

Partner Survey 2018 Final Report

The Immigration Partnership of Waterloo Region (IP) is a collective of community partners that collaboratively develop and implement strategies for the successful settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees. Over 100 community members, organizations, public sector representatives, employers, and business associations are engaged to address organizational, systems, and policy issues that affect immigrants and refugees in our community.

This report outlines findings from the IP Partner Survey conducted in November 2018. It is part of IP's Evaluation Strategy, which aims to understand the settlement and community integration of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region and how the Partnership is contributing to their success.

Summary of Findings

In 2018, partners were quite committed to the Immigration Partnership and positive about overall directions. Partners experienced many benefits from their Partnership involvement. In fact they were more engaged, more collaboration was occurring and services were felt to be increasingly meeting the needs of immigrants and refugees in 2018 compared the previous year. However, there was recognition of persistent challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees stemming from systems and community-ide issues that we continue to engage in through the Immigration Partnership.

- **High Engagement:** Partners are highly engaged in and committed to the Immigration Partnership. Their involvement in IP was a source of support and helped improve their work with immigrants and refugees.
- **Affirmation of Immigration Partnership Directions:** All partners feel that the Immigration Partnership is focused on the critical issues for immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region, and is a catalyst for effective change and a valuable source of information.
- **Increased Knowledge:** Partners are consistently increasing their knowledge of issues, immigrant/refugee needs and available services.
- **Increased Collaboration:** There was significant collaboration occurring. In the last year, many participants had made and received more referrals and have greater coordination and collaboration.
- **Increasingly Meeting Needs:** The majority of partners feel that the needs of immigrants and refugees have been better met in the last year than previously across all service areas. However, they are somewhat less likely to suggest that the needs of immigrants and refugees were better met in the areas of housing services, education services, or employment and/or skills training programs. This had changed somewhat from the previous year when the top areas of concern were employment and skills training programs and health and mental health services.

- **Top Challenges/Solutions for Immigrants/Refugees:** Partners indicated that the top challenges for immigrants are finding work, accessing affordable housing, learning English and making friends or social connections – areas that cover all three pillars of Immigration Partnership activities. Housing grew as an issue for immigrants/refugees in 2018 compared to 2017. Employment continued to be a key area where partners believed changes would better support immigrants and refugees in our community. Some of these, such as affordable housing, are part of persistent community-wide challenges.
- **Organizational Issues:** The majority of partners serving immigrants and refugees are seeing more clients than in previous years, with a greater diversity of backgrounds and needs. The top organizational challenges to serving immigrants and refugees reported by partners were: lack of funding, language barriers and systems issues.

Contents

Summary of Findings.....	1
Detailed Survey Findings	3
Section 1: Demographic Overview	3
Section 2: Partner Engagement.....	5
Section 3: Impact of Involvement on Partners	7
Section 4: Reflections on Services for Immigrants & Refugees	10
Section 5: Current Challenges and Emerging Issues	12
Section 6: How to Better Support Immigrants and Refugees.....	17
Appendix A: Detailed Response Data	19
Appendix B: Full Comments Regarding Impacts of the Immigration Partnership.....	20
Appendix C: Full Comments Regarding Services Meeting Needs	22
Appendix D: Full Comments Regarding Significant Changes in the Immigrant/Refugee Population.....	23
Appendix E: Full Comments Regarding Anticipated Changes or Emerging Issues	26
Appendix F: Full Comments Regarding Desired Changes.....	28
Appendix G: Methodology	31

Detailed Survey Findings

In total, 61 individuals completed the survey¹. This includes 55 out of about 90 active community partners² (~60% response rate) and 6 IP staff.

Section 1: Demographic Overview

Survey participants represented IP Council and all three pillars with about half of participants being part of IP for 5 years or more. Service providers and employers made up the majority of survey participants. The majority of organizations represented served more than 100 immigrants/refugees in the past year.

Length of Participation

The majority of survey participants (64%) had been involved with IP for at least 3 years, with nearly half (47%) having been with IP for 5 years or more (Table 1).³

Table 1: Length of Participation in Immigration Partnership

Length of Time with IP	# of participants	% of participants
5 years or more	28	47%
3 to 4 years	10	17%
1 to 2 years	17	29%
Less than 1 year	4	7%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Involvement with Immigration Partnership

Partners from Council and all Steering and action groups are represented in the survey as shown in the figure below. Most of the Council and Settle Pillar partners responded to the survey (83% and 75% respectively), and approximately half of the partners involved with the Work and Belong Pillars responded to the survey (47% and 57% respectively) (Table 2).⁴ Almost half of the survey participants (45%) indicated that they were on multiple groups – either within multiple pillars or on a steering group as well as an action group.

Table 2: Involvement with Immigration Partnership

Immigration Partnership Group	# of survey participants	# of active IP community partners
IP Council	15	18
Settle Steering/Action Groups	24	32
Work Steering/Action Groups	8	17
Belong Steering/Action Groups	13	23
IP Staff	6	6

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

¹ See Appendix G for a summary of the survey background and methodology.

² “Active community partners” are those that regularly came to IP meetings or other activities over the past year. The 2018 Partner Survey was initially sent to 124 individuals.

³ Q2. How long have you been involved with the Immigration Partnership? (n=59)

⁴ Q3. What is your involvement with the Immigration Partnership? (Select all that apply) (n=59)

The majority of the survey participants (57%) answered the survey as a service provider to immigrants. Employers made up 20% of participants (13% as public sector employers and 7% as private sector employers). Community members made up 10% of participants. The remaining participants (13%) answered as IP staff or “Other”.⁵

More than a third of survey participants came to Canada as immigrants or refugees (30% as immigrants and 7% as refugees), with the remainder having been born in Canada.⁶

Number of Immigrants/Refugees Served

The majority of organizations represented by survey participants served more than 100 immigrants/refugees in the past 12 months (57%) (Table 3).⁷

Table 3: Number of Immigrants/Refugees Served

Number of immigrant and refugee clients served	# of participants	% of participants
1000+ clients	14	23%
500-999 clients	3	5%
200-499 clients	11	18%
100-199 clients	6	10%
1-99 clients	9	15%
N/A	17	28%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Employment of Immigrants/Refugees

Of 45 partners that provided information about how many immigrants or refugees they or their organization hired in the last year, a third (33%) shared that more than half of their new hires were immigrants/refugees (Table 4).⁸

Table 4: Proportion of New Hires that were Immigrants/Refugees

Proportion of new hires	# of participants	% of participants
More than 50%	15	33%
30-49%	5	11%
10-29%	7	16%
Less than 10%	11	24%
We did not hire	7	16%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Participants from the Settle Pillar were more likely to have had at least 30% of their new hires being immigrants/refugees (68% of participants) compared to those from the Work (14%) or Belong Pillars (22%).

⁵ Q4. 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.) (n=60)

⁶ Q5. Which of the following describes you? (n=60)

⁷ Q9. What is the estimated number of immigrant and refugee clients your organization served in the last 12 months?: (n=60). Note that there may be multiple survey participants from the same organization and there may be clients that receive service from multiple organizations. As such, the number of clients served in Table 3 isn't a total unduplicated number of clients served across the whole community.

⁸ Q19. If you/your organization hired in the past 12 months, what proportion of new hires were immigrants/refugees? (n=45). Note that some organizations had more than one staff person that responded to the survey.

Section 2: Partner Engagement

Partners were quite committed to the success of the Immigration Partnership and motivated to participate in Partnership activities. They were even more engaged in 2018 than a year earlier. Partners felt that the Partnership is focused on the critical issues and is an effective catalyst and a valuable source of information.

Engagement and Commitment to the Partnership

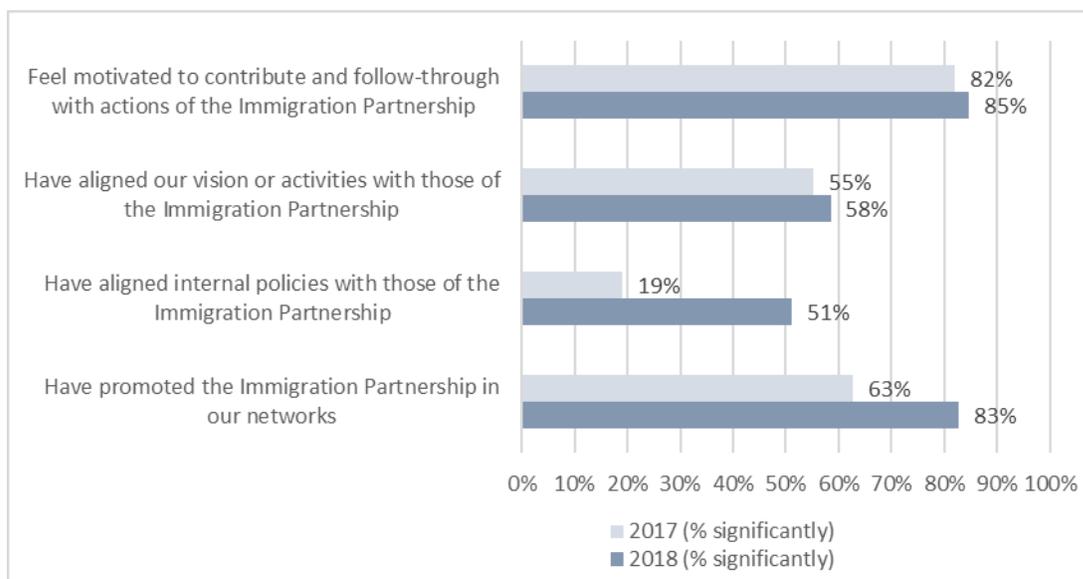
Most survey participants attended 5 or more meetings during the past year – including meetings of Steering Groups, action groups, Council, etc.⁹ Among all survey participants, 17% attended 2 or fewer meetings, 28% attended 3-4 meetings, 32% attended 5-9 meetings, and 23% attended 10 or more meetings throughout the year.

Partners were asked various questions about their commitment and engagement with the Partnership¹⁰.

- All partners were committed to the success of the Partnership and were motivated to contribute and follow through with the IP actions.
- Furthermore, 98% of partners had aligned their vision/activities and 89% aligned their internal policies with those of the Partnership.
- 98% of participants had promoted the Immigration Partnership in their networks.

Levels of commitment were quite consistent with a year earlier in the 2017 Partner Survey (Figure 1) with the exception that, in 2018, partners were more likely to have promoted the Immigration Partnership in their networks and aligned internal policies with those of IP.

Figure 1: Change in Commitment of Partners, 2017-2018¹¹



Source: IP 2017 Community Survey and 2018 Community Survey

⁹ Q6. Approximately how many Immigration Partnership meetings have you attended in the past 12 months (steering group, action group, Council, etc.)? (n=60)

¹⁰ Q7. In the past 12 months, as a result of our work through the Immigration Partnership my organization or I ... (n= varies by the question. See the chart in Appendix A for the number of responses and response details for individual sub-questions.) The percentages listed in this section do not include those that responded that the question was not applicable.

¹¹ This chart highlights the percentage of participants that responded “A great deal” or “Quite a bit” to the respective questions. In this report these are grouped as individuals who felt *significantly* so.

Immigration Partnership Directions and Impact

When asked to reflect on the broader role of the Immigration Partnership, partners were very positive about its overall directions and impact¹².

- All partners felt that the Partnership is focused on the critical issues for immigrants and refugees in our community (98% felt significantly¹³ so).
- All partners also felt that the Partnership is a catalyst for effective changes that help immigrants and refugees successfully settle, work and belong in our community (92% felt significantly so).
- All partners saw the Immigration Partnership as a valuable source of information about local needs and supports with respect to immigrants and refugees (97% felt significantly so).

¹² Q8. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. ... (n= varies by the question. See Appendix B for the number of responses for individual sub-questions. Appendix A also includes more detailed response information.)

¹³ “Significantly”, in this report, refers to those that responded either “A great deal” or “Quite a bit” to these questions.

Section 3: Impact of Involvement on Partners

Partners reported that their involvement in IP had resulted in many significant benefits including increasing their awareness of newcomer needs and available services, and stronger abilities and tools to respond to newcomer needs. Most partners also made and received more referrals, collaborated more and had stronger working relationships with other partners in the community. Most partners had also implemented specific initiatives to support newcomer welcoming and inclusion and other positive community changes.

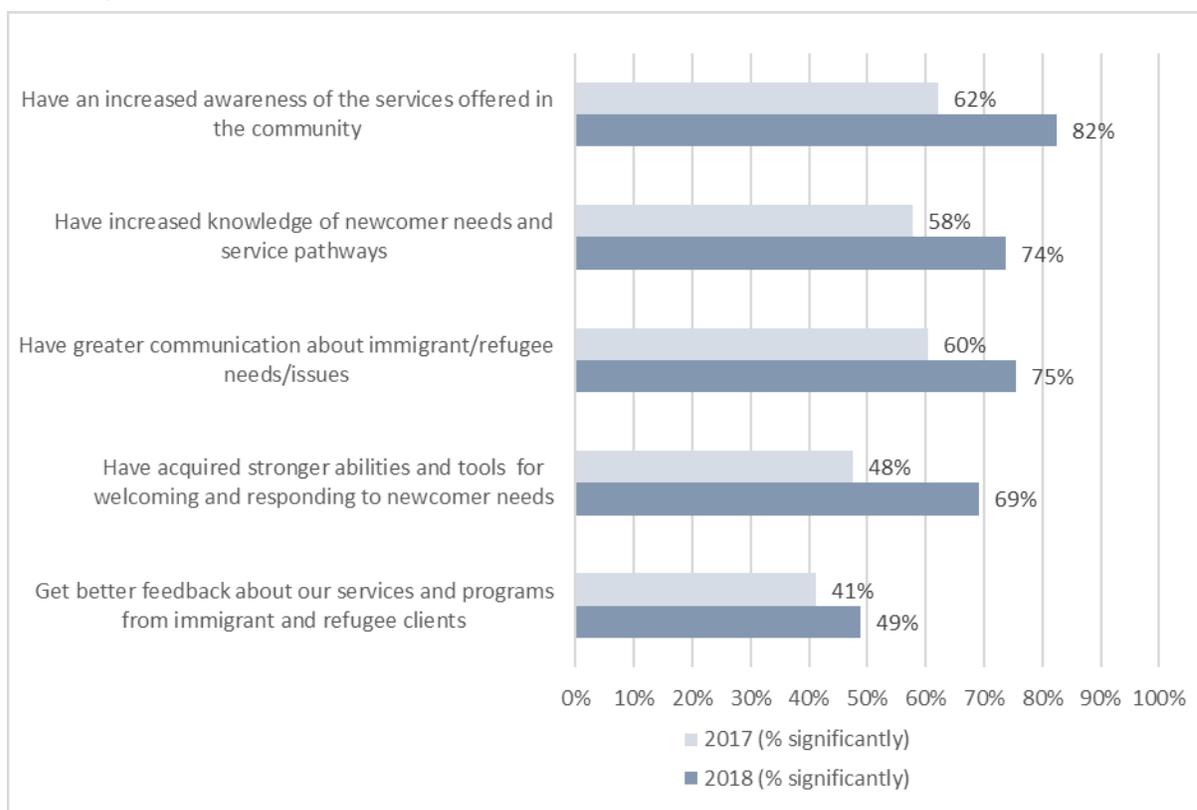
Impact of Involvement in IP on Partners

Survey participants were asked if and how being an IP partner had directly impacted their work and interaction with immigrants and refugees over the last 12 months. The majority of partners reported having realized several benefits from being part of the Immigration Partnership:

- 98% had increased their awareness of the services offered in the community.
- 98% had increased knowledge of newcomer needs and service pathways.
- 98% had greater communication about immigrant/refugee needs/issues.
- 92% of participants had acquired stronger abilities and tools for welcoming and responding to newcomer needs because of their work through the Immigration Partnership.
- 84% got better feedback about their services and programs from immigrant and refugee clients.

Partners were more likely to have realized all the above benefits in 2018 than a year earlier when they responded to the 2017 Partner Survey (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Impact of Involvement in IP on Partners, 2017-2018 ¹⁴



Source: IP 2017 Community Survey and 2018 Community Survey

¹⁴ Most comparisons to 2017 compare “significantly” changed in each question to more clearly pull out differences. In this report, “significantly” is a combination of “A great deal” and “Quite a bit” responses.

Referrals and Collaboration

Involvement in the Immigration Partnership resulted in increased referrals for all participants (Figure 3):

- 100% of participants made more referrals to other organizations as a result of their work through the Immigration Partnership.
- 75% received more referrals from other organizations.

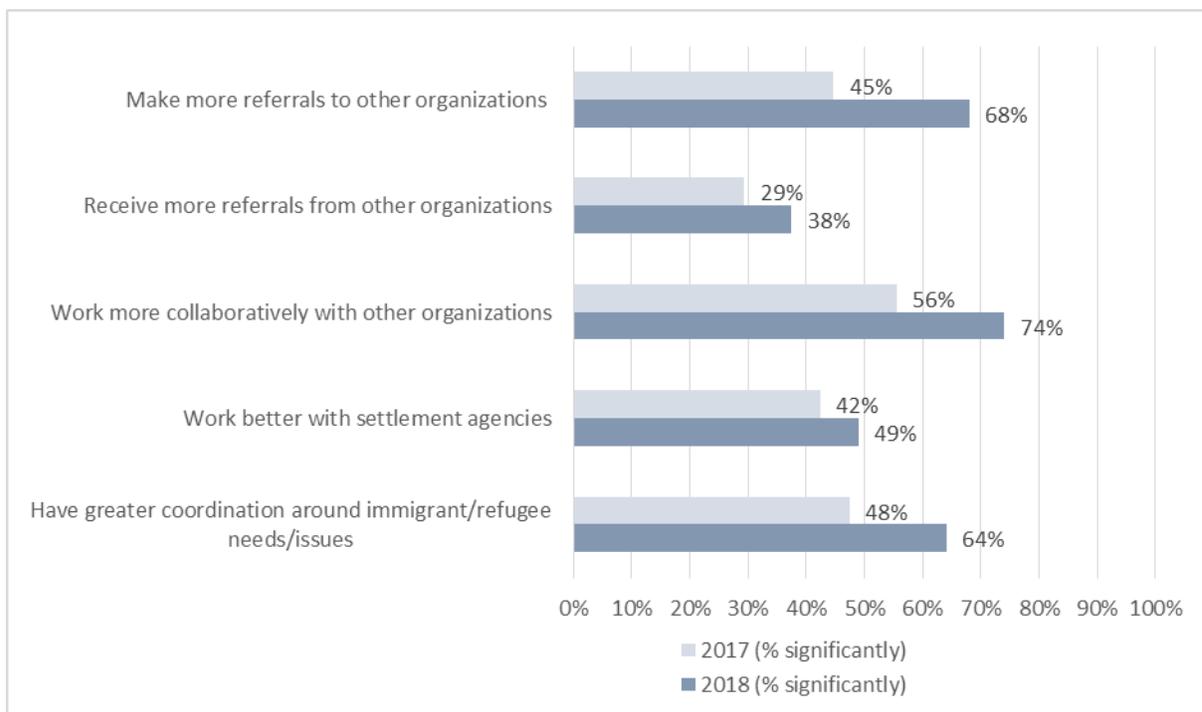
Participants that made or received “A great deal more” referrals were more likely to be from the Settle Pillar and to a lesser extent the Work Pillar. These pillars also have the highest proportion of participants who identified as service providers of immigrants and refugees.

Partners noted involvement in IP also resulted in stronger working relationships with other organizations:

- 91% work more collaboratively with other organizations.
- 80% work better with settlement agencies.
- 91% have greater coordination around immigrant/refugee needs/issues.

Partners were more likely to have realized significantly stronger working relationships in 2018 compared to in 2017 (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Change in Working Relationships, 2017-2018



Source: IP 2017 Community Survey and 2018 Community Survey

Not only do organizations report working better together, but this resulted in new formal and informal agreements with partners to better serve immigrants and refugees in the last year:

- 60% had entered into new formal agreements with partners.
- 74% developed informal agreements with partners.

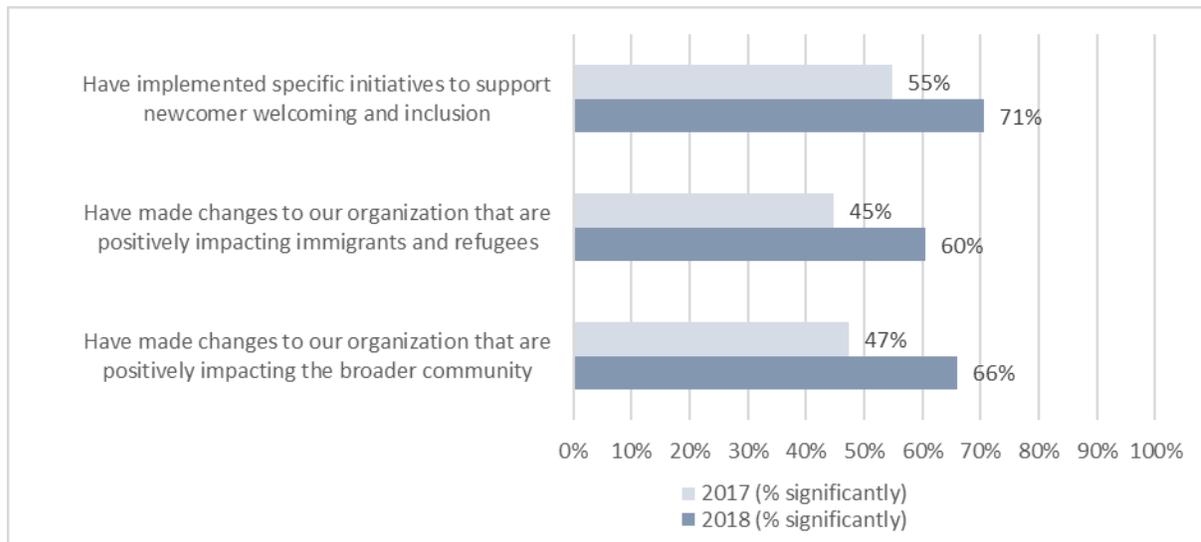
Broader Impact of Involvement with IP

Most survey participants had also made changes to their organization that are having a broader impact on immigrants, refugees and the community (Figure 4):

- 86% implemented specific initiatives to support newcomer welcoming and inclusion.
- 79% had made changes that are positively impacting immigrants and refugees.
- 82% had made changes that are positively impacting the broader community.

Partners were more likely to have significantly realized broader benefits as a result of involvement in IP in 2018 compared to the 2017 Partner Survey (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Change in Broader Impact of Involvement with IP, 2017-2018



Source: IP 2017 Community Survey and 2018 Community Survey

The Immigration Partnership started about 10 years ago in 2009. Partners shared their thoughts about what has changed for immigrants and refugees, their organization, or Waterloo Region as a result of the Immigration Partnership since that time.¹⁵ Thirty-two individuals shared a variety of impacts of this community-wide partnership with more than half mentioning better information or increased awareness of needs and better coordination/collaboration (Table 5).

Table 5: Impacts of the Immigration Partnership

Impacts	# of participants	% of participants
Better information/increased awareness of needs	18	56%
Stronger or more coordination/collaboration	17	53%
Stronger or more connections	11	34%
Better services	5	16%
Stronger community/economy	5	16%
Stronger outreach to immigrants/refugees	2	6%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

See Appendix A for a full list of the shared comments.

¹⁵ Q20. Since the Immigration Partnership started in 2009, what has changed for immigrants and refugees, your organization or Waterloo Region as a result of this community-wide partnership? (n=32, not including those that simply left contact information to respond in person)

Section 4: Reflections on Services for Immigrants & Refugees

Survey participants generally felt that local services were better meeting the needs of immigrants and refugees – in particular interpretation, settlement and other community services. They were less positive about housing, education and employment and/or skills training programs. Some of these areas were challenged by persistent community-wide challenges such as the lack of affordable housing.

How Services Are Meeting the Needs of Immigrants and Refugees

Survey participants were asked whether services were better meeting the needs of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region over the past 12 months compared to previous years.¹⁶ Overall, interpretation, settlement and other community services were seen as most likely to have better met the needs of immigrants and refugees. This is consistent with responses in 2017.

On the other hand, housing, education and employment and/or skills training programs were perceived as less likely to have better met the needs of immigrants and refugees (Table 6). This differs somewhat from 2017 when partners ranked employment and skills training programs, and health and mental health lowest.

Table 6: Perception of Whether Services in Waterloo Region are Better Meeting the Needs of Immigrants and Refugees

Are the needs of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region being met better in the past 12 months compared to previous years, in each of the areas below?	Very much so	Somewhat	Not at all
Interpretation services (n=50)	56%	42%	2%
Settlement services (n=44)	34%	66%	0%
Other community services (n=41)	29%	71%	0%
English language learning programs (n=47)	28%	66%	6%
Health and mental health services (n=43)	23%	65%	12%
Employment and/or skills training programs (n=48)	21%	73%	6%
Education services (n=42)	17%	81%	2%
Housing services (n=43)	12%	60%	28%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Twenty participants provided information as to why they believed some service areas were or were not better meeting the needs of immigrants and refugees compared to previous years.¹⁷

Housing

Comments about housing often pointed to the fact that the overall housing market is challenging because of lack of affordable housing:

- Housing seems to be worse but not because of lack of effort - the housing market in general is just very challenging. Housing is a challenge for everyone in this community – not just newcomers.

¹⁶ Q14. Are the needs of immigrants and/or refugees in Waterloo Region being met better in the past 12 months compared to previous years in each of the areas below? (n=59). Six participants qualified their responses by pointing out that they had greater understanding about the issues in some sectors more than others.

¹⁷ Q15. If you have any comments or differentiating factors to share regarding the above question please explain here. (n=20) Some points included here are paraphrased to encompass multiple responses.

- There are wider issues impacting service delivery such as the lack of affordable housing and higher-level government policies.
- Often there is a gap where the service exists but clients don't know how to or can't access it because of barriers such as language and lack of childcare.
- Lack of affordable housing and rising housing and other costs of living are negatively impacting initial settlement.

Interpretation

Although interpretation services were typically perceived to better meeting needs (e.g. “LHIN funding for medical interpretation is a game changer”), survey participants identified a few challenges for services to fully respond to immigrants’ needs – such as the lack of interpretation services for less commonly spoken languages.

- Need for more trained interpreters or access to telephone interpretation services (especially for languages not commonly spoken) that is cost effective for settlement and other community services.
- Counselling is challenged not just by funding but by accessing interpretation in less frequently requested languages.

Other comments about why or where services were not meeting needs included:

- Lack of family doctors accepting any patients.
- Health providers/practitioners need to become more culturally self-aware, less ethnocentric, with more intercultural understanding.
- Small employment programs targeting immigrant employment are doing great, but the wider Employment Ontario system doesn't seem to be shifting towards better serving immigrants and refugees.
- There are distinctly different access-to-service issues for people without status; they cannot be equated to Government Assisted Refugees, Privately Sponsored Refugees or other immigrants.

See Appendix C for a full list of the shared comments.

Section 5: Current Challenges and Emerging Issues

Partners highlighted a number of issues impacting organizations serving immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region, including increased number of clients served by local organizations, funding constraints, language barriers, system issues and constantly changing demographics of immigrants and refugees. The top languages in which services are requested in 2018 were Arabic, Tigrinya, Spanish, Farsi and Somali.

Partners felt that the key challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees were finding work, accessing affordable housing, learning English and making friends/social connections.

Main Issues and Challenges

Partners were asked a range of questions on current challenges and emerging issues. The majority of partners (59%) were serving more immigrants/refugees in the past year. A third (33%) were seeing the same number and only a few partners (8%) were seeing fewer immigrant/refugee clients.¹⁸

When asked about their own biggest challenges to serving immigrants and refugees,¹⁹ the top three challenges identified by survey participants were lack of funding (50%), language barriers (47%) and system issues (43%) (Table 7). This was consistent with responses to the 2017 Partner Survey.²⁰

Table 7: Main Challenges in Serving Immigrants and Refugees Among Partners

Main challenges	# of responses	% of responses
Lack of funding	30	50%
Language barriers	28	47%
System issues	26	43%
Workload	17	28%
Lack of coordination between agencies	16	27%
Racism/discrimination towards immigrants and refugees	14	23%
Lack of collaboration between agencies	13	22%
Cultural barriers	12	20%
Other, please specify	8	13%
N/A	6	10%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Other challenges included serving immigrants/refugees within their broad mandate to serve the whole community, inflexibility of funding as well as ineligibility based on immigration status, location of services and complexity of client needs.

¹⁸ Q10. In the last 12 months, has your organization served: (n=51)

¹⁹ Q17. What is your biggest challenge in serving immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region? (Select all that apply) (n=60)

²⁰ There were a few additional options in the 2018 questionnaire for this question (compared to the 2017 survey) so more detailed comparisons are not possible.

Challenges Experienced by Immigrants and Refugees

Reflecting on the challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region,²¹ most survey participants reported finding work to be the top challenge (79%), followed by finding affordable housing (69%) and learning English (48%) (Table 8).

Table 8: Main Challenges of Immigrants and Refugees

Main challenges	# of responses	% of responses
Finding work	48	79%
Finding affordable housing	42	69%
Learning English	29	48%
Making friends or social connections	18	30%
Discrimination and racism	13	21%
Learning where and how to do things	10	16%
Accessing health care	7	11%
Receiving public or social services (e.g. settlement services, government services, etc)	4	7%
Transportation	1	2%
Other, please specify	4	7%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Other challenges noted by partners included parenting in a new culture and accessing mental health care. Partners also commented that all areas are challenging depending on the pre-settlement experience and age cohort of the clients.

Significant Changes in Population Served in the Past Year

Partners were asked to highlight any significant change in the immigrant/refugee population served by their organization in the past 12 months.²² The table below highlights some of the most frequently mentioned topics (Table 9).²³

²¹ Q16. What are the top 3 challenge that immigrants and refugees currently face in Waterloo Region? (n=61)

²² Q11. 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.). (n=40)

²³ Comments were varied within each area. To view the full range of comments see Appendix D.

Table 9: Significant Changes in the Immigrant/Refugee Population

Types of Changes	# of responses	% of responses
Ethnic Origin/Country	11	28%
Employment & Education/Training	10	25%
Overall Numbers	8	20%
Refugees	8	20%
Language	7	18%
Increasing Diversity	5	13%
Refugee Claimants	5	13%
Partnerships/Referrals	5	13%
Secondary Migration	4	10%
Health & Mental Health	4	10%
International Students	3	8%
Other	13	33%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Many partners mentioned an overall increase in the number and diversity of immigrants and refugees from countries and regions around the world – with increases or high levels of immigration specifically from: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Syria, Colombia, Myanmar, Cuba, China, Turkey, and generally from Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

Some partners noted that the number of clients needing employment supports, including conversational/workplace English, has increased.

Several participants commented they were seeing more refugees or refugee claimants. They also noted that the resolution of refugee claims are taking longer so people are in the community longer with temporary status.

Others noted that they were seeing increasing numbers of secondary immigrants who initially landed somewhere else in Canada and have since moved to Waterloo Region.

In terms of language, several partners noted that they are seeing an increasing diversity of languages (i.e. in recent years there was more emphasis just on Arabic because of the Syrian resettlement initiative) including: Tigrinya, Amharic, Swahili and Somali. There were comments about a diversity of English language and literacy levels, as well as an increasing number of Arabic-speaking clients in counselling/parenting programs.

See Appendix D for a full list of the shared comments.

Top Requested Languages of Service

Survey participants were asked about the top five languages, other than English, in which service is requested at their organization²⁴. The most frequently requested languages were Arabic (80% of participants), Tigrinya (46%), Spanish (41%), Farsi (26%) and Somali (26%) (Table 10).

Table 10: Top Requested Languages

Languages	# of responses	% of responses
Arabic	38	83%
Tigrinya	21	46%
Spanish	20	43%
Farsi	12	26%
Somali	12	26%
Mandarin	11	24%
Amharic	10	22%
Urdu	8	17%
Cantonese	6	13%
Rohingya	6	13%
Serbo-Croatian	6	13%
Swahili	6	13%
Vietnamese	4	9%
French	4	9%
Dari	3	7%
Korean	3	7%
Portuguese	3	7%
Punjabi	3	7%
Turkish	3	7%
Kurdish	2	4%
Nepali	1	2%
Karen	1	2%
Shona	1	2%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

²⁴ Q13. Other than English, what are the top 5 languages in which service is requested at your organization? (n=43). Note that the top languages in which service is requested at local organizations may be different from the languages with the largest number of speakers across Waterloo Region.

Anticipated Changes in the Coming Year

Participants were asked to briefly highlight any significant anticipated changes, demographic shifts or emerging issues in the coming year (Table 11).²⁵

Table 11: Expected Changes to the Immigration Landscape in the Coming Year

Types of Changes	# of responses	% of responses
Partnerships & Program Development	8	22%
Health/Mental Health	6	17%
Refugee Claimants	4	11%
Housing	4	11%
Language	3	8%
Overall numbers	3	8%
Employment	3	8%
Government Policy Impacts	3	8%
Countries of Origin/Ethnicity	2	6%
Interpretation	1	3%
International Students	1	3%
Other	4	11%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Many participants noted increased partnerships, outreach or new programming that they were planning to initiate. Several partners indicated that the 2019 Federal election or the new provincial and municipal governments could lead to unknown policy changes and impacts.

Partners also noted:

- Health and mental health issues are anticipated in the coming year – covering various specific groups of immigrants/refugees, counselling, system navigation, family dynamics, etc.
- An expected increase in the number of refugee claimants.
- Accessing housing is expected to get even more difficult for immigrants and refugees.
- Employment and the disconnect between employers and available talent were expected to be an ongoing challenge.

See Appendix E for a full list of the shared comments.

²⁵ Q12. Briefly highlight any significant anticipated changes, demographic shifts, or emerging issues in the coming year. (n=37)

Section 6: How to Better Support Immigrants and Refugees

Partners noted changes that would best help immigrants and refugees included having more affordable housing options, educating employers about hiring immigrant and refugees, enhanced employment/workplace services and ESL opportunities. In the next 10 years, partners want to see improved community services (such as a service/welcome hub or increased coordination/collaboration) as well as strengthened employment, community inclusion/welcome and housing options.

Suggestions to Better Support Immigrants and Refugees

Partners provided suggestions for what can be done to better support the settling and belonging of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.²⁶ The most frequent responses were: the need for more affordable housing options (58%), more education for employers on the value and ways of hiring/retaining immigrants and refugees (29%) and enhanced services and programs for immigrants and refugees to find work (27%) (Table 12).²⁷

Table 12: Suggested Changes to Better Support Immigrants and Refugees

Most important change	# of responses	% of responses
More affordable housing options	34	58%
Educate employers on the value and ways of hiring and retaining immigrants and refugees	17	29%
Enhanced services and programs for immigrants and refugees to find work	16	27%
ESL opportunities in workplaces	15	25%
More ESL opportunities to help improve English skills	13	22%
Actions to improve the social connectedness of immigrants and refugees	13	22%
Better collaboration between agencies	11	19%
Broader community services better able to serve immigrants and refugees as one part of our diverse community	10	17%
More funding	10	17%
Actions to increase welcoming and acceptance of immigrants and refugees	9	15%
Better coordination between levels of government	7	12%
Funding for interpretation and translation	6	10%
Better coordination between agencies	6	10%
Actions to reduce racism and discrimination towards immigrants and refugees	5	8%
Other	2	3%

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Other suggestions included:

- The need to educate newcomers about their rights and responsibilities in the Canadian workplace.
- Increased support in understanding system requirements and in complying with those.
- Recognition that not everyone is computer literate when it comes to completing requirements online.
- Financial literacy education and management.

²⁶ Q18. What are the top 3 changes that could be made to better support the settling, working and belonging of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region? (n=60)

²⁷ There were significantly more response options for this question in 2018 versus the 2017 questionnaire, so a comparison is not possible.

Two thirds of participants (67%) noted at least one option related to employment, and a little less than half noted at least one option related to language/interpretation (48%) or community welcoming and inclusion (43%).

When the main challenges for immigrants/refugees are paired with the most important changes or solutions, the top issues for survey participants were finding work, finding housing, language, social/community factors and service system factors (Table 13).

Table 13: Perception of Biggest Challenges and Solutions to Better Serving Immigrants and Refugees

Main challenges of Immigrants/Refugees (% of participants, n=61)	Most Important Change/Solution (% of participants, n=60)
Finding work (79%)	More affordable housing options (58%)
Finding affordable housing (69%)	Educate employers on the value and ways of hiring and retaining immigrants and refugees (29%)
Learning English (48%)	Enhanced services and programs for immigrants and refugees to find work (27%)
Making friends or social connections (30%)	ESL opportunities in workplaces (25%)
Discrimination and racism (21%)	More ESL opportunities to help improve English skills (22%)
Learning where and how to do things (16%)	Actions to improve the social connectedness of immigrants and refugees (22%)
Accessing health care (11%)	Better collaboration between agencies (19%)
Receiving public or social services (e.g. settlement services, government services, etc) (7%)	Broader community services better able to serve immigrants and refugees as one part of our diverse community (17%)
Transportation (2%)	More funding (17%)
	Actions to increase welcoming and acceptance of immigrants and refugees (15%)
	Better coordination between levels of government (12%)
	Funding for interpretation and translation (10%)
	Better coordination between agencies (10%)
	Actions to reduce racism and discrimination towards immigrants and refugees (8%)

Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Desired Changes for the Next Ten Years

Looking forward to the next 10 years, partners shared their thoughts about what changes they want to see with respect to the settling, working and belonging of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.²⁸ Approximately half of participants (49%) commented on further community service changes for immigrants and refugees, followed by employment and community inclusion and welcoming (Table 14).

Table 14: Changes for the Next Ten Years

What changes participants want to see in ten years	# of participants	% of participants
Community Services (hub, coordination, collaboration, current & community-wide)	21	49%
Employment	18	42%
Community Inclusion and Welcoming	18	42%
Housing	10	23%
Language Learning & Interpretation	6	14%
Mental Health/Health	4	9%
International Students/Temporary Residents	3	7%

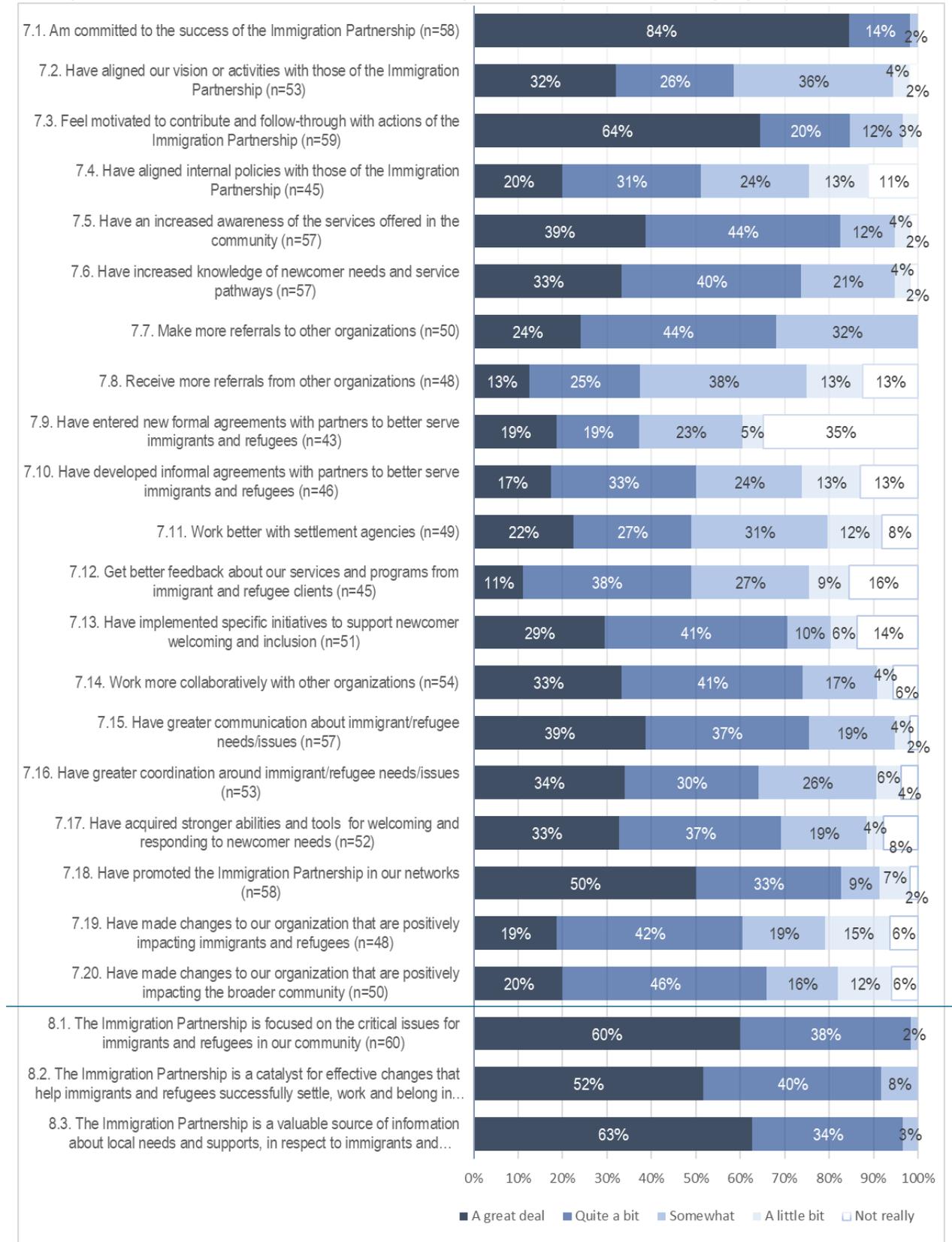
Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

See Appendix F for a full list of the shared comments.

²⁸ Q21. With respect to the settling, working and belonging of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region, what change do you want to see 10 years from now? (n=43, not including those that simply left their contact information to respond in person)

Appendix A: Detailed Response Data

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



Source: IP 2018 Community Survey

Appendix B: Full Comments Regarding Impacts of the Immigration Partnership

Q20. Since the Immigration Partnership started in 2009, what has changed for immigrants and refugees, your organization or Waterloo Region as a result of this community-wide partnership?

- I have noticed an increase in the communication among agencies serving new immigrants and in some situation the ability to coordinate services on their behalf.
- Better coordination, greater understanding about refugees and immigrants in the broader community, improvements in access to interpretation.
- Additional collaboration between organizations to support the overall goals of work, settle and belong. Specific to the health system, we have a better understanding of gaps, which supported the launch of interpretation services.
- Growing immigrant population Growing need for workers across sectors.
- Through the past years we noticed: Better interaction between service providers Better advocacy for newcomers needs Interpretation services is improving Mainstream organizations more open to diversity
- Significantly increased awareness (of the benefits and challenges) and lived experience for employers and co-workers who have seen immigrants actively entering workplaces.
- Just joined the IP and still learning.
- I see more coordination of services, a better understanding of the issues and opportunities for immigrants and refugees, and better sharing of information. All these things together position Waterloo Region as ready to work differently together and attract more resources to support our community.
- The inclusion of the post secondary education sector as part of the settlement community. The recognition of international students as early arrival immigrants. Most recently as a result of changes allowing international students to work, the awareness that there are now more international students in Canada with ability to work than migrant workers in Canada and the supports they need to prevent them being take advantage in the workplace.
- We did not think about the impact of racism on referrals even 5 years ago. We are much more open and willing to adapt our services to meet the needs of newcomers and refugees. Previously we expected them to fit into our system.
- IP has assisted in the coordination of services to immigrants in the community. Their organizational and collaborative influence has been critical.
- The level of communication and collaboration has increased and relationships of trust have evolved. This has helped all of us to work together more effectively and to learn from each other which has impacted our planning and service provision.
- I think we succeed to reach out more more immigrants and refugees from different ethnic background.
- We are now better connected to the social service system for newcomers as a whole, having this not have necessarily been the primary focus of the work we do here at BBBSWR.
- We have had the opportunity to share with community partners though the Immigration Partnership our work and asked for help with referrals and we have seen a change in numbers of people being referred to us by other community partners.
- A wider understanding of the challenges facing newcomers especially, but not only those arriving from refugee experiences.
- Increase collaboration; greater awareness of services/organizations in community; increased partnerships.
- The Immigration Partnership has raised the profile of immigrants and refugees both in terms of needs and contribution to the community.
- There appears to be more information available to connect people with proper services. Agencies also seem to have better information on where to send people with questions. However, as I have only been involved in serving refugees for a little over a year I am not well positioned to fully answer this question. This may speak to the need for me to have a fuller understanding of all of the work that IP does.

- More and better planning and coordination. A central 'clearing house' for information.
- We have so much more knowledge and information on how best to serve these clients, it is night and day. Thank you!
- Information sharing.
- IP has making visible the gaps in the programs that served immigrants, and it started the process to a better coordination and collaboration between agencies.
- Definitely, many things have changed for all. For immigrants and refugees, there are better services in the areas of housing, employment, learning language, accessing health care (interpretation) etc., which drastically helped immigrants and refugees settle, work and belong. This also means for immigrants and refugee a quick economic and social inclusion that can be seen in a big number of immigrants and refugees who joined the job market very quickly and became homeowners, which can be an indicator to poverty reduction among immigrants and refugees. My organization added new programs that have met the needs of these immigrants and refugees. My organization has also witnessed diversity in staff to serve our diverse clients. Also, my organization has partnered with other organizations to share resources for better services for clients. The region has benefited from having immigrants' talent that contributed a lot to the workforce, which means a stronger economy for the region.
- There is definitely a greater awareness of the challenges facing immigrants/refugees within Employment Services. There is greater collaboration between organizations, though we're not where we need to be just yet in terms of a coordinated approach.
- There certainly has been increased collaboration and connection. The activities of the IP and the connection with other organizations have contributed to this collaboration. I appreciate the leadership and inspiration provided by IP staff that serves to spearhead and champion our actions and activities.
- Thanks to the array of campaigns/initiatives launched, such as Belong Together WR, Hire an Immigrant or the Global Migration Film Festival - the community is more aware of challenges faced by immigrants and refugees, more empathy has been fostered, and more community members are slowly beginning to shift paradigms. In addition to providing a comprehensive 'one stop shopping' resource for immigrants and refugees - that provides immigrants and refugees with salient information from before they move to settlement. The IP has enhanced dialogue and information sharing to better integrate newcomer needs into the process of community planning.
- We have found a way to connect our valued resources to those who might benefit from it most.
- The Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery has designed more opportunities through its exhibitions and public programs to welcome immigrants/ refugees. The overall shift in the Gallery is to provide opportunity for dialogue addressing changes in contemporary culture and trends. This shift is designed to address some of the more pressing issues experienced by the immigrants/ refugees. As for changes in the community, I am not able to respond as I myself are fairly new to the area.
- Organizations are more coordinated when it comes to serving and considering immigrants and refugees. There is better collaboration and our organization, as one of the first places immigrants might be connected to, has more information and resources for referrals to support individuals.
- Connection among agencies, and the networking that it brings.
- Much greater awareness of immigrant and refugee concerns and contributions to the community, aided by the resettlement of Syrian refugees. Much greater collaboration and willingness to collaborate among community agencies. New non-settlement partners seeing their role in supporting immigrant and refugee settlement and acting accordingly - i.e., LHIN funding for medical interpretation after 20 years of community advocacy. Growing expanse of community partners with a shared mission to facilitate the successful settling, working and belonging of immigrants and refugees.
- There is a foundation of working together that is much stronger and more of an assumed part of the way we work in the sector than it was 10 years ago. When the Syrian influx occurred, we could come together quickly. The 2019 CFP is also a good example where now we are discussing proposals together before one organization submits to IRCC - 10 years ago I gather that wouldn't have happened. Language learning is more practical than it was back then - 10 years ago it was more formal classroom learning (though we could certainly do more in this respect).

Appendix C: Full Comments Regarding Services Meeting Needs

Q15. Are the needs of immigrants and/or refugees in Waterloo Region being met better in the past 12 months compared to previous years? If you have any comments or differentiating factors to share regarding the above question please explain.

- I am most knowledgeable about improvements made in the health care system.
- There are wider issues impacting the service delivery to immigrants and refugees in the region, these include the political will of the Ontario government, the lack of affordable housing, and the systemic approach to services. Gains are being made in almost every category but it is difficult to answer 'very much so' for any category.
- Need for more trained interpreters or access to telephone interpretation services (especially for languages not commonly spoken) that is cost effective for settlement agencies and other community services to better meet clients' needs. Lack of family doctors accepting any patients. Lack of affordable housing and rising housing and cost of living is negatively impacting initial settlement.
- We are challenged with getting interpretation services in some languages because they only have one or two people. Families and individuals are in need of individual counseling but funding isn't available.
- There are distinctly different access-to-service issues for people without status - they cannot be equated to Government Assisted Refugees, Privately Sponsored Refugees or other immigrants.
- I have no data to support my sense of improvements, only experience as a sponsor and as a volunteer and I cannot really say over what period of time, I think things are improving - it is very subjective. I am more aware of the shortcomings!
- Housing's a challenge in this community for everyone, especially newcomers and vulnerable populations.
- The agencies are doing their usual great work to support newcomers and immigrants with housing. The challenging housing market has made finding affordable and adequate housing really challenging.
- There is a point between 'Not at all' and Somewhat that is the differentiator. There needs to be more focus and the gaps need to be closed in service provision.
- I don't have a huge knowledge base on these items so I'm just responding based on the relatively small number of clients we serve (under 99 per year) and their experiences as they relate them to me. Many struggle with adequate housing and basic needs. Often there is a gap in which the service is there but they don't know how to access it or can't access it because of barriers: language barriers and lack of childcare.
- We don't have specific houses program, but we refer clients to the housing agencies/ landlords.
- In order to better meet the health and mental health needs of immigrants and refugees, practitioners and health providers need to become more culturally self-aware, less ethnocentric, and develop more intercultural understanding.
- Our organization does not have many requests for various language materials however we have started to create some of our youth engagement materials in other languages for schools. More review or our practices would be great with increased resource supports as we have seen recently in the LHINS programs which is a result of our collective work. I feel we have resources but haven't really sought them out personally.
- The role of the Gallery is to create welcoming opportunities for immigrants/ refugees to visit and connect through the exhibitions and public programs.
- LHIN funding for medical interpretation is a game changer. Small employment programs targeting immigrant employment are doing great, but the wider Employment Ontario system doesn't seem to be shifting towards better serving immigrants and refugees.
- Housing seems to be worse but not because of lack of effort - the housing market in general is just very challenging.

Appendix D: Full Comments Regarding Significant Changes in the Immigrant/Refugee Population

Q11. 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.).

- I volunteer with an organization that expanded services to refugee claimants coming to our region, with this, it has been an increase in the number of agencies working with this population.
- More claimants. Constant increase in Ethiopian / Eritrean clients.
- We are likely serving an increased number of newcomers due to the changing demographics of our community.
- Increase in the number of private sponsored refugees. We continue seeing a large number of clients coming from Eritrea that are primarily Privately Sponsored Refugees and Syria that are primarily Government Assisted Refugees. We are also seeing many clients from Colombia. The English language levels for refugees is very low.
- We are seeing different types of immigrants with different expectations about their future in Canada.
- We served around 1800 last year Around 800 were immigrants and new Canadians, most can communicate in English, 80% with an undergraduate degree or higher, almost 60 are employed Around 600 were refugees both GARs and PSRs, recent arrivals, still at different low levels of ESL, not employed and 40% with an undergraduate degree.
- I am involved in a community Center where I oversee the development of programs for people of all ages in the community. Although we are not specifically targeting immigrants/refugee most of our clients are such.
- The immigrant and refugee population attending Wilfrid Laurier University do not access services from Laurier International. Most use the services provided to students as they don't identify as International Students. This has led to changes through out the University as the needs of immigrant and refugee students are often similar to those of international students (cultural adjustment, language, prior academic preparation, family and friend concerns in other parts of the world, discrimination, etc.) As a result, University programs and services have changed to meet a much more diverse population of students (halal meat served in the cafeteria, Muslim prayer rooms, diversity training for student and staff, English language supports, new athletic and recreation programs (Cricket and Korean pop dancing classes)). Programs and services that were once seen as for international students are now being accessed by a greater number of students who would identify as immigrants/refugees.
- This is a challenge to answer the answer to the above question is anecdotal as we do not track the information requested.
- Wide variety of source countries where refugees are coming from increased number of refugees moving within Canada and coming to K-W for work large family size (6+) and singles - difficulties with housing and budgeting on low-income with increased cost of living and rental costs complex medical needs.
- It's taking extremely long to turn over clients because of the lack of available rental housing in Waterloo Region.
- We are serving more clients who have found employment and, therefore, need to access language classes in the evening and on Saturdays. We also have more clients speaking Tigrinya as their first language. Also, more of our students are at the CLB 3-5 levels than in the previous year.
- This is a question I can not answer for my organization as the College has a broad range of programs. Certainly, the language programming, especially LINC programming, reflects the changing demographic of recent newcomers to the region. In addition, the English Language Studies program (English for academic purposes) has experienced a sharp increase in students from Turkey who want a more academic approach to language learning.
- We succeed to increase the number of immigrants and refugees who are served by our organization and reach out different groups from different countries of origin and different ethnic group.
- Through our Summer Discovery camp, this past summer 2018 we served 204 children, in 4 weeks of programming, across 2 different program sites. This is an increase from being able to serve 145

children the summer previous in 2017. In addition, we see more newcomer children being referred to both our school based and community-based programs.

- More diverse countries of origin in clients served.
- We are seeing more of the African, Caribbean and black Communities living with HIV/AIDS and new immigrants to Canada dealing with immigration, housing and financial issues. Stigma and isolation is prevalent within this community due to many underlining issues.
- Seeing an increase number of families from Sub-Saharan Africa - more Swahili and Somali speaking.
- Numbers continue to climb resolution of claims are taking longer meaning our active caseload has gone up about 50% over the past year.
- Growth of refugee newcomers seeking services from Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre continues. The number of refugee claimants and those arriving under private sponsorships has increased, so too have those resettling in the region from other parts of Canada. The particular ethnic and language groups changes in response to the politics of the countries involved. English knowledge, education and employment skills are specific to families, their countries of origin and their refugee experience. We would be foolish to focus simply on the immediate needs of refugee peoples in their first year so many issues arise in the transitional years that follow especially in the areas of conflicting cultural understandings including human rights and legal limitations and with increasing inter-generational conflict.
- No significant change, only increase in requests for refugee sponsorship support.
- We continue to serve a large number of Newcomers in formal and informal ways: formally via LSP services and Newcomer-focused programs like English Conversation Circles and more informally via more traditional library visits where people are seeking information or library-based resources. We partner with more organizations now so that increases the number of Newcomer visits. The partnerships are with organizations like St. Louis, KW Multicultural Centre, and Reception House.
- Number of clients needing employment supports have gone up significantly for us in the past 12 months.
- Numbers of GAR's have decreased in the last few years. We have returned numbers similar to those before the Syrian refugees. We still see about half of incoming clients from Syria but are seeing a bigger cross-section of clients from a range of countries in the middle east and Sub-Saharan Africa for the most part. We have also seen a few clients from Myanmar and Cuba this year.
- We have seen a significant increase in the number of Arabic-speaking immigrant/refugee people for our counselling and parenting programs.
- We have served more secondary migrants we have served a consistently high number of GARS usually more than had projected.
- We are finding more refugees entering our programs, more diversity of languages, and more varied levels of literacy in the home language.
- More than 1500 clients from almost all countries in the world but mainly from Eritrea, Syria, Ethiopia, China, Latin America and more other countries.
- We have been helping immigrants teaching them how to start business in Canada, and referring them to other organizations. In the last 12 months we have served 61 people.
- We have seen more refugees, increased number of new Canadians but fewer ITPs. Youth immigrant numbers have increased.
- Hard to say as an employer as it is still difficult to know where to access immigrant talent.
- No change. We hire immigrants regularly in our Manufacturing division +plus some engineering roles.
- We're working with more i/r for whom conversational/workplace English is more challenging.
- We partnered with Reception House WR to provide therapeutic counselling and programming to parents and children. We also are positioned to provide counselling to International students and WUSC students at WLU and UW specifically - linguistic, cultural and faith sensitive.
- At the Volunteer Action Centre, I have witnessed an increasingly diverse spectrum of immigrants and some refugees dropping in to learn about volunteer opportunities. I've also noticed that most of those people are highly educated - many have advanced degrees - and many have high levels of proficiency in English. Even those who are struggling with the language seem eager to get involved through volunteering.
- All our programs have an element of newcomer support opportunities from youth to adults in ESL programs and one on one visits. Referrals from organizations that serve immigrants and refugees reach out to our community for ways to engage as volunteers or active community members. The referrals are

also from us to the Immigration Partnership. Our recent tool development around Volunteer Readiness and Cultural Competency development is another reason we have to do more outreach and develop new collaborators for continued outreach.

- I entered n/a above as I don't believe any of our departments tracks service provided according to immigrant / refugee status.
- Introduction of new initiatives in public programs at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery that invite the immigrant/ refugee population to participate. Creation of camp subsidies for the immigrant/ refugee population. Gallery tours and studio workshops specifically engaging immigrant/ refugee participants. Facilitator at the Multicultural Connections event at KPL. Host for two films for the Global Migration Film Festival. Lastly, the Gallery is a designated site that offers the Cultural Passes to new Canadians in the Region.
- More secondary migrants of Eritrean, Ethiopian descent - different countries, more variety not just Arabic speaking - consistent issues of domestic violence - more need (has been ongoing for perhaps 5 years?) for access to Swahili and Somali interpretation services. Only 1 interpreter each in our region.
- We have seen more refugee claimants from Latin America since changes in US immigration policy. We also continue to see more international students from East Asia, and more refugees from Eritrea.
- Tigrinya and Amharic speaking clients have increased.

Appendix E: Full Comments Regarding Anticipated Changes or Emerging Issues

Q12. Briefly highlight any significant anticipated changes, demographic shifts, or emerging issues in the coming year.

- Due to the political climate addressing refugees in USA, there will be an increase of refugee claimants moving to Canada and claiming refuge.
- More claimants, Expect more Spanish speaking, more French speaking, possible relief efforts for folks from Yemen.
- Additional focusing on supporting newcomer health care access. We have worked to support additional access to professional interpretation services.
- I expect we will receive more immigrants into our community.
- Talent gap for biz continues to grow.
- More demand on our Mental Health Services and Seniors programs
- We are always looking for strategies to get more community members into the community programs at the center.
- The changes identified above are anticipated to continue into the next year and into the future. As the Immigrant and refugee population increases in Southern Ontario, so will their presence on University and college campuses. This will continue to improve the programs and services for international students
- We anticipate the clients we serve when lol reflect the growing diversity in our community. We are beginning to unpack how systemic racism result in certain populations are over represented in child welfare services.
- Unknown - depends on government policy.
- The long wait for refugee claimant hearings prevents refugees from settling and the lack of rental housing will slow our ability to assist new clients significantly.
- I expect we will be serving more refugee claimants in the coming year. We will be serving the needs of more clients with improved language knowledge.
- We are planning to reach out new location who are in need for our services and also approach different community group.
- We continue to work to meet the needs of the ever-evolving groups we serve.
- We are seeing more significant mental health issues in young women who are dealing with challenges of wanting to live more of a Canadian lifestyle that conflicts with family beliefs. More LGBTQIA issues and family conflict related to this.
- Working more in collaborations with community partners that commit to effectively work with ACKWA's clientele to achieve best outcomes of their presenting issues such as expediting immigration and housing issues.
- Unless they close the borders we will see more people coming with the greatest need continuing to be safe and adequate shelter.
- Continuing demands especially for counselling and support in mental health, system navigation and the potential for early interventions.
- As a library, we aim to have resources for all community members in various languages however, there can be challenges in obtaining such materials and there are other issues. For example, it can be very challenging to find publishers offering materials in Tigrinya and Eritrean. In addition, we try to focus on collections that can be robust and not be minimal collections. Libraries will need to be more flexible to meet the needs of users with changing/emerging language patterns.
- The biggest emerging issue is the increased challenges in finding safe and reasonably priced housing. Budgets do not allow enough funds to pay for what it available. Vacancy rates are extremely low. Length of stay in our temporary accommodation is sky-rocketing as housing challenges increase. Even over the last 6 months this problem has really grown beyond any expectations.
- We see more challenges is health related issues newcomers and particularly refugees are exhibiting, which means staff are spending an increasing amount of time on that issue. Housing has become a much

more acute and serious issue, even more so than when the Syrians arrived. The average length of stay at Reception House is now 5 weeks rather than 3 weeks.

- I am not sure, but I think more refugee clients means more need for certain services e.g. trauma counselling and home visitors.
- Services seem to be mainly tailored to the specific needs of immigrants or refugees basic needs in settling and getting better future through family awareness, English language support, youth programs, LGBTQ+ newcomers outreach and organizational and community advocacy.
- The social and political problems in Latin America will bring more Hispanic people to the Region.
- Increase competition for talent makes accessing immigrant talent even more critical.
- We don't (yet!) really know the direction/support that our new provincial government will take regarding the myriad of i/r issues. I expect that it will be very impacting.
- We were not successful to secure additional dollars for the parenting and play therapy program. We are now in a position to look for further funding for this work.
- Building deeper and more meaningful connections across lines of ethnicity, race, and nationality, in my view is going to be essential to enhancing belonging and building communities in which we can all thrive.
- Need for funding of programs to connect newcomers with broader community rather than silo-ing them together. More funding for translation of promotional materials so that newcomers can self-select what programs they want to participate in.
- With our expanded area of service to now also include the communities of Cambridge and North Dumfries we are learning to stretch our already stretched staffing to respond to these opportunities to assist with education and promotion of community engagement access points for new community members. As always, the partnerships and collaborations are essential to our existence but also require more of our existence. It is a battle to continue each of our 35 years in 2019! With thanks to the Region for their continued support with our work.
- The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery will continue to follow its vision as outlined in its Strategic Plan 2015-20 that recognizes the Gallery 'as a cultural presence in the community by actively growing and engaging a broader and more diverse audience'. As more programs are developed in collaboration with local community partners, the Gallery anticipates that the demographics of visitors will shift significantly which will impact offerings and reflect a broader cross section of the community.
- Rent is becoming more expensive in Waterloo region, which I think will make safe and affordable housing more of an issue for newcomers to our community.
- Immigration may be a trigger issue in the 2019 federal election. New direction from provincial government still unclear. New municipal councils.
- Continued workforce gaps - disconnect between employers and accessing immigrant talent Aging population affecting small business operation - more businesses will be closing due to a lack of succession planning.

Appendix F: Full Comments Regarding Desired Changes

Q21. With respect to the settling, working and belonging of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region, what change do you want to see 10 years from now?

- Immigrants are able to find jobs that fit their education and experience and their average income becomes the same as the average population.
- proactive campaigns and education to reduce racism/discrimination increased openness of employers to hire immigrants increased referrals to settlement agencies from the broader community/supports/services.
- Additional support for newcomers in the areas of health, housing and work.
- Immigrants will be the primary source to fill all job vacancies.
- More immigrants involvement in the 3 levels of IP and at least 60% percent of the IP council are newcomers.
- I would hope to see the current cohort settled, working and happily raising families and contributing to the economy. For three next series of newcomers, I hope we're better coordinated and equipped (via attitude and systems of support) to welcome receive and integrate newcomers into our schools, workplaces and communities.
- That irrespective of whether one is an immigrant/refugee, we all have the right to settle, work and belong in this region in without any form of discrimination.
- More housing options, less racism and discrimination, opportunities to feel included and heard in all areas - social, government, education, workforce. I want to see immigrants and refugees teaching us about how to best help others to work, settle, and belong they are the leaders!
- Recognition of the right for migrant workers to qualify for permanent residence. Recognition of prior learning and experience by industry to assist immigrants pursue and contribute their skills, knowledge and experience to the Canadian economy. A better understanding amongst Canadians of plight of refugees and the need for their well being and care.
- Increased understanding of immigrants and refugees and less discrimination. I hope we are a much more welcoming community and new members to our community gain a sense of belonging in the first year. A more robust offering of English language services.
- I'd love to see a Refugee Hub.
- I would like to see immigrants and refugees working, living in a minimum of adequate, affordable housing without any bias against them. I would like to see them connected with and fully participating in the community.
- I would like to see effective incentives for providing more affordable housing, more flexible and fluid modalities for helping immigrants find work, and renewed collaboration between language service delivery and employers.
- I want to see more strategic plans to enhance collaboration between agencies.
- We would love to see all newcomers feel welcomed, connected, have affordable and safe housing and gain meaningful employment in the Region.
- More coordinated and collaborative approach to service planning. More workplace internships that allow for learning and development within the work.
- People settling smoothly and fast. More support to all immigrants and refugees not just a specific group.
- In no particular order: 1) interpretation more broadly in community (specialist services, dental, optometry) 2) increased coverage for extended health benefits (dental...) 3) increased number of settlement workers 4) community hubs (one stop shopping for social and health services) 5) affordable housing.
- Access to safe and affordable housing.
- More resources available and guaranteed to those who need them over a longer period. Fewer obstacles in systems access so that newcomers are less likely to be marginalized and better able to comply with requirements.
- More employment and skills-training opportunities for newcomers.
- As discussed in other meeting, more community-focused approach.

- Settling: Improved services to assist in finding housing, learning life-skills and navigating the community. More affordable housing available in the community and shorter wait times. Working: Provide more links to career counseling, education and training. Many immigrants take low paying jobs and are stuck there with little to no information or path on how to make a better life for themselves. Belonging: Work on reducing racism and biases in the community. Bring people together more often and break down misconceptions about immigrants and refugees.
- Real coordination and collaboration between agencies not only 'settlement agencies' but those agencies whose mandates are different from what we do. As an example, I would like to see a real partnership/collaboration and coordination between RHWR and local hospital(s).
- More peer mentoring opportunities.
- Immigrants and refugees basic needs presented and accessible by settlement providing agencies
- I expect to see more NGO organizations participating actively in creating a welcome environment for immigrant, making easier for them their integration to the Canadian Society and the GO organizations can worked from a HUB to help immigrants to be settled in the Region.
- A central location to access immigrant talent and help bridge the gap between employers needs and immigrant talent - helping individuals with credential upgrading etc. in areas that have jobs available.
- Work - More employers hiring immigrant talent.
- In 10 years from now, I want to see more diversity in the workplace. That entails an effort to be devoted to having employers, who remain hesitant to hire immigrant, on board. I want to see a region free of discrimination against immigrants, whatever that kind of discrimination. I want to see coordinated immigrant services that respond quickly and efficiently to the needs of the immigrants and refugees. I want to see effective programs for social and economic inclusion, which accelerates the engagement and belonging of immigrants and refugees. I want to see more media focus on the importance of immigration and its benefits to the economy of the region, which changes the point of views of those who are against immigration and immigrants/refugees. I want to see Waterloo Region as the best place to live in because the basics needs for all residents, specially immigrants and refugees have been met.
- No surprise here, a dedicated Hub for Employment (and literacy) Services!
- Recognition that resettlement is not just the purview or work of 'settlement agencies'. Advocacy for newcomers to more easily and readily access supplementary benefits IFH offers including counselling. MTCU and Employment Ontario recognize that newcomer focused employment agencies (that used to exist) should exist again, inclusive of work training or practice firms. Employment offers immersion into English and related to work and training a specialized agency would work well. To consider models of language acquisition - i.e. immersion for children in school vs ESL for parents or adults. This is not my area however I see children acquiring the language more quickly and with more fluency than their parents or older siblings. Some has to do with development however I am not as sold that the ESL model is the best way. Affordable housing stock has larger units for larger families.
- I would like to see the settlement, inclusion, working and belonging process more seamless and supported by the broader community.
- I would see more understanding from non-immigrant population. Getting a closer look, comprehending a human beyond numbers.
- I'd like to see barriers to employment, such as the 'Canadian Experience' requirement significantly reduced. More affordable housing. Build deeper connections across cultural, ethnic, racial or national differences by hosting more events like WR Multicultural Connections and following through with recommendations offered by participants. Reduce racial discrimination and discrimination through workplace programs and in schools.
- Positive messaging of how Canadians have been welcoming and inclusive. Continued reports of successful integration efforts while also pinpointing the very evident stress points. Families and International students who are coming with stories of hardship and trying to find their place - connecting the isolated of all generations - with a system for success for parents and youth. Not sure how to iterate this for sure. We need to learn from what has worked in other communities - countries - or IP networks. LOVE the work we are trying to do - appreciate it!
- A vibrant, thriving community that welcomes all people.
- I would love to see much greater diversity from the staff at our organization and at other organization like ours in the community (school boards, emergency response etc.) I would love to see there being an

easier navigation system for newcomers in place - more of a 'no wrong door' approach to service. In the last election there were many diverse candidates but a very small proportion of them were elected - obviously more diversity in this area would be great as well. Things like the health care interpretation services are a major move forward this year and it would be great if there were these kinds of services for schools and services as well. Affordable housing and transportation are also really important so thinking about systems that connect the suburbs and more affordable family housing spaces to schools and work is really important.

- I feel like cultures in our community are politely disconnected. Each culture tends to keep to themselves. I'd love to feel true cultural diversity in more places and spaces in our region. I notice this every time I do anything outside of work. At work, I experience and feel the diversity of our community. However, once I'm in places and spaces outside of work, everyone around me that participates in the same leisure activities as me, looks like me, talks like me, works in similar places and drives fuel efficient hatchbacks. Obviously, this is on me to branch out. However, I'd love to see all cultures interacting informally and formally in a more real way. The one place where I do see this is in schools, so maybe the young people of our community will help bring about this change.
- More immigrants and refugees in leadership roles across Waterloo Region. Public sector and other major employers in Waterloo Region committing to employment equity, setting targets to close employment gaps for immigrants other diverse groups and tracking / reporting on results. Vibrant settlement and immigrant employment service hubs.
- I would hope there would be even more of a 'whole of society' approach where each organization, government, employer, etc. sees immigrants/refugees not as a separate group to be helped by settlement-oriented organizations but part of our diverse community. I would hope to see a better understanding of international students and how they fit into the fabric of our community (and understand their potential pathway to permanent residence).
- A central location/hub for immigrant employment providing easy access and support for employers and immigrant talent. More and different English language training.
- A variety of ways to connect newcomers with community activities such as the Kitchener and Waterloo Public libraries, since language is often a barrier to local activities and events.

These three suggestions were included in Question 22: Other Comments.

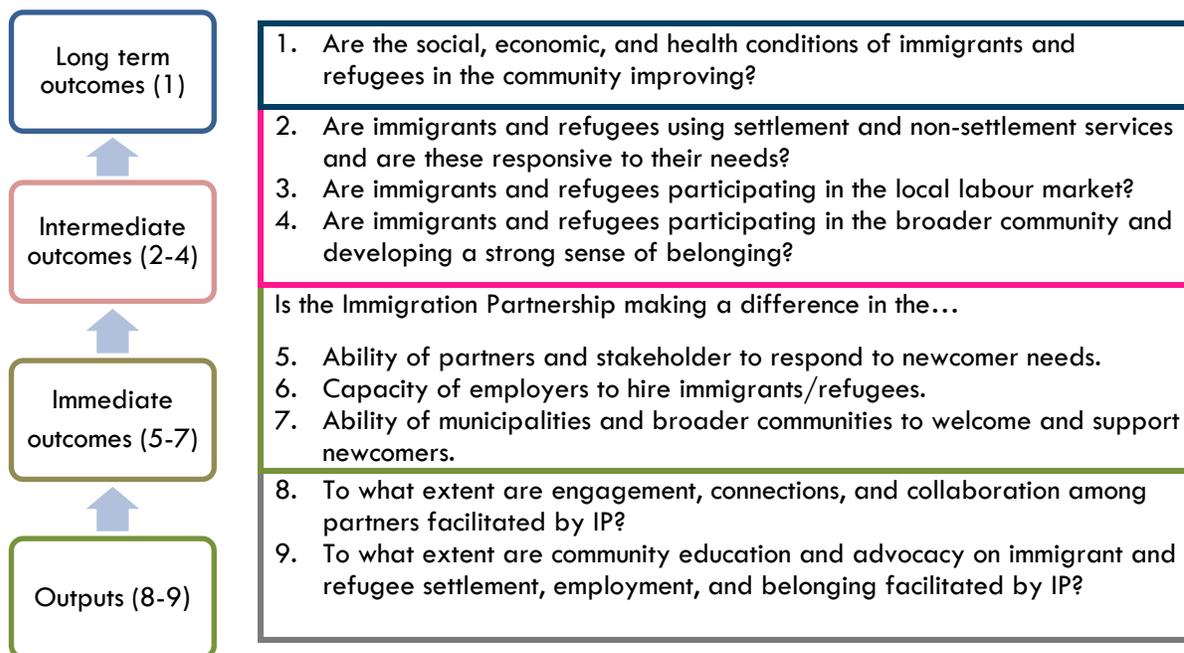
- Agencies need to increase the collaboration among them, to select areas of services where they coordinate their actions and keep assessing their work vis-a-vis results from the Partnership Evaluation results.
- Would love to see opportunities to educate organizations, business, individuals, etc. about racism and discrimination through open, honest dialogue, training, and learning together with an emphasis on better understanding. It would also be great to find learning opportunities on how to be a good ally.
- Utilize Council to advocate for systems change related to issues identified through Working Groups. Identify students/researchers that could be utilized by service providers.

Appendix G: Methodology

Background

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).

Immigration Partnership Overarching Research Questions



The PMF also includes 59 indicators to help IP measure how its work is helping immigrants and refugees successfully integrate in Waterloo Region.

IP gathers data for these indicators from various sources – including an annual survey of engaged partners and a broader bi-annual community survey of immigrants and refugees, individuals from community organizations and the business sector, and interested community members.

Partner Survey Data collection

The first annual Partner Survey which was developed out of the PMF was conducted in November/December 2017 and repeated in November 2018. This current report includes findings from the 2018 Partner Survey with comparisons to 2017 data where appropriate. 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 based on the PMF indicators. The 2018 survey used many of the same questions as the original version but, in discussion with the Evaluation Advisory Committee, incorporated feedback about the original survey and several new questions. The survey tool is available at <https://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/partnersurvey2018>.

All survey participants are partners directly involved with IP and were recruited through email and/or at IP meetings. Most survey participants responded to the survey online with one providing a paper response.

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).