

2019 Partner Survey 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 September 2019. 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 2019, 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 generally more engaged, more collaboration was occurring and services were felt to be increasingly meeting the needs of immigrants and refugees than in past years. However, there was recognition of persistent challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees stemming from increasing number and diversity of newcomers, systems and community-wide issues that we continue to engage in through the Immigration Partnership.

- **High Engagement:** Partners were 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 felt 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 were 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 had greater coordination and collaboration.
- **Increasingly Meeting Needs:** The majority of partners felt that the needs of immigrants and refugees had been better met in the last year than previously across all service areas. However, they are somewhat less likely to suggest that needs were better met in the areas of housing, small business/entrepreneurial supports, legal services and mental health services.

- **Top Challenges/Solutions for Immigrants/Refugees:** Partners indicated that the top challenges for immigrants were finding work, accessing affordable housing, learning English and making friends or social connections – areas that cover all three pillars of Immigration Partnership activities. These were the same top challenges as noted in 2018. Employment/employer related solutions, affordable housing, ESL opportunities and social connectedness of immigrants/refugees continued to be key areas where partners believed changes would better support immigrants and refugees in our community. Centralized services or hubs (employment or settlement) were also mentioned frequently.
- **Organizational Issues:** The majority of partners serving immigrants and refugees were seeing more clients than in previous years, with a diversity of backgrounds and needs. The top organizational challenges to serving immigrants and refugees reported by partners were lack of funding, system issues and language barriers.

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.....	15
Appendix A: Detailed Response Data	20
Appendix B: Full Comments Regarding Stories of Impact.....	21
Appendix C: Full Comments Regarding Services	22
Appendix D: Full Comments Regarding Changes in the Past Year	23
Appendix E: Full Comments Regarding Upcoming Changes.....	25
Appendix F: Full Comments Regarding What We Might Do LESS/MORE.....	27
Appendix E: Methodology.....	30

Detailed Survey Findings

This survey gathered feedback from partners involved in IP committees and other community partners that receive the Immigration Waterloo Region Weekly email updates. Data was collected in September 2019. The survey included 26 questions (<https://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/partnersurvey2019questions>); some were only asked of committee members and some of all respondents.

There were 70 responses to the 2019 Partner Survey. For comparison, the 2018 Survey had 61 respondents but was only sent to members of IP committees.

Section 1: Demographic Overview

Survey participants represented IP Council and all three pillars. More than half of all participants had been part of IP for 3 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.

Table 1: Respondent Connection to IP¹

What is your connection to the Immigration Partnership? ²	# responses
I am a member of the IP Council, one of the Steering Groups or Subcommittees ³	48
<i>IP Council</i>	18
<i>Settle</i>	19
<i>Work</i>	9
<i>Belong</i>	8
I am not a member of an IP committee but receive information from IP regularly	17
I am an IP staff member	5

The majority of partners had been involved with IP for 3 or more years.

Table 2: Length of Involvement with IP

How long have you been involved with the Immigration Partnership? ⁴	# responses	% responses
Less than 1 year	9	21%
1 to 2 years	8	19%
3 to 4 years	7	16%
5 years or more	19	44%

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the data source for all tables and figures is the 2019 Partner Survey, with comparisons to previous surveys sourced from the 2018 Partner Survey and 2017 Community Survey.

² Q2. What is your connection to the Immigration Partnership? (n=70)

³ The number of responses from various groups did not add up to the current total members of because some individuals sit on multiple groups (i.e. all steering group chairs sit on Council). Other respondents may have been past members of various committees.

⁴ Q3. How long have you been involved with the Immigration Partnership? (n=43)

Committee member respondents represented multiple perspectives.⁵

Table 3: Sector Perspectives

Are you completing this survey as a...?	# responses	% responses
Service provider to immigrants, refugees or international students	21	49%
Public sector employer	5	12%
Private sector employer	2	5%
Government representative	2	5%
Community member	3	7%
Other	10	23%

Thirty respondents provided information about how many immigrants or refugees they or their organization hired in the last year: for 27% more than half of their new hires were immigrants/refugees and for another 26% between 10% and 50% of new hires were immigrants/refugees. One-fifth of respondents or their organizations did not hire in the last year.

About a third of all respondents were immigrants or temporary residents⁶. Twenty-three respondents were permanent residents or had become citizens of Canada, one respondent was a temporary resident, and the rest were born in Canada.

⁵ Q6. Are you completing this survey as a...? (n=43)

⁶ Q7. Which of the following describes you? (n=69)

Section 2: Partner Engagement

Partners were quite committed to the success of the Immigration Partnership and motivated to participate in Partnership activities. They were as or more engaged in 2019 than in previous years. 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

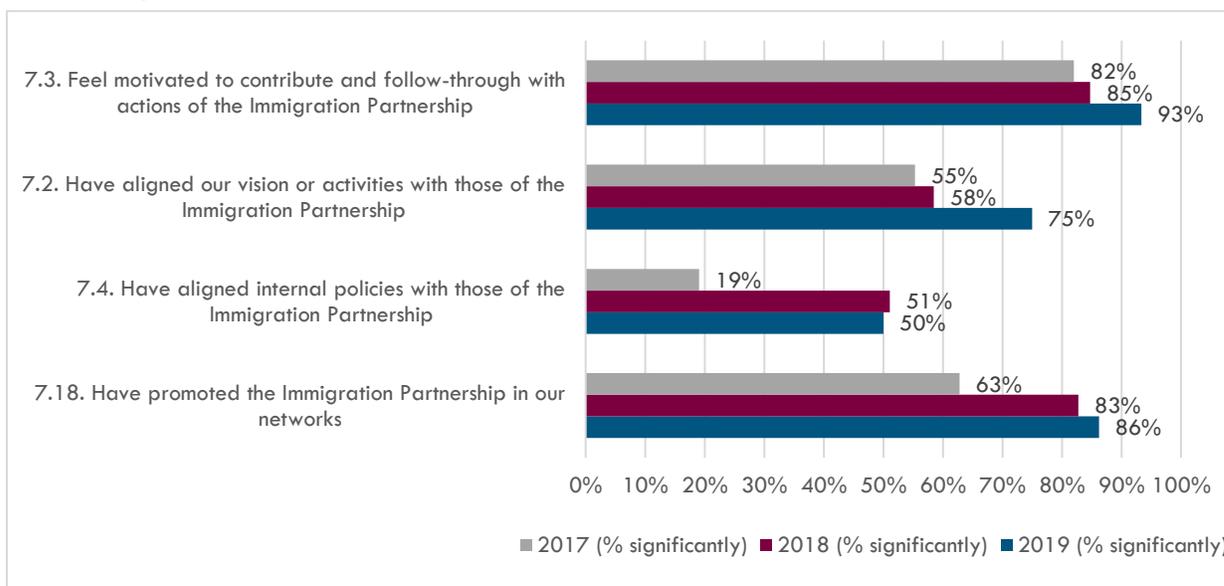
Most survey participants attended 5 or more IP meetings during the past year – including meetings of Steering Groups, action groups, Council, etc.⁷ Among all survey respondents, 12% attended 2 or fewer meetings, 35% attended 3-4 meetings, 37% attended 5-9 meetings, and 16% attended 10 or more meetings throughout the year.

Respondents were asked various questions about their commitment and engagement with the Partnership.⁸

- All respondents were committed to the success of the Partnership and were motivated to contribute and follow through with the IP actions.
- All respondents had aligned their vision/activities and 90% 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 previous Partner Surveys (2017 and 2018) with the exception that, in 2019, respondents were more motivated to contribute and follow-through and more likely to have aligned their vision or activities with those of the Immigration Partnership.

Figure 1: Change in Commitment of Partners, 2017-2019⁹



⁷ Q5. Approximately how many Immigration Partnership meetings have you attended in the past 12 months (steering group, action group, Council, etc.)? (n=43)

⁸ Q10. 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.

⁹ 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 impact.¹⁰

- All partners felt that the Partnership is focused on the critical issues for immigrants and refugees in our community (97% felt significantly¹¹ so).
- All partners felt that the Partnership is a catalyst for effective changes that help immigrants and refugees successfully settle, work and belong in our community (89% felt significantly so).
- 98% of 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).

This was similar to the responses from the 2018 Partner Survey.

¹⁰ Q11. 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.)

¹¹ “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.

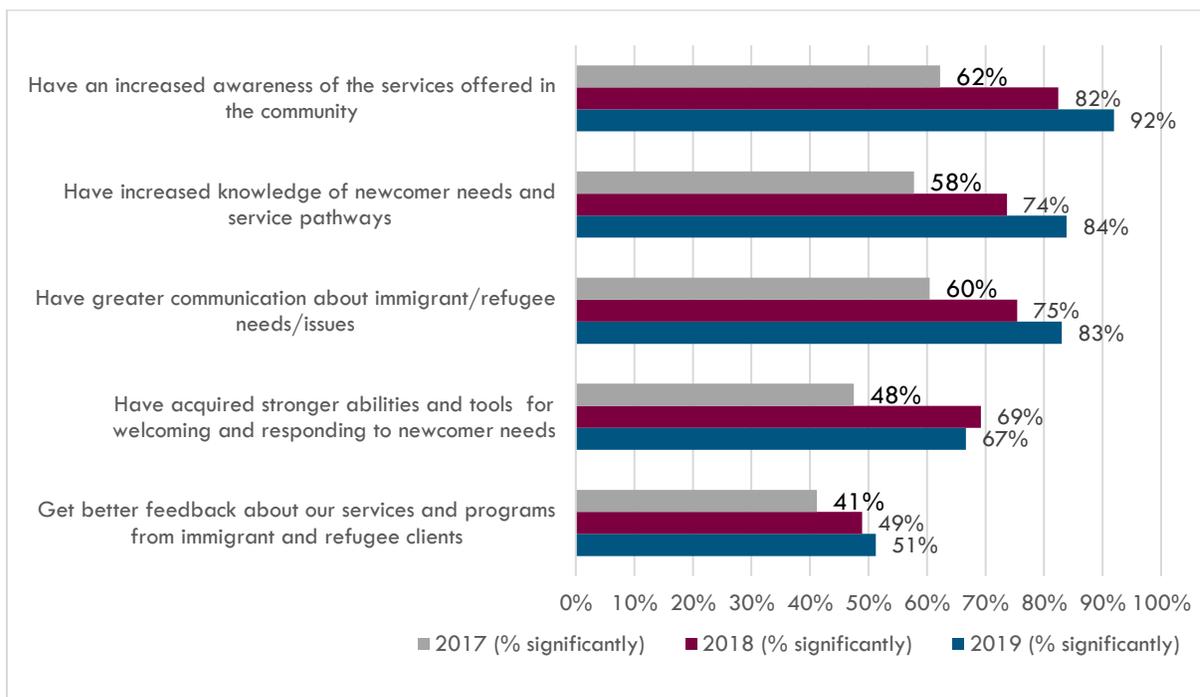
Impact of Involvement in IP on Partners

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:

- 100% had increased their awareness of the services offered in the community.
- 100% had increased knowledge of newcomer needs and service pathways.
- 100% had greater communication about immigrant/refugee needs/issues.
- 94% had acquired stronger abilities and tools for welcoming and responding to newcomer needs.
- 87% got better feedback about their services and programs from immigrant and refugee clients.

Partners were more likely to have realized the above benefits in 2019 than in previous years (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Impact of Involvement in IP on Partners, 2017-2019¹²



¹² In this report, “significantly” refers to the combined percentage of both “A great deal” and “Quite a bit” responses. Most comparisons to 2017 compare the changes in “significantly” responses to more clearly pull out differences.

Referrals and Collaboration

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

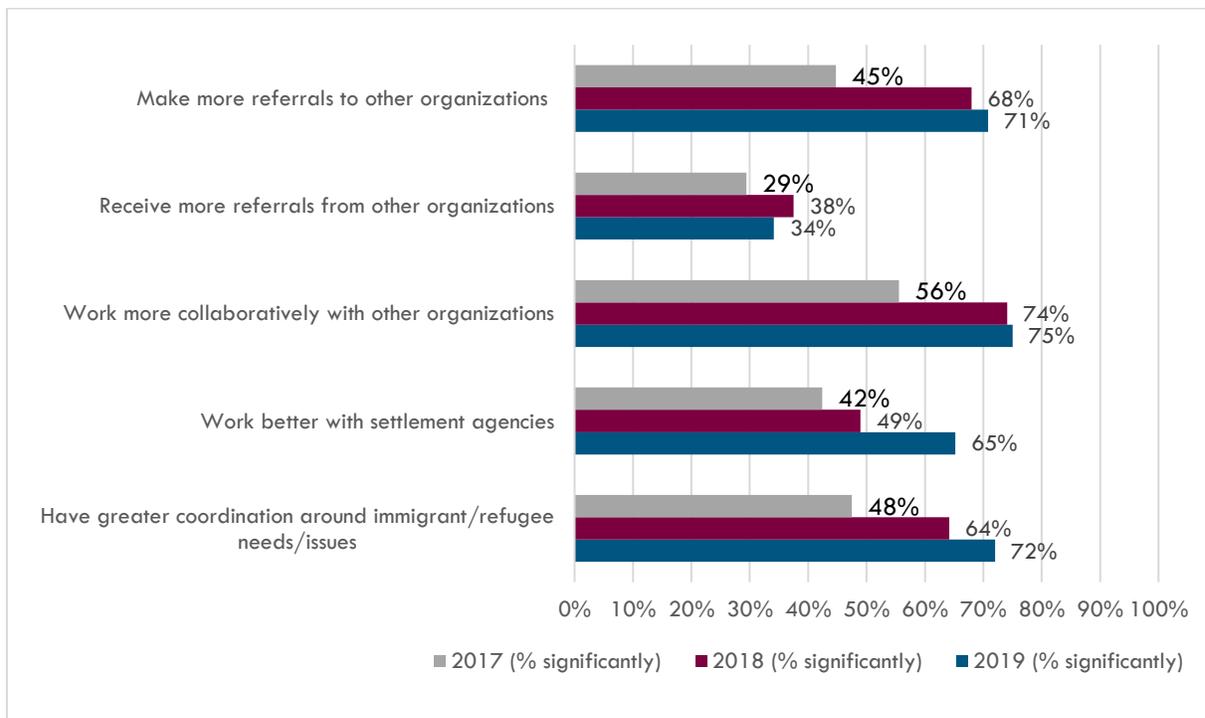
- 96% of participants made more referrals to other organizations as a result of their work through the Immigration Partnership.
- 85% received more referrals from other organizations.

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

- 96% worked more collaboratively with other organizations.
- 89% worked better with settlement agencies.
- 94% had greater coordination around immigrant/refugee needs/issues.

Partners were as or more likely to have realized significantly stronger working relationships in 2019 compared to past years (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Change in Working Relationships, 2017-2019



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:

- 78% had entered into new formal agreements with partners.
- 88% developed informal agreements with partners.

Broader Impact of Involvement with IP

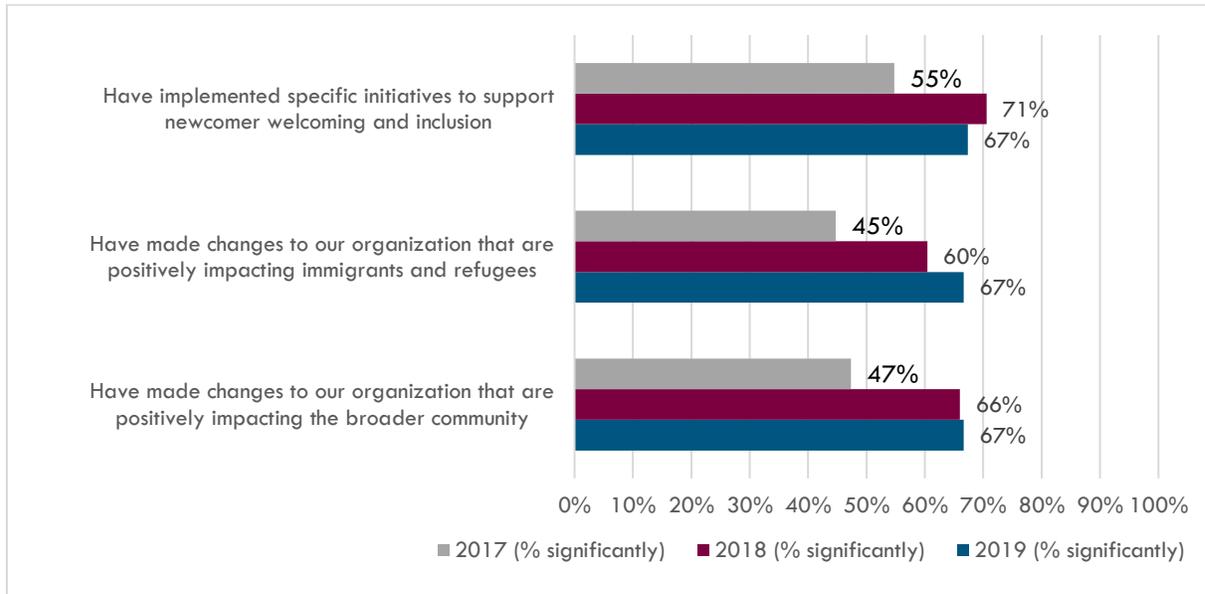
Most survey participants had made changes to their organization that were having a broader impact on immigrants, refugees and the community (Figure 4):

- 96% had implemented specific initiatives to support newcomer welcoming and inclusion.
- 96% had made changes that are positively impacting immigrants and refugees.

- 98% had made changes that are positively impacting the broader community.

In most cases, partners were more likely to have significantly realized broader benefits as a result of involvement in IP in 2019 compared to previous years (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Change in Broader Impact of Involvement with IP, 2017-2019



Respondents were asked to share a story that highlights the impact of their involvement with the Immigration Partnership.¹³ They shared a number of stories including comments regarding:

- **Greater awareness among partners and in the community** (6 comments), for example:
 - “Nothing drastic or sensational, but receiving detailed information about events, policy, media etc that are relevant to immigrants and refugees has been instrumental in our organization remaining up to date and able to refer and share relevant and needed connections and opportunities.”
 - “The social media campaign on the Day to Eliminate Racial Discrimination was an excellent way to engage the community and showcase the local champions in inclusion.”
- **Connections/networking** (4 comments), for example:
 - “As a result of sitting at the Immigration Partnership table, I was aware of a lawyer who recently started to practice immigration law. I later attended a training regarding newcomers where a representative of an agency spoke to how critical their need was for legal representation. I was able to connect the two parties. They have started a regular legal aid clinic at their site.”
- **Referrals** (3 comments)
- **Employers asking for help and hiring immigrants** (2 comments), for example:
 - “Currently an action group from the Work Steering Group is working on a model for a one stop location for employers to access immigrant talent. This concept has been presented to a number of employers and has received a positive response. Employers are asking how quickly this 'hub' could be implemented as there is such a shortage of talent.”
 - “Recently, Tigercat industries was a lead that Nora provided that will be hiring about 7 refugees in the next few days.”

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

¹³ Q23. Please share one story that highlights the impact of your involvement with the Immigration Partnership in the last 12 months (n=16).

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 English language learning programs. They were less positive about housing, small business/entrepreneurial supports, legal services and mental health services.

Two-thirds of respondents provided services to newcomers (42 individuals, 67%). Three-quarters of respondents that provided service to immigrants/refugees worked in organizations that each served more than 100 immigrants/refugees in the last year.

Table 4: Number of Clients Served

What is the estimated number of immigrant and refugee clients your organization served in the last 12 months?	# responses	% responses
1-99 clients	9	25%
100-199 clients	5	14%
200-499 clients	7	19%
500-999 clients	2	6%
1000+ clients	13	36%

How Services Are Meeting the Needs of Immigrants and Refugees

Survey participants were asked whether services had better met the needs of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region in the past 12 months compared to previous years.¹⁴ Overall, interpretation, settlement and English language learning programs were seen as most likely to have better met the needs of immigrants and refugees. This was roughly consistent with responses in 2017 and 2018.

On the other hand, housing, small business/entrepreneurial supports, legal services and mental health services were perceived as less likely to have better met the needs of immigrants and refugees (Table 5). This differs somewhat from 2017 and 2018, but a number of these options were new in 2019 so direct comparisons are not possible.

¹⁴ Q18. 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=39).

Table 5: 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=31)	39%	58%	3%
Settlement services (n=30)	30%	60%	10%
English language learning programs (n=30)	30%	63%	7%
Other community services (n=30)	30%	70%	0%
Employment and/or skills training programs (n=29)	28%	66%	7%
Health services (n=32)	25%	63%	13%
Education services (n=29)	21%	69%	10%
Mental health services (n=29)	14%	76%	10%
Legal services (n=25)	12%	52%	36%
Small business/entrepreneurial supports (n=24)	8%	79%	13%
Housing services (n=31)	6%	52%	42%

Seventeen 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.¹⁵

- **Housing is a community wide concern (4 comments), for example:**
 - “Housing continues to be the main concern - lack of affordable housing availability makes it extremely hard for immigrants/refugee/claimants to find shelter and settle in our community”
 - “There are large families at Reception house that are waiting a very long time for housing which is delaying their entry into school, which is unfortunate”
- **Community welcoming and overall systemic inclusion needs further work (3 comments), for example:**
 - “I think the system is still a big issue to accommodate the needs of immigrants and refugees who need to settle in the region. System's change is needed to give a big room for equity, diversity and inclusion and order to pave a way for real adaptation and belonging and prevent isolation and loneliness for a big number of refugees, especially adults and seniors”
- **Diversity of newcomers (2 comments), for example:**
 - “It has been a growing effort to serve all the variety of newcomers who contact me”

Various other needs (5 comments) including employment, legal services, interpretation, French settlement services

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

¹⁵ Q19. If you have any comments or differentiating factors to share regarding the above question please explain here. (n=17).

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 among immigrants and refugees.

Partners felt that the key challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees were finding work, accessing affordable housing, learning English and making friends/social connections. These have been quite consistent over the last few years.

Main Issues and Challenges

Partners were asked a range of questions on current challenges and emerging issues. The majority of partners (57%) were serving more immigrants/refugees in the past year. Most of the rest (41%) were seeing the same number and only one partner (3%) was seeing fewer immigrant/refugee clients.¹⁶

When asked about their own biggest challenges to serving immigrants and refugees,¹⁷ the top three challenges were lack of funding (61%), system issues (58%) and language barriers (53%) (Table 6). This was consistent with responses to the 2018 Partner Survey with the exception that cultural barriers was mentioned more frequently in 2019.

Table 6: Main Challenges in Serving Immigrants and Refugees Among Partners

Main challenges	# of responses	% of responses
Lack of funding	23	61%
System issues	22	58%
Language barriers	20	53%
Complexity of client needs	17	45%
Cultural barriers	13	34%
Workload	12	32%
Racism/discrimination towards immigrants and refugees	12	32%
Program eligibility restrictions (e.g. based on immigration status)	11	29%
Lack of collaboration between agencies	10	26%
Lack of coordination between agencies	9	24%
Intercultural conflict	4	11%
Other	6	16%

Other challenges included: Housing; intergenerational conflict arising from clashes in cultural practices/values among the older family members and the younger generations who learn new ways quickly and more readily want to be Canadians; LIP staff seem unaware of where we could find specific communities to support tenants; reaching newcomers and letting them know everything we have available for them; student attendance and engagement - competing with work demands, family support, mental health and wellbeing, effects of trauma, etc.; would like more support from GRT to reduce cost of transportation; and would like to offer more childminding services.

¹⁶ Q14. In the last 12 months, has your organization served: more OR about the same number of OR fewer immigrants/refugees, compared to past years (n=37)

¹⁷ Q16. What is your biggest challenge in serving immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region? (Select all that apply) (n=38)

Challenges Experienced by Immigrants and Refugees

Reflecting on the challenges experienced by immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region,¹⁸ most survey participants reported finding work to be the top challenge (79%), followed by finding affordable housing (69%) and learning English (48%) (Table 7). This was the same in 2018.

Table 7: Main Challenges of Immigrants and Refugees

Main challenges	# of responses	% of responses
Finding work	34	79%
Finding affordable housing	31	72%
Learning English	17	40%
Making friends or social connections	15	35%
Discrimination/racism	8	19%
Accessing mental health care	6	14%
Accessing health care	5	12%
Learning where and how to do things	4	9%
Receiving public or social services (e.g. settlement services, government services, etc)	2	5%
Transportation	2	5%
Starting a new business	2	5%
Accessing relevant programming in local community centres, arts & culture spaces, libraries, etc.	1	2%
Public opinion	0	0%
Making sure my kids are okay at school and in the community	0	0%
Other (please specify) ¹⁹	1	2%

Significant Changes in Population Served

Partners were asked to highlight any significant change in the immigrant/refugee population served by their organization in the past 12 months.²⁰ Most comments related to demographic changes, increasing diversity in languages, countries of origin, etc. Comments included:

- **Demographic changes** (17 comments), regarding high number or increased number of clients from Middle East and East Africa (Syria, Eritrea, Iraq) and Africa (Eritrea, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia), as well as South America, India, Caribbean, Korea, USA and Black communities (though some comments indicating fewer from the Middle East/Syria). Also noted was refugee claimants from Turkey receiving their Notice of Decision quite quickly, secondary migrants from Atlantic provinces or Quebec (Nepalese).
- **Health/mental health** (4 comments) and high/multiple health needs, for example:
 - “Government Assisted Refugees were once the major players - they are no longer though they often come with huge health care challenges but we see an increasing number of refugee claimants and privately sponsored families who often have very different challenges.”
- **Increased diversity of languages** (4 comments), specifically Arabic, Spanish, Amharic, Tigrinya, Serbo-Croatian, Farsi, Kirundi, Lingala and Creole.
- **More refugees and refugee claimants** (4 comments)

¹⁸ Q20. What are the top 3 challenge that immigrants and refugees currently face in Waterloo Region? (n=43)

¹⁹ Only one “Other” challenge was noted: “Awareness and adjustment to cultural differences necessary for everyday living”.

²⁰ Q15. 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=26)

- **Employment and ESL changes** related to language learners finding work (2 comments), for example:
 - “More demand for evening and weekend classes as more learners find work. Also more need to accommodate shift workers in our classes.”
 - “I often hear from highly educated immigrants/refugees who struggle finding employment.”
- **Miscellaneous comments** (2 comments) regarding steady stream of newcomers and funding challenges, for example:
 - “We are just no longer able to see the same number of people that we used to see due to funding cutbacks.”

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

Respondents were also asked to reflect on any significant changes, shifts or emerging issues projected for the coming year.²¹ Their comments covered many areas including:

- **Employment** (9 comments) regarding aging out of baby boomers from the workforce, impact of technology on the future of work and jobs, need for ongoing continuous training opportunities, increase in entrepreneurship, employment expectations of newcomers, for example:
 - “Talent shortage will grow. Need for more immigrants to fill the many job vacancies is essential.”
 - “We could lose immigrants from our region if specifically jobs are not being secured.”
 - “There has been increased competition and demand for talent among employers. Immigrants and refugees are a potential solution to that problem, however there are still many barriers for this talent pool to obtain meaningful employment (English language proficiency, cultural competency).”
 - “In the coming year(s) there will more of a focus on employment as a key lever of settlement success and community success/welcoming.”
- **Government/Policy/Funding** (6 comments) regarding Provincial level funding/program cuts affecting new immigrants, refugee claimants and others, changes resulting from the federal election, and other funding cuts, for example:
 - “The result of Federal elections could influence funding for settlement agencies and approach to the whole immigration area, become less positive toward newcomers.”
- **International Students** (3 comments), for example:
 - “We anticipate that the number of international students coming to Waterloo Region will continue to increase.”
- **Housing** (3 comments), for example:
 - “Housing will continue to be an issue, particularly adequate and safe as the market provides either 'luxury' condos or very very poor conditions apartments.”
- **Demographic changes** (3 comments) regarding increasing numbers anticipated from Turkey, Rohingya people, continued numbers from Central and Northeast Africa (including Eritrea), increased number of Brazilian families with study permits looking to become permanent residents
- **Other (7 comments)** regarding intergenerational conflict, domestic abuse, newcomer youth and employment preparation needed for them, co-location of services and early intervention of supports, increase in French as a second language students, increased newcomers served and particularly at libraries.
 - “Refugee families that arrived 2 years ago, still require much support with language learning and basics - suitable housing, vehicles (and vehicle maintenance)...”

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

²¹ Q17. Briefly highlight any significant anticipated changes, demographic shifts, or emerging issues in the coming year. (n=22)

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, more ESL opportunities, educating employers about hiring immigrant and refugees, and actions to improve the social connectedness of immigrants and refugees.

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.²² The most frequent responses were: the need for more affordable housing options (66%), more ESL opportunities to help improve English skills (30%), more education for employers on the value and ways of hiring/retaining immigrants and refugees (25%), actions to improve the social connectedness of immigrants and refugees (25%).

The next most frequent solutions suggested were a central location where immigrants and refugees can receive many settlement and other services in one place (23%) and a central place for employers to find immigrant and refugee workers and where workers can find employment opportunities (23%).

The main differences in this list compared to responses in 2018 was ESL opportunities was mentioned more frequently and enhanced services and programs for immigrants and refugees to find work was mentioned less frequently in 2019. The solutions highlighting central hubs were not included as options in 2018 (Table 8).

Table 8: Suggested Changes to Better Support Immigrants and Refugees

Most important change	# of responses	% of responses
More affordable housing options	29	66%
More ESL opportunities to help improve English skills	13	30%
Educate employers on the value and ways of hiring and retaining immigrants and refugees	11	25%
Actions to improve the social connectedness of immigrants and refugees	11	25%
A central location where immigrants and refugees can receive many settlement and other services in one place	10	23%
A central place for employers to find immigrant and refugee workers and where workers can find employment opportunities	10	23%
Actions to reduce racism and discrimination towards immigrants and refugees	9	20%
More or better programs for immigrants and refugees to find work	7	16%
Actions to increase welcoming and acceptance of immigrants and refugees	5	11%
Better coordination between service agencies	5	11%
Funding for interpretation and translation	4	9%
More effort by community services to better serve immigrants and refugees	4	9%
Better collaboration between service agencies	4	9%
ESL opportunities in workplaces	3	7%
More funding for... (please specify below)	2	5%
More relevant programming in local community centres, arts & culture spaces, libraries, etc.	1	2%
Better coordination between levels of government	1	2%
Other (please specify)	3	7%

²² Q21. 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=44)

The other suggestions included:

- Increased funding over longer periods of time that recognize that it takes several years for those arriving from refugee experiences to settle and belong.
- More interest in neighbourhoods of welcoming newcomer neighbours.
- More services related to counselling and mental health.

More than half of participants (57%) noted at least one of the four options related to employment, and almost half noted at least one of the three options related to community welcoming and inclusion (48%) or language/interpretation (43%).

When the main challenges for immigrants/refugees are paired with the most important changes or solutions, the top issues for survey respondents were employment, housing, language, and social connections/inclusion (Table 9).

Table 9: Perception of Biggest Challenges and Solutions to Better Serving Immigrants and Refugees

Main challenges of Immigrants/Refugees (% of participants, n=43)	Most Important Change/Solution (% of participants, n=44)
Finding work (79%)	More affordable housing options (66%)
Finding affordable housing (72%)	More ESL opportunities to help improve English skills (30%)
Learning English (40%)	Educate employers on the value and ways of hiring and retaining immigrants and refugees (25%)
Making friends or social connections (35%)	Actions to improve the social connectedness of immigrants and refugees (25%)
Discrimination/racism (19%)	A central location where immigrants and refugees can receive many settlement and other services in one place (23%)
Accessing mental health care (14%)	A central place for employers to find immigrant and refugee workers and where workers can find employment opportunities (23%)
Accessing health care (12%)	Actions to reduce racism and discrimination towards immigrants and refugees (20%)
Learning where and how to do things (9%)	More or better programs for immigrants and refugees to find work (16%)
Receiving public or social services (e.g. settlement services, government services, etc) (5%)	Actions to increase welcoming and acceptance of immigrants and refugees (11%)
Transportation (5%)	Better coordination between service agencies (11%)
Starting a new business (5%)	Funding for interpretation and translation (9%)
Accessing relevant programming in local community centres, arts & culture spaces, libraries, etc. (2%)	More effort by community services to better serve immigrants and refugees (9%)
Public opinion (0%)	Better collaboration between service agencies (9%)
Making sure my kids are okay at school and in the community (0%)	ESL opportunities in workplaces (7%)
	More funding for... (please specify below) (5%)
	More relevant programming in local community centres, arts & culture spaces, libraries, etc. (2%)
	Better coordination between levels of government (2%)

Immigration Partnership Role and Actions

The Immigration Partnership is guided by a Community Action Plan which is developed by community partners across Waterloo Region. Respondents were asked to share one or two things the Immigration Partnership might focus LESS energy on and MORE energy on as IP begins to develop the Community Action Plan for the next 5 years.²³

Comments about what we might spend LESS energy on included:

- Less focus on settlement and more on work.
- Fewer networking sessions for immigrants.
- “Less on one specific organization's need ...and more on the big picture and the systemic issues. (...need to do more than just addressing issues; ...[more focus on] problem solving.”
- “Focus less on settlement or employment-related direct services that other organizations can cover, and focus more on covering the gaps and working with the public on building welcoming communities for immigrants and refugees.”
- Fewer “educational opportunities to learn about challenges immigrants face.”
- “Be mindful of duplication of effort with settlement service agencies.”
- ESL programming.
- “Less on belonging. Sense of belonging is the result of different/multiple factors where communication/language and employment play a significant role plus the sense of acknowledgement/recognition by the community (family, faith communities, ethnic communities, neighbourhoods).”

Comments about what we might spend MORE energy on included:

- **Employment** (10 comments) including systemic changes, connecting employers/jobs to newcomers, an employment hub, services for employers, employment service for refugee claimants, coordinating services, for example:
 - “Taking different approach to employment by working more with employers: moving from building awareness among employers on the values immigrants bring to their workplace to making systemic changes so employers hire for talent not for who they know.”
 - “The Employment Hub, to connect immigrant employees with potential employers.”
 - “Employer services (Legal/HR) regarding temporary foreign workers and how to integrate inter-cultural strategies for making workplaces more dynamic and cohesive.”
 - “Looking for innovative initiatives on teaching/learning English learning how employment have been addressed in other places.”
- **Advocacy, System-wide Changes** (5 comments), including sharing stories of why IP/newcomers are important, systemic changes, advocating for funding and services coordination, equity as an underlying principle of our work, and developing champions, for example:
 - “Systemic change: promoting social inclusion and social justice, disputing racism, promoting multiculturalism, advocating for equal opportunities to be granted to immigrant and refugees to become engaged in building our community and improve their civic participation.”
 - “Encouraging organizations (government, employers/industry, non-profit) in becoming champions for newcomer inclusion.”
- **Partnership & connections** (6 comments), including strengthening ethno-cultural and faith groups, developing IP partner organizations and the connections between them, for example:

²³ Q24. What are 1 or 2 things the Immigration Partnership might focus LESS energy on as we look to the next 5 years? (n=12) Q25. What are 1 or 2 things the Immigration Partnership might focus MORE energy on as we look to the next 5 years? (n=26)

- “Opportunities for frontline staff to network and learn about what you do. Many opportunities with IP are for leadership and I see value in something like brown bag lunches specifically for frontline on topics of interest.”
- “Continue the coordination of services among settlement agencies- moving to the hub and common intake process.”
- “Streamlining and collectively branding settlement services - a settlement hub would be valuable just as much for the cooperation that would result as from the clarity it would provide to newcomers.”
- **Housing** (5 comments), including advocating for more affordable housing, for example:
 - “Affordable housing - join in the efforts of others to strengthen the voices”
 - “More affordable housing and jobs for newcomers. People tend to focus more on other health related issues when they have a secure place to stay and food on the table.”
- **Engagement with regional government and other levels of government** (4 comments), for example:
 - “Working closely with the regional government and the cities where the system can be changed to maintain equity and inclusion that lead to strong belonging.”
 - “Taking a stepped and intentional approach to IPs public education and engagement mandate, especially as relates to municipal and community leadership and their ability to plan and advocate on immigration success in Waterloo Region.”
- **Belonging and inclusion** (4 comments), including the work of the belong pillar, improving the social connection of immigrants and more prominent public work on anti-racism/discrimination, for example:
 - “Keep working at the belonging pillar. It is the broadest pillar and therefore the hardest to strategically focus for impact.”
 - “I think the work of the Belonging Steering group around belonging and social inclusion for immigrants is critical. More energy on educating and engaging the public on these issues.”
- **Other comments** (9 comments) regarding international students, funding for ethno-cultural communities, research and evaluation, and comments about how we work like more structured volunteer engagement, immigrant/refugee engagement, for example:
 - “I like the recent shift towards action groups that have a mandate to implement change. I think continuing to use this strategy will be helpful in continuing to induce positive change in our region.”
 - “Engagement with immigrant/refugee community on services THEY need. Better connections to services across the lifespan.”
 - “Keep partnering on collaborative research projects that promote a learning community.”
 - “Deeper research and evaluation (issue, population specific, etc) to deepen the evidence base for public education and engagement work.”

Respondents a number of additional comments including:²⁴

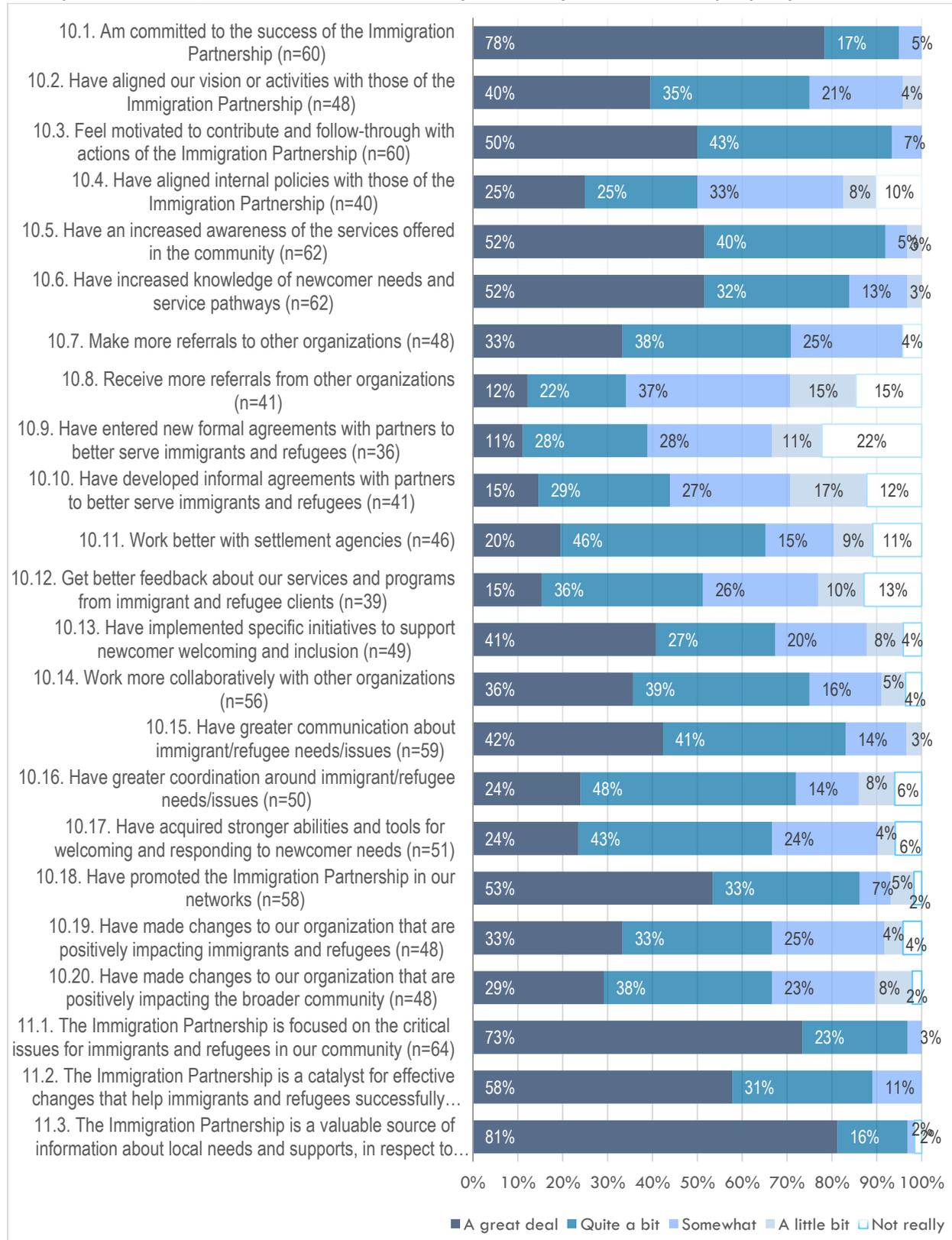
- “I appreciate the reports and data on issues that newcomers face, as I anticipate meeting and connecting with more newcomers to KW in the years to come.”
- “Immigration Partnership continues to be an important initiative facilitating communication and collaboration among settlement and other agencies in the region. However, we seem to be missing clear and concrete examples on how the partnership has lead to changes in the way agencies provide services and how effective they have been in facilitating the incorporation of new immigrants within the society. The report produced based on the community survey should be a way of expressing changes, but also a concrete invitation for agencies to see where do they need to modified practices to become more successful.”
- “The other important role to play is how are we contributing to the social advance of new immigrant women. This is an area that is missing from most of the settlement programs.”
- “Jim Estill on IP Council?”

²⁴ Q26. Other comments, ideas or suggestions (n=7)
DOCS#3122822

- “Maybe some updated information from various organizations about their services, such as any new program, specific training for newcomers, different program information (such as conversation class, school settlement workers, employment support, etc.) for better community referrals.”
- “The IP and steering groups have done great work in the past, more needs to be done. While we are committed to continue our work on meeting the recommendations outlined in our CAP, we need to look at different strategies to better promote equity and inclusion and improve newcomers access to services. Way to go IP”
- “The work the Immigration Partnership staff and its members do is absolutely vital for the strength, health, and wellbeing of not only immigrants/refugees but the entire community. The importance of IP's leadership in our community cannot be overstated. ...Thank you for all that you do.”

Appendix A: Detailed Response Data

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



Appendix B: Full Comments Regarding Stories of Impact

Respondents were asked to share a story that highlights the impact of their involvement with the Immigration Partnership.

- As a result of sitting at the Immigration Partnership table, I was aware of a lawyer who recently started to practice immigration law. I later attended a training regarding newcomers where a representative of an agency spoke to how critical their need was for legal representation. I was able to connect the two parties. They have started a regular legal aid clinic at their site.
- Currently an action group from the Work Steering Group is working on a model for a one stop location for employers to access immigrant talent. This concept has been presented to a number of employers and has received a positive response. Employers are asking how quickly this 'hub' could be implemented as there is such a shortage of talent.
- Getting involved with the Immigration Partnership allowed us to know more of the services that are being offered and opportunities to connect and work collaboratively with other agencies, for example we work more with Reception House, housing and OW/ODSP offices.
- Helped 2 refugee families from Eritrea purchase vehicles, get their licenses, get insurance and help with on-going maintenance of these vehicles. They work shifts so require a vehicle to get to work and back home. Both these families attend English Conversation Circles.
- I believe my involvement has led to a greater recognition of international students in the Waterloo Region.
- I have seen a few of my inquirers become involved in the IP activities as committee or event participants. The most recent story is of a client who is now volunteering virtually to fill the IP Calendar for us!
- I am involved with IP in the WSG activities/meeting in the effort of hiring immigrants and promoting a diverse workplace, where immigrants can be accepted and contribute to the local economy. As well as my contribution to the Multicultural Connections effort for helping ethnocultural communities find common space to meet, carry out their activities, be together and not isolated and lonely.
- Increased awareness of the needs of Francophone newcomers and the desire to connect them with their new community.
- It has been a very important for me to meet with the IP Council and being informed of its activities and all the working groups and bring back to various colleagues.
- Nora works very closely with us to promote our employment program. Recently, Tigercat Industries was a lead that Nora provided that will be hiring about 7 refugees in the next few days.
- Nothing drastic or sensational, but receiving detailed information about events, policy, media etc that are relevant to immigrants and refugees has been instrumental in our organization remaining up to date and able to refer and share relevant and needed connections and opportunities.
- Speaking about my program details at the meeting and gaining referrals.
- Thanks to the support of the Immigration Partnership, and contributions of several of its members, we hosted a citizenship ceremony and Newcomer Day to welcome newcomers to our community.
- The social media campaign on the Day to Eliminate Racial Discrimination was an excellent way to engage the community and showcase the local champions in inclusion.
- We have much more access to information on immigrant issues and services as a result of your newsletters and emails.

Appendix C: Full Comments Regarding Services

Q19. If you have any comments or differentiating factors to share regarding the above question please explain here.

- The increase of international students in the Region is impacting housing driving up the cost and creating a housing shortage for students in Waterloo.
- Housing continues to be the main concern - lack of affordable housing availability makes it extremely hard for immigrants/refugee/claimants to find shelter and settle in our community.
- Housing needs are rising as there is a lack of affordable housing across the region.
- There are large families at Reception house that are waiting a very long time for housing which is delaying their entry into school, which is unfortunate.
- I think the system is still a big issue to accommodate the needs of immigrants and refugees who need to settle in the region. System's change is needed to give a big room for equity, diversity and inclusion and order to pave a way for real adaptation and belonging and prevent isolation and loneliness for a big number of refugees, especially adults and seniors.
- Many issues still exist in refugees' ability to access health care and other services in 'main stream' organizations.
- We don't always get interpretation or other services for the people we serve due to stigma and discrimination based on their health status.
- It confuses to lump refugee newcomers and immigrants together - their needs are very different. Most services continue to be aimed at the immigrant community, people who choose to come here and have some knowledge of both language and the culture to which they are coming.
- It has been a growing effort to serve all the variety of newcomers who contact me for a meeting. Sometimes it is a referral to education or counselling instead of volunteering. Programs or community maps for their understanding and often I recommend IP events or Newcomer programs at KW Counselling primarily.
- Employment/Skills Training programs are available, however after immigrants/refugees go through them there are still barriers to accessing employment - racism, discrimination, lack of 'Canadian' experience etc.
- The continuation of legal aid funding by the federal government is a great benefit (though it is only for one year). The removal of funding for legal aid by the province is a sad development. The increasing role of Community Legal Services in immigration law support is a great benefit. In terms of basic needs supports, the elimination of the Transition Child Benefit is a dangerous move as it will cut supports from some of those who are most in need.
- The interpretation services seem to be made available and accessible for most immigrants, English language classes have increased and more classes are made available with flexible schedules for immigrants and refugees.
- The top unmet needs of newcomers are: housing, and finding meaningful employment, access to legal services.
- No settlement services French, interpretation is NOT a French service.

Appendix D: Full Comments Regarding Changes in the Past Year

Q15. 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.).

- # of people arriving with more serious health care/mental health care needs than in previous years.
- Many refugees arriving with multiple health needs.
- We now offer a medical clinic to people in the community and have attempted to advertise it locally. People from various African communities as well as middle eastern countries are served in our clinic.
- 200- 500, Syrian, Eritrean, English level from low - medium level, Education level from primary school till university level.
- Approximately over 1000 immigrant/refugee population served by our organization in the past 12 months, which accounted for over 3000 services rendered to these clients. This number of clients included PR and refugee claimants as well as citizens (through the library partnership). Clients served from South America, India, Nigeria, the Middle East (mainly, Syria, Iraq), Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and other countries. Languages of clients served include, but not limited to Arabic, Spanish, Amharic, Tigrinya, English, Serbo-Croatian. Clients served in both settlement and employment fields.
- As a family outreach family program we serve many recent newcomers especially refugee claimants. we serve diverse/ethnicity. with the new change on Transition Child Benefits cut, we are expecting to get more refugee claimants.
- Growing Korean population that are coming to learn English and then decide to further their education in an attempt to stay in Canada. Decrease in Syrian refugees coming for English Conversation, but increase in Eritrean refugees.
- Increased languages.
- It is a steady stream of newcomers who are visiting our centre – directly from ESL or Employment or schools. It's a large part of our work it seems – welcome center – info centre -
- Laurier International are seeing more local refugees attending Laurier.
- More demand for evening and weekend classes as more learners find work. Also more need to accommodate shift workers in our classes.
- No change regarding the people who are accessing our services. We are just no longer able to see the same number of people that we used to see due to funding cutbacks.
- Our numbers have increased as more and more people we serve share their experience with our programming. The participants we are seeing have shifted from the Middle East to seeing more people from Africa/Nigeria.
- Primary language of our clientele is French but the second language spoken used to be English and now it's Arabic, followed by Kirundi, Lingala and Créole. More newcomers arriving from the USA.
- Refugee Claimants from Turkey receiving their Notice of Decision quite quickly, Secondary Migrants from Atlantic provinces or Quebec (Nepalese).
- The BSG has been engaging more directly with immigrants and refugees in the community, particularly through the activities targeted to ethno-cultural groups. I'm not sure there are any particular changes and sadly what I hear is that the challenges we have been hearing about for the past six years are still the same ones people are facing every day. I often hear from highly educated immigrants/refugees who struggle finding employment.
- The countries of origin change with the global crises of the time. We have to be dynamic in responding to the different language and cultural needs, educational levels and skills of newcomer refugees. Government Assisted Refugees were once the major players - they are no longer

though they often come with huge health care challenges but we see an increasing number of refugee claimants and privately sponsored families who often have very different challenges.

- We are finding immigrants from a wider diversity of countries entering our programs.
- We are seeing an increase in refugee claimants, and a high number of people from Eritrea/Ethiopia. Arabic, Tigrinia, Spanish, Amharic and Farsi are still top languages.
- We are seeing more of the African, Caribbean and Black communities accessing our services more, just the last two weeks we had 16 new intakes from this population.
- We have seen a very recent increase in refugee claimants in our school system. We have also seen more diversity in newcomers through family reunification. Main countries of origin are Somalia, Eritrea, Syria.
- We have served more clients through opening more language learning classes. In LINC 50% of our clients are from Syria or Eritrea. This is a change from previous years.

Appendix E: Full Comments Regarding Upcoming Changes

Q17. Briefly highlight any significant anticipated changes, demographic shifts, or emerging issues in the coming year.

- Aging out of baby boomers from the workforce. Impact of technology on the future of work and jobs. Need for ongoing, continuous training opportunities.
- An increase in entrepreneurship, also resettlement. We could lose immigrants from our region if specifically jobs are not being secured.
- Talent shortage will grow. Need for more immigrants to fill the many job vacancies is essential
- More refugees and many with unrealistic expectations regarding housing and employment that could effect their ability to resettle.
- In the coming year(s) there will more of a focus on employment as a key lever of settlement success and community success/welcoming.
- There has been increased competition and demand for talent among employers. Immigrants and refugees are a potential solution to that problem, however there are still many barriers for this talent pool to obtain meaningful employment (English language proficiency, cultural competency).
- As I mentioned before, with Transition child benefits cut (OW-provincial benefits), we assume that there will be increase in our caseload and more families will be struggling financially
- Be aware of the possible cuts at the province that might affect benefits that new immigrant population receive or will not receive.
- Funding changes from the provincial government that will impact refugee claimants and housing.
- Election results could bring changes to funding, clients numbers and demographics.
- The result of Federal elections could influence funding for settlement agencies and approach to the whole immigration area, become less positive toward new comers.
- We have received reduction of funds which has resulted in reducing staff hours and ending some contracts.
- Continued need for more affordable housing that meets the needs of the new immigrant population.
- Housing will continue to be an issue, particularly adequate and safe as the market provides either 'luxury' condos or very very poor conditions apartments.
- the increase of international students in the Region is having impacts on housing.
- We anticipate that the number of international students coming to Waterloo Region will continue to increase and we will increasingly see them stay in Waterloo Region as permanent residents. There is likely a coming wave of temporary residents seeking PR status and we should anticipate and plan for it.
- I think there is so much focus now for agencies to reach out to Indigenous communities it is almost taking away from agencies being able to focus some work on newcomer groups.
- Increase #s of newcomers from Turkey and from the Rohingya people and a continual flow from the central Africa and the north east. Intergenerational conflict and domestic abuse as older cohorts become more settled.
- Not sure if we can target newcomer YOUTH we require more programs and supports. It would be a good area to focus on – that and employment preparation as the primary target. Supporting newcomers with volunteer engagement could be a good mentorship program - much like the employment one. BUT the model could be internal mentors for newcomers and youth.
- One of our staff is now co-located at Reception House. We believe that this will allow us to provide some early intervention services that will result in less involvement from child welfare (the sector we represent).
- Refugee families that arrived 2 years ago, still require much support with language learning and basics - suitable housing, vehicles (and vehicle maintenance)...

- Significant increase in the French Catholic Board of # of FSL students, more than 100 across the school board vs to last year.
- The amount of Rohingya is starting to increase and we anticipate more people arriving from that community in the coming year.
- The Eritrean population is growing and their younger children will become a larger share of the student body in Secondary Schools. We see more Brazilian families coming with study permits likely looking to become permanent residents.
- Working towards an east side branch in Waterloo that will welcome and serve more customers, including newcomers. Work with partners on some upcoming projects to serve newcomers better at the library.

Appendix F: Full Comments Regarding What We Might Do LESS/MORE

Q24. What are 1 or 2 things the Immigration Partnership might focus LESS energy on as we look to the next 5 years?

- 1. Focus less on one specific organization's need, most of those issues should be to be addressed on the steering groups and focus more on the big picture and the systemic issues. The steering groups need to do more than just addressing issues, I suggest a level of problem solving to be added to their agenda items. 2- Focus less on settlement or employment-related direct services that other organizations can cover, and focus more on covering the gaps and working with the public on building welcoming communities for immigrants and refugees.
- Although I have enjoyed the many educational opportunities to learn about challenges immigrants face, I wonder how much of an impact this has?
- As it has been mentioned, I think it's time for IP to focus less on settlement and more on work, making sure immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region have a real chance of getting jobs that match their qualifications and credentials.
- Networking sessions for immigrants (reduce the number). Support the sectors that are in greatest need for employees and educate immigrant about the job opportunities.
- Be mindful of duplication of effort with settlement service agencies.
- ESL programming.
- Less on belonging. Sense of belonging is the result of different/multiple factors where communication/language and employment play a significant role plus the sense of acknowledgement/recognition by the community (family, faith communities, ethnic communities, neighbourhoods).
- Five additional respondents either noted N/A, none, or that the organization must review its direction/plan and determine how best to answer this question.

Q25. What are 1 or 2 things the Immigration Partnership might focus MORE energy on as we look to the next 5 years?

- 1- Work on meeting the CAP goals: housing, legal services, mental health,...., continue the coordination of services among settlement agencies- moving to the hub and common intake process, 2- Systemic change: promoting social inclusion and social justice, disputing racism promoting multiculturalism, advocating for equal opportunities to be granted to immigrant and refugees to become engages in building our community and improve their civic participation. On another hand prioritizing the emerging needs: like access to affordably housing, health, legal support , advocacy for funding and services coordination for immigrants and refugees 3- Taking different approach to employment by working more with employers: moving from building awareness among employers on the values immigrants bring to their workplace to making systemic changes so employers hire for talent not for who they know.
- Advocate at the region to increase more affordable housing.
- Affordable housing - join in the efforts of others to strengthen the voices and more prominent public work on anti-racism/discrimination.
- Affordable Housing, employment service for refugee claimants.
- More affordable housing and jobs for newcomers. People tend to focus more on other health related issues when they have a secure place to stay and food on the table.
- Advocacy with respect to housing and matching employer needs with immigrants seeking work.
- connecting business /jobs to newcomers 2. sharing stories of why IP/newcomers is important
- The Employment Hub, to connect immigrant employees with potential employers. Education of employers as to the opportunities presented by immigrant workers in addressing their worker shortages.

- Employer services (Legal/HR) regarding temporary foreign workers and how to integrate inter-cultural strategies for making workplaces more dynamic and cohesive. Helping to formalize formal collaboration with key services in the area.
- The question of employment remains a big one. The 'hub' doesn't appear to be getting traction. Do we need to look into that further. How can we help, remove obstacles, critically look at it or kill it and move on?
- To continue working on collaboration/coordination of settlement agencies including other areas such as education and employment. Communication and employment for new immigrants are big barriers that we need to continue addressing, looking for innovative initiatives on teaching/learning English learning how employment have been addressed in other places.
- Employment - Continuing to put forward the economic rationale for integrating immigrants into the local economy and getting employers on board - matching immigrants to employment gaps. Streamlining and collectively branding settlement services - a settlement hub would be valuable just as much for the cooperation that would result as from the clarity it would provide to newcomers.
- Working closely with the regional government and the cities where the system can be changed to maintain equity and inclusion that lead to strong belonging. 2. Reasonable funding to ethno-cultural communities to share their heritage and culture with the community, which enrich diversity and culture.
- I think IP should continue looking for ways to deepen its engagement with municipalities. A stronger partnership with them would be highly beneficial to the three pillars of our work. We need to continue carrying out research and mobilizing the knowledge we already have when it comes to immigration in WR.
- How to better advocate for issues that are relevant and critical for the community. That advocacy could also be with the Regional Government as well as the provincial government.
- Taking a stepped and intentional approach to IPs public education and engagement mandate, especially as relates to municipal and community leadership and their ability to plan and advocate on immigration success in Waterloo Region. Deeper research and evaluation (issue, population specific, etc) to deepen the evidence base for public education and engagement work. Central priority on bridging to employment as this recurs as the number one challenge and solution in feedback from immigrants and refugees, including how employment services are able to effectively support immigrants to get into meaningful jobs and how employers are supported to successfully hire and retain immigrants. Equity as an underlying principle of our work. Deepening connection between IPs mandate and the mandate and development or IP partner organizations.
- Actually have staff of LIP reflect the newcomer community and have current staff learn where to find communities, who the contact people are, and how to connect newcomers to those groups. I asked a LIP staff how to find the Pakistani community, or someone in that community who could connect newcomers. The response was 'I wouldn't be expected to know anything like that'. Why not?
- I like the recent shift towards action groups that have a mandate to implement change. I think continuing to use this strategy will be helpful in continuing to induce positive change in our region
- I think the work of the Belonging Steering group around belonging and social inclusion for immigrants is critical. More energy on educating and engaging the public on these issues, strengthening ethno-cultural and faith groups, and on encouraging organizations (government, employers/industry, non-profit) in becoming champions for newcomer inclusion.
- International students.
- More structured volunteer engagement.
- Keep working at the belonging pillar. It is the broadest pillar and therefore the hardest to strategically focus for impact. Keep partnering on collaborative research projects that promote a learning community.
- Housing, improving the social connections of immigrants.
- More partnership sharing.

- Opportunities for frontline staff to network and learn about what you do. Many opportunities with IP are for leadership and I see value in something like brown bag lunches specifically for frontline on topics of interest.
- Engagement with immigrant/refugee community on services THEY need. Better connections to services across the lifespan.

Respondents shared the following additional comments in the open ended last survey question:

- “I appreciate the reports and data on issues that newcomers face, as I anticipate meeting and connecting with more newcomers to KW in the years to come.”
- “Immigration Partnership continues to be an important initiative facilitating communication and collaboration among settlement and other agencies in the region. However, we seem to be missing clear and concrete examples on how the partnership has lead to changes in the way agencies provide services and how effective they have been in facilitating the incorporation of new immigrants within the society. The report produced based on the community survey should be a way of expressing changes, but also a concrete invitation for agencies to see where do they need to modified practices to become more successful.”
- “The other important role to play is how are we contributing to the social advance of new immigrant women. This is an area that is missing from most of the settlement programs.”
- It was challenging for me to fill out a large portion of this survey, and where I did answer questions, I am not sure I did it 'right'. As an organization not delivering front line service or working directly with other organizations that do, many questions were not relevant. I would suggest a separate survey for funders or other institutions that is more relevant.
- Jim Estill on IP Council?
- Maybe some updated information from various organizations about their services, such as any new program, specific training for newcomers, different program information (such as conversation class, school settlement workers, employment support, etc.) for better community referrals
- The IP and steering groups have done great work in the past, more needs to be done. While we are committed to continue our work on meeting the recommendations outlined in our CAP, we need to look at different strategies to better promote equity and inclusion and improve newcomers access to services. Way to go IP
- The work the Immigration Partnership staff and its members do is absolutely vital for the strength, health, and wellbeing of not only immigrants/refugees but the entire community. The importance of IP's leadership in our community cannot be overstated. My answers to #10 (changes in my organization) might seem dismal, but because of our involvement with the Immigration Partnership those scores are not zero. Thank you for all that you do.

Appendix E: 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 this annual survey of engaged partners and a broader bi-annual community survey of immigrants and refugees.

Partner Survey Data collection

The first annual Partner Survey was conducted in November/December 2017 and repeated in November 2018. This current report includes findings from the 2019 Partner Survey with comparisons to 2017 and 2018 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 and the 2018 and 2019 survey used many of the same questions as the original version but, in discussion with the Evaluation Advisory Committee, incorporated feedback on previous questions and several new questions. The survey tool is available at <https://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/partnersurvey2019questions>.

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

There were 70 survey responses after ineligible surveys were removed. Surveys were ineligible if they only included a response to the first question or two or were doubles from the same person due to technical difficulties.

Analysis & Limitations

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