face the COVID19 and they continue working hard.

30. Please share one story that highlights the impact of your involvement with the Immigration Partnership in the last 12 months. This will allow us to share stories with others to show the impact of our collective work. Max 200 words.

- Being involved with IP has allowed me to connect with other service agencies and people with lived experience to better understand how to create a meaningful mental health trauma program for immigrants/refugees. The Partnership was a vehicle to share info, engage people and move the conversation and planning forward.
- Better informed on current needs, and better able to integrate that into our organizations processes.
- Colleagues who work with neighbourhood groups were looking for someone to speak to these groups about inclusivity. Connections I made via the Immigration Partnership allowed me to recommend staff at an agency they could connect with.
- Discussion with IP about need for Chromebooks during shutdown led to partnership with Reception House to lend Chromebooks to several students.
- Extremely vulnerable client with [many] children who fled domestic abuse received community housing through the collaborative advocacy of a number of community and government organizations. IP offered advice, referrals and support during the process and provided invaluable services and support to lead agency.
- Hearing about virtual job fairs and events and sharing with newcomers who can attend and meet employers. This has helped some of our clients in their job search and networking even while they have been at home.
- I feel more connected to other service providers. I can make warmer referrals.
- I had the opportunity to meet Nora [IP staff] and her passion for her work is palpable. I have moved on to a new role within my organization so I don't have the opportunity to work with Nora however, it is a part of my previous job that I do miss.
- I have many success stories of opportunities to connect with organizations within the community.
- Leadership Waterloo Region has partnered with the Waterloo Institute for Social and Innovation and Resilience at UW, and Wellbeing Waterloo Region to launch an Affordable Housing Lab to identify and make recommendations to systemic changes to our current affordable housing landscape. I have been working with Dan Vandebelt [IP staff] on the IP Housing Group. My involvement has been a great personal learning experience, which has filtered into our core program. I am able to share resources from IP with our core program participants.
- Participating at Ambush the Art at Kitchener City Hall, seeing the collaboration between KWAG Youth Council and Let's Talk Youth deliver art-making activities for over one hundred youth.
- The Immigration Partnership has been supportive and advocates for my program and by allowing me to collaborate with them on events and continuing to remember me when meeting organizations and newcomers. I have had positive referrals to employment as well as to small business development. IP also provides an open, transparent and welcoming platform for organizations and new programs to flourish.

- Through the connection with the IP, I have become a partner and a founding participant in the Reception House Working Together Project. For the past three years, we have been hiring refugees with significant community support, including the pre and post employment support of our new hires. This relationship has allowed us to hire close to 100 refugees. While the benefit to our company is clear, one of the highlights this year was to provide a post secondary scholarship award to the child of one of our employee couples hired through the program. It was the poignant connection between the benefit of employment and the opportunities it can afford.
- We are concerned and working to break isolation of immigrants and other people.
- Working with the Belong Steering Working Group - Public Education Subgroup highlighted our connection to each other and our values as we presented the concept of a letter to make clear the message of Anti-Racism with the whole IP. I also felt needed when supporting our new staff lead following the departure of the previous staff member. I felt we all pulled together for this however as past chair I was also working with the new chair on the transition as well at the same time. I felt I had a role to play.

31. Other comments (Feel free to share any ideas, suggestions or specific areas in which the Immigration Partnership should spend either less or more energy):

- Articulate collaboration between immigrant aid agencies and government effectively
Create a more operational source of communication between participants
- Hard work and good to have the support of the Region to bring us together on topics that hopefully ARE impacting our newcomers.
- I would enjoy a pathway recognizing training and a more significant focus on small business. I see these as supporting work, by including these avenues additional growth and development of the IP mission is possible. These areas also offer many zero or low cost options for agencies to collaborate with and/or to support newcomers. For example, often training can help newcomers with networking, upgrading skills, and understanding workplace expectations which satisfy some of the concerns that we hear on the Work Steering Group. Ultimately, helping newcomers advance in the labour market. This is also a viable option for newcomers in entry level employment for them to move to higher paying roles.
- IP has proven that they are needed in order to make connections that some agencies wouldn't be able to make or know about on their own. I believe one of the greatest strengths of IP is the networking that takes place. As a worker in a local agency I have benefited greatly by the introductions and referrals that IP have offered and a number of them have resulted in incredibly valuable resources for my agency and the work that we do.
- Please spend more time on Anti-Racism Work, specifically anti-black and anti-indigenous racism. Newcomers and indigenous people in Canada have a lot of shared experience (loss of home, language etc.) however there is a gap between newcomers and indigenous people in Waterloo Region. It is important to bring these two groups together, and for newcomers to learn about and understand indigenous history in Canada.

Appendix B: Detailed Responses for Multiple Choice Questions

12. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements as relates to your work with immigrants in Waterloo Region. (n=76)

In the past 12 months, as a result of our connection or collective work through the Immigration Partnership my organization or I ...

(Note: If you are part of the Immigration Partnership on behalf of an organization, group or business, please respond to this question in that capacity.)

	Not really	A little bit	Some-what	Quite a bit	A great deal
Am committed to the success of the Immigration Partnership (n=75)	1%	0%	5%	31%	63%
Have aligned our vision or activities with those of the Immigration Partnership (n=66)	6%	2%	18%	50%	24%
Feel motivated to contribute and follow-through with actions of the Immigration Partnership (n=74)	1%	1%	12%	47%	38%
Have aligned internal policies with those of the Immigration Partnership (n=61)	10%	10%	36%	34%	10%
Have an increased awareness of the services offered in the community (n=75)	3%	5%	16%	43%	33%
Have increased knowledge of newcomer needs and service pathways (n=74)	1%	5%	20%	39%	34%
Make more or better referrals to other organizations (n=63)	3%	5%	37%	35%	21%
Receive more or better referrals from other organizations (n=59)	15%	17%	39%	15%	14%
Have entered new formal agreements with partners to better serve immigrants (n=56)	32%	16%	27%	20%	5%
Have developed informal agreements with partners to better serve immigrants (n=62)	23%	15%	29%	29%	5%
Work better with settlement agencies (n=58)	9%	17%	28%	31%	16%
Get better feedback about our services and programs from immigrant clients (n=56)	16%	16%	39%	20%	9%
Have implemented specific initiatives to support newcomer welcoming and inclusion (n=66)	11%	11%	38%	23%	18%
Work more collaboratively with other organizations (n=71)	3%	6%	28%	44%	20%
Have greater communication with other partners about immigrant needs/issues (n=72)	3%	6%	24%	42%	26%
Have greater coordination around immigrant needs/issues (n=63)	3%	11%	29%	38%	19%
Have acquired stronger abilities and tools for welcoming and responding to newcomer needs (n=67)	3%	19%	30%	30%	18%
Have promoted the Immigration Partnership in our networks (n=74)	4%	4%	16%	47%	28%
Have made changes to our organization that are positively impacting immigrants (n=61)	5%	18%	31%	30%	16%
Have made changes to our organization that are positively impacting the broader community (n=61)	7%	15%	31%	31%	16%

13. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. (n=76)

In my opinion...	Not really	A little bit	Some-what	Quite a bit	A great deal
The Immigration Partnership is focused on the critical issues for immigrants in our community (n=74)	0%	0%	12%	35%	53%

The Immigration Partnership is a catalyst for effective changes that help immigrants reach their full potential and help create and sustain a thriving community for everyone (n=74)	1%	1%	14%	46%	38%
The Immigration Partnership is a valuable source of information about local needs and supports, in respect to immigrants (n=74)	0%	1%	9%	36%	53%
Overall, we are achieving the IP Mission (“We work together to create the conditions for immigrants to succeed and help build a welcoming, dynamic community.”) (n=74)	0%	4%	18%	42%	36%

24. Are the needs of immigrants in Waterloo Region being met better in the past 12 months compared to previous years, in the areas below? (n=57)

	Very much so	Somewhat	Not at all	Getting worse
Interpretation/translation services (n=38)	29%	55%	16%	0%
Settlement services (n=41)	29%	54%	15%	2%
Education services (n=41)	19%	56%	21%	5%
Health services (n=38)	8%	68%	21%	3%
English language learning programs (n=41)	22%	46%	22%	10%
Employment and/or skills training programs (n=46)	17%	50%	26%	7%
Mental health services (n=38)	5%	63%	26%	5%
Small business/entrepreneurial supports (n=35)	9%	54%	31%	6%
Other community services (including public services, community centres, arts and culture spaces, libraries, etc.) (n=45)	4%	69%	13%	13%
Legal services (n=34)	6%	53%	32%	9%
Housing services (n=41)	0%	49%	34%	17%

Appendix C: Methodology

Immigration Partnership, through the work of its Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC), developed an evaluation strategy and performance measurement framework (PMF) in 2017. The evaluation strategy outlines the overarching research questions for the Immigration Partnership (IP). The EAC is reviewing and refreshing the framework in 2020/2021.

Immigration Partnership Overarching Research Questions



The framework includes a wide variety of indicators to help IP measure how its work is helping immigrants successfully integrate in Waterloo Region. IP gathers data for these indicators from various sources – including this annual survey of engaged partners and a bi-annual community survey of immigrants.

Partner Survey Data collection

The first annual Partner Survey was conducted in November/December 2017 and repeated in 2018 and 2019. This current report includes findings from the October 2020 Partner Survey with comparisons to past years where possible. The Partner Survey addresses some of the overarching research questions above – particularly outputs and immediate outcomes.

The survey questionnaire was designed in 2017 by the Evaluation Advisory Committee and subsequent surveys used many of the same questions as the original version but, in discussion with the Evaluation Advisory Committee, incorporated feedback on previous questions and several new questions. The survey tool is available at <http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/partnersurvey2020>.

All survey participants are partners directly involved with IP or subscribers to the Immigration Waterloo Region Weekly email updates.

There were 87 survey responses after one ineligible survey was removed. Surveys were ineligible if they only included a response to the first one or two introductory questions or were doubles from the same person due to technical difficulties.

Analysis & Limitations

The findings were analyzed using descriptive statistics. In some cases, the sample size is small and the findings should be interpreted with caution (sample sizes are included throughout).

The above analysis includes disaggregation of the survey results by immigrant status and racialized status only where there were clear differences between total responses and either the immigrant-only or racialized-only responses (difference of >10%). More obvious differences were also noted between this 2020 survey data and similar surveys in 2017-2019.