

PARTNERSHIP-WIDE

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p>1.</p> <p>Champion advocacy and engage with elected officials, policy and systems leaders</p>	<p>IP Council members, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to advocate for immigrant-responsiveness within the regional pandemic response across sectors, contributing to a developing health equity approach, disaggregated data collection/dissemination, attention to specific challenges, language access, and culturally appropriate responses. With KWMC, continued to engage Ontario Health West and Ontario Health Teams on ongoing medical interpretation investment in Waterloo Wellington: \$150,000 annually committed from 1 Apr 2022 forward. Region of Waterloo will host funds. Discussing next steps with KWMC as will create significant service gaps and health equity concerns. Participated as a member of the KW4 Ontario Health Team. Consulted Grand River Hospital to inform equity focus in upcoming development of its Clinic Services Plan. Convened the IP Council Refugee Task Force with focus on Afghan/other refugee resettlement and Ukraine response. Convened three Task Force meetings focused on housing, education, health and community welcome/integration. Engaged MPs, MPPs, Regional Chair and Mayors in advocacy on issues arising. Supported donations to the IP Fund for Immigrant and Refugee Initiatives at KWCF/CNDCF.
<p>2.</p> <p>Build awareness of the Immigration Partnership and beneficial impact of immigration</p>	<p>IP Council members, partners, staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through Council/SG partner and staff engagement in pandemic tables and others, grew awareness of IP, immigration and the experiences of immigrants. Significant social media engagement via Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook to promote the importance and contributions of immigrants to Canada. Approx. 4,924 (+299) followers and 133,833 impressions. Fostered significant media coverage of immigration and IP: <p><u>'Thinking globally, acting locally': Local agencies bracing for influx of Ukrainian refugees in Waterloo Region</u> The Record, Waterloo Chronicle, The Star, Apr 11</p> <p><u>'There is no one place when it comes to the Ukrainian response'</u> The Record, Niagara This Week, Mar 28</p> <p><u>Local organization seeking housing for incoming Ukrainians</u> CityNews Everywhere, Mar 24</p>

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		<p><u>What K-W is doing to support arrival of Ukrainian refugees</u> CBC News, Mar 21</p> <p><u>Bowl For Ukraine On April 1 Will Support Local Wartime Refugees</u> The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette, Mar 17</p> <p><u>Waterloo Region will accept Ukrainian refugees, awaiting direction from feds</u> The Record, Cambridge Times, Mar 12</p> <p><u>Group meeting Friday to prepare for arrival of Ukrainian refugees</u> CityNews Everywhere, Mar 11</p> <p><u>Are we ready for refugees from Ukraine?</u> The Mike Farwell Show, Mar 7</p> <p><u>Waterloo Region preparing for influx of Ukrainian refugees.</u> CityNews Kitchener, Mar 7</p> <p><u>Regional Chair asks residents to welcome Ukrainian refugees with kindness</u> CityNews Everywhere, Cambridge Today, Mar 3</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>Lead collaborative learning and community education</p>	<p>Partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared partner feedback from the 2021 IP Partner Survey: https://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/en/resources/IP_Partner_Check-in_Summary_-_2021.pdf • Developed topic and population-based sub-analyses of the 2021 Immigrant Survey to explore perspectives of specific groups. To be released in coming months (e.g. Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, rural resident profiles, housing profile, interpretation profile, inclusion and discrimination profile, etc.) • Shared relevant data insights from Immigrant Survey with specific groups. • Shared survey findings at Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT) event regarding Youth Impact Survey data on inclusion (as part of the Mar 21 events). • Worked with Region of Waterloo, Workforce Planning Board and WLU researchers to coordinate sharing/analysis of data, particularly in light of 2021 census data which will be released in August (language data) and October (immigration data). • Consulted with WLU researchers and CFFM regarding food insecurity of refugees and migrants in KW and two global cities. • With CYPT and Wellbeing Waterloo Region, planned upcoming sessions on White Supremacy to further build community capacity for anti-racist organizational change. • Regular updates to the Immigration portal, with 6,214 visits by 5,664 unique visitors. Nine Weekly Updates on Covid-19 and Immigration to 566 subscribers, with a 32% open rate and 1,422 opens - shared relevant research reports to grow community knowledge. • Co-chairing a new LIP Research Working Group made up of LIPs across Canada focused on sharing and advancing research and data needs of all LIPs.
<p>4.</p>	<p>SG partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing engagement of a Council and Steering Group-wide approach to implementation of IPs Anti-Racism Commitment and evaluation framework development.

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<p>Break down silos within the Partnership and the community to promote immigrant success</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to share resources, connections, provide support between BSG and SSG partners and pandemic groups on language and interpretation issues, providing linkages for guest speakers to specific newcomer/racialized/language groups re vaccines and safe-isolation sites. Continued collaboration and alignment by regular staff engagement with WR Crime Prevention Council, Children and Youth Planning Table and Wellbeing Waterloo Region peers (focus on aligning anti-racism/equity in governance, data and evaluation, public education, and more). Ongoing connection with Local Immigration Partnership peers in SW Ontario and nationally. Convened bi-weekly settlement executive leadership meetings to facilitate collaboration and alignment.

SETTLE STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p>1.</p> <p>Develop communication strategies and tools to simplify service systems and pathways for immigrants</p>	<p>ROW Citizen Service and Public Health, settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared information about Afghan and Ukrainian settlement needs and activities among SSG immigrant-serving partners. Partners/staff continue to work with KW4 Ontario Health Team partners – OHT has been focusing on pandemic-related needs and urgent issues that come up (e.g. interpretation) while they reorganize for work beyond their first year.
<p>2.</p> <p>Drive collaboration and innovation within the settlement sector</p>	<p>YMCA, KWMC, Reception House, Carizon, MCRS, IP staff</p> <p>IP partners and staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support sharing and networking between YMCA, KWMC and Reception House. Launched a new working group – the Waterloo Region Migrant Workers Coalition (WRMWC) – based on an identified need to share information and collectively respond to gaps for migrant/temporary workers. The group is exploring opportunities for referrals to services for migrant workers, supporting migrant worker employers, accessing needed data, discussions about services for residents with precarious status, etc. Supported community organizations regarding interpretation options.
<p>3.</p> <p>Leverage service providers and planning tables as effective immigrant supports through strong</p>	<p>Settlement partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners and staff continue to support <u>KW4</u> Ontario Health Team (OHT) groups, which have identified refugees as a priority population, to determine health, mental health, and language interpretation resources and pathways for refugees. Part of the KW4 OHT Refugee Health working group and the Refugee Mental Health Working Group. IP and Centre for Family Medicine staff co-leading KW4 Interpretation Services working group. Utilized immigrant survey findings regarding interpretation in Waterloo Region to inform funding advocacy.

relationships and collaboration		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to collaborate with Region of Waterloo Housing staff in the planning to develop a <u>portal housing benefit for equity-deserving populations</u> (Black, Indigenous and people of colour). Launched on Sept 9, it will be expanded from the original pilot of 30 households to 200 families. Supported recruitment of a staff lead for this work. Immigrant Housing Working Group partners met regularly to share, network and problem-solve. Maintained connection to housing and other community action tables to bring forward immigrant perspectives.
4. Engage networks of private stakeholders in supporting immigrants	Settlement and other partners, IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged with and provided information to the Waterloo Region Grassroots Response to the Ukrainian Crisis (https://www.wrgrassrootsresponse.ca) – a local group of about 250 volunteers. Connected them to existing community systems and partners. Referred people wanting to provide support to Ukrainian families to settlement and other services. Reception House, with IP staff, supported WLU students to develop tools/supports for landlords renting to refugees. Shared Immigrant Survey data regarding housing to inform the project directions.

WORK STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
1. Develop campaigns and tools to amplify the value proposition and economic contribution of immigrants to employers	WSG members/IP staff	Ongoing placement of strategic ads in Chamber newsletters and directories, social media and virtual events for awareness building and message sharing, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoted via Greater KW and Cambridge Chamber of Commerce events and publications. Working with Cambridge Chamber on their upcoming Business Gala event through sponsorship presence and, the Greater KW Chamber's Annual Business Directory will feature an article and advertising from IP and we will be part of the Manufacturing Day in June. Raising awareness through social media related to hiring immigrant talent and associated topics. Promoting partnerships with other organizational initiatives. Participated in Greater KW Chamber Business Around 5 and most recently Cambridge Business After 5 (in person) events using video, backdrops and chatrooms to build awareness and engage with employers. Collaborated with the Guelph Wellington Immigration Partnership to support Workforce Planning Board (WFPB) in an immigrant labour research project.

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<p>2.</p> <p>Foster cohesive service to employers and immigrant job-seekers across sectors and the talent spectrum</p>	<p>WSG members/ IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked closely with employment service partners and employers to build the bridge for immigrants to access meaningful employment. Referred various regional employers to immigrant employment partners. Most recently liaising with employers regarding Ukrainian workers. Keeping track of those interested for further connection. • Continued to work closely with the Workforce Planning Board to market their FindyourJob.ca job board and to discuss the future inclusion of more immigrant hiring, networking and resource tools. • The Talent Hub Task Group continues to look at the most feasible and effective way to launch an immigrant talent hub. Exploring other options including most recently the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce Newcomer employment hub. The Winnipeg Chamber will provide an overview of this program at an upcoming WSG meeting. Atlas, a Vancouver-based company, will present their program and interest in launching supports for employers to find talent. They focus on providing easy access to immigration processes for employers and have had many requests from their employer clients to launch an online talent hub. The Talent Hub Task Group still believe that such a program should be with the Chambers with a community/employer advisory group. The critical component to address in Hub planning is funding for programming, marketing, staff and administration.
<p>3.</p> <p>Engage networks of employers to hire and retain immigrants</p>	<p>WSG members/IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSG's role is to bring awareness to employers that immigrants are invaluable to their organization, that they are here and ready to work; also to look at processes and systems that will allow employers to easily access this talent and make connections. Engaging employer partners through the pandemic has been difficult as they faced many challenges and it has gradually improved and so has their need for talent. The gaps are increasing in many sectors including manufacturing, healthcare, warehousing, restaurants, retail and more. There are issues with not only recruitment and hiring but also retention. Many are looking at how and from where they can hire immigrants and refugees. • Referred many employers to local immigrant employment programs for support. Other employers have questions around immigration law, related to work permits or bringing people from abroad. IP shares shared job postings to our network regularly (including Reception House, KWMC, Connector program and Mentorship Program. We also refer to Employment Ontario team members i.e.: YMCA. There is clearly a need for a Talent Hub where immigrants and refugees can go to access jobs and employers can engage them. FindYourJob.ca reports an increase in job postings across the region, increased re-entry into the job market and more professional immigrants being employed. • Continued partnership with the Greater KW Chamber on weekly Business Success webinars. The March event included former IP Council member and immigration lawyer Jennifer Roggeman (view it here), who shared the do's and don'ts with business immigration and the various policies and processes. It was a very informative session for employers. The next event is scheduled for May. • We will continue to work the Greater KW Chamber on immigrant related events as we move throughout this year and beyond.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IP staff support work of the Greater KW Chamber in various ways. Currently meeting with Chamber about an immigrant leadership program and an event in the fall of 2022. IP participates on the Greater KW Chamber's DEI Committee to offer input into their messaging and programming, for example a recent webinar about Health Equity and another on Islamophobia in the near future.
<p>4.</p> <p>Collaborate with leaders and organizations (public, private and not-for-profit) to foster immigrant attraction, employment and entrepreneurship</p>	IP staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work closely with regional economic development reps via Best WR and WSG. Continue to address various sectors and what they are facing during COVID and how this group can support them. This group has gradually moved to monthly meetings with a broader focus than COVID impact. The talent challenges require this group to continue working together. Continue to have stronger relationships with members at ROW Ec Dev and the City of Cambridge. All urban municipalities now engaged with WSG. Provided input as part of ROWs economic development strategy refresh and talent strategy development to bring focus to immigration elements. Continue relationships with other Immigration Partnerships with leadership by Immemploy (London) as we plan collaborative engagement of employers across Southwestern Ontario to build capacity to hire immigrants. Two employer webinars will took place in Feb and March, and we will host several more in the fall of 2022. Attendance at an in person employer workshop for Immemploy was successful with consideration for Immemploy to host an event in Waterloo Region this fall. Continued to work with the Small Business Centre, promote their workshops and make connections with immigrant service providers to improve supports for immigrant entrepreneurs. Gave input into a new project that just received approval and will launch soon. Continued to work with the Job Developer Group and CELC (Community Employment and Literacy Council) and sometimes the Brown Bag Lunch group to help their work supporting immigrant job seekers. CELC decided recently to hold its Employer Recognition event later this fall (2022) in a virtual format. Partnership with Worldwide Education Services (WES) on a program called #Immigrant Work, which includes developing and launching an employer playbook for Waterloo Region re: hiring immigrants and more. Held bi-weekly meetings with WES team as the development of the Employer Playbook continues. Expected completion is end of May 2022. The Foundational Partner group will meet once more to review the content prior to release online. This Employer Playbook will be an ideal resource for employers to have a one-stop location to get answers to their questions and to access resources needed to support their efforts for recruitment, hiring and retention. WES will maintain and update this digital Playbook. Continue to attend educational meetings and to participate in sessions that keep IP connected to the business community within Waterloo region and beyond. The changes that are facing employers are drastic re: staff shortage, resignations, mandates and whatever IP can do to help bridge gaps is very important.

BELONG STEERING GROUP

Strategic Direction	Who's Leading	Progress Update
<p>1.</p> <p>Build connections, capacity, and civic engagement among ethno-cultural groups and the community at large to increase immigrant influence in policymaking and social connectedness</p>	<p>BSG partners, IP staff, and Social Inclusion Working Group (SIWG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued participation in discussions that affect the lives of immigrants and refugees with community partners, ethnocultural groups, and members. The Social Inclusion WG is planning an annual Multicultural Connection Event for June 2022. Ongoing updating of ethno-cultural groups list and efforts to make connections and build relationships. Ongoing phone and zoom meetings to build a rapport and relationship with ethno-cultural leaders/members. Attended the opening of the Rohingya Centre of Canada in Kitchener.
<p>2.</p> <p>Work with municipalities and other public sector partners as leaders and advocates to strengthen immigrant welcoming, inclusion, and engagement</p>	<p>City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener, City of Cambridge, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support/participation, sharing resources, networking, support between partners on language and interpretation issues, connections for guest speakers to specific newcomer/racialized/language groups regarding belonging, and community building. Supported the City of Cambridge with their Newcomer Outreach Program in hosting a Newcomer Wellness event.
<p>3.</p> <p>Increase public support for immigration, and action to address racism, discrimination and foster immigrant belonging through campaigns and initiatives</p>	<p>IP Staff and Public Education Working Group (PEWG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to support, collaborate and build capacity to address hate crime, hate incidents, and racism at the individual, organizational, and community level convening targeted discussions and participating in related workshops and training. March 21 was the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. IP and partners hosted four events as part of work to build community capacity to address racism. It was a day of unpacking, unlearning, and understanding the immense impact of racial discrimination. The sessions were well received and much needed. Fourteen organizations partnered in hosting and/or presenting session on racism, anti-racism work happening in Waterloo Region, and research findings. The partners included Wellbeing Waterloo Region, Coalition of Muslim Women KW, Volunteer Waterloo Region, Children Youth Planning Table, Kind Minds Family Wellness, Somali Canadian Association Waterloo Region, Landback Camp, Waterloo Region Anti-Racism Advisory Working Group, Selam Debs, Healing of the Seven Generations, Bring on the Sunshine, Black Lives Matter WR and African Community

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		<p>Wellness Initiative. Their engagement made the events a success – they gave time, expertise, immense insight, and had brave discussions around White Supremacy and racism. Two hundred and seventy five attendees learned about local anti-racism initiatives and the many ways we can tangibly support each other in countering racism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Understanding White Supremacy as the Root of Racial Discrimination – 65 attendees * Youth: Beyond Belonging – 75 attendees * Spotlight on Anti-Racism Work – 115 attendees * Amplifying YOUTH Voices – 25 attendees <p>This level of participation validates the ongoing need for work in this space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PEWG continues to develop anti-racism strategies, resources, and campaigns like #RacialEquityWR. • Presented on diversity and inclusion to Community Support Connections staff in Breslau.
<p>4.</p> <p>Collaborate with systems and community tables and leaders</p>	<p>Municipal partners, IP staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welcoming Refugees Collaborative, newly formed as a sub-group of the IP Council Refugee Task Force, met a few times to address issues of Afghan, Ukrainian and other refugee welcoming and integration. See Task Force meeting minutes for updates. • Continued participation with the pandemic Psychosocial and Spiritual Working Group, Cambridge Mobilization Team and Wellbeing Waterloo Region to bring immigrant focus. • Participation in the Region of Waterloo’s internal Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Human rights (EDI) Working Group.

Welcome New Partners!

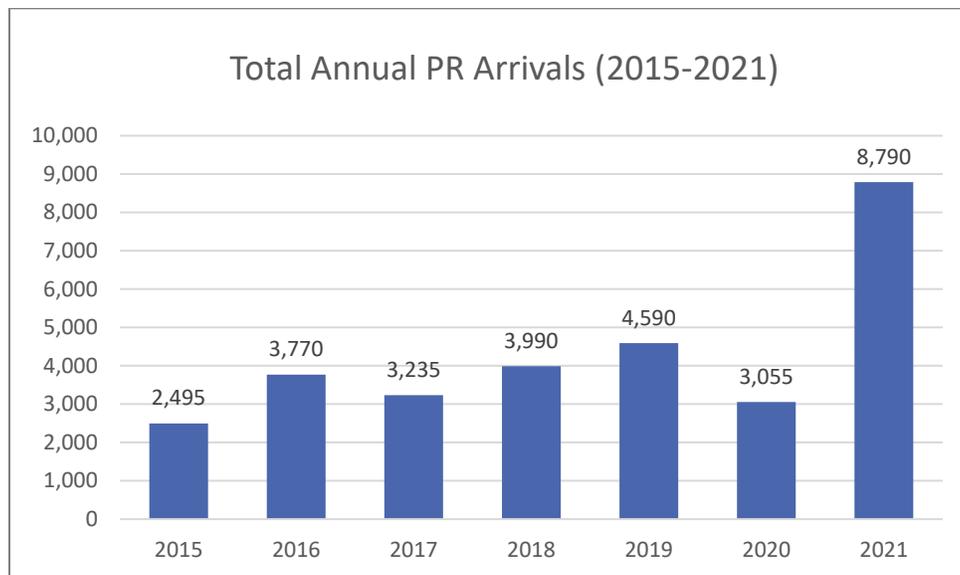
SSG: Jenna Hennebry (WLU & Balsillie School of International Affairs), Erica Dudszus (KPL), Wajma Attayi (Centre for Family Medicine), Angie Pham (WR Community Legal Services), Mayada Abou Warda (Sanctuary, KDCHC). Working Groups: David Alton (Social Development Centre), Brittany Bridge (ROW Housing Services), Nicole Perreira (SHOW), Ashley Schuitema & Joanna Mullen (WRCLS), Natalie Hughes (Conestoga College)

BSG: Thank you to Shannon Markle from Idea Exchange for stepping into IP leadership as BSG’s new Vice-Chair! Welcome Sheryl Mascoll (Region of Waterloo), Cheryl Grove (Wellbeing Waterloo Region), Allie Fallis (Libraries WR), Cheryl Faria (Region of Waterloo)

Context and cross-referrals

Immigration Data and Trends

- The [2022-2024 Immigration Levels Plan](#) was announced in Feb. It targets 431,645, 447,055 and 451,000 new permanent residents annually in that period, up from just over 405,000 in 2021.
 - Includes up to 40,000 Afghan refugees (10,605 arrived, including 330 in WR).
 - Does not include temporary residents (claimants, int’l students, work permit holders).
 - Does not include people fleeing war in Ukraine – unlimited number to be welcomed to Canada. So far, over 100,000 people have applied.
- 2021 saw the largest annual number of new permanent residents settling in Waterloo Region (8,790) – nearly three times as many as 2020 (3,055) and nearly twice as many as 2019 (4,590). January 2022 saw a decrease from the monthly arrivals in the fall 2021 – though still more than the overall average for all of 2021 (733). ([IRCC data, 2021](#)).



Contributors to success

- Partner commitment and engagement. Solid foundation of partnership and collaboration.
- Partners have been keen to know what others are doing and collaborate when possible.

Challenges and how we are responding

- Housing, primary health care and mental health are major challenges at this time.
- Organizations impacted by staff shortages and growing demand for services.
- Funding for interpretation in health settings is less than half of what is needed. Conversations are continuing to advocate for increased, sustainable funding.

How Council or other Steering Groups can support

- Review and improve organizational policies on interpretation provision and anti-racism.
- Refer employers seeking talent to WSG/Nora.

Other community initiatives and how to they relate

- The Region of Waterloo is developing new strategies for economic development and talent.