



**2014
PROGRESS
REPORT**



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

Looking to the future, immigration will play an increasingly important role in the growth, prosperity and vibrancy of Waterloo Region. Under the leadership of the Immigration Partnership Council, in early 2014 community partners launched a Community Action Plan (CAP) which addresses service improvement and alignment, the creation of improved work, leadership and community participation opportunities and increased awareness of the value of diverse and welcoming communities.

Over the past year, our community partners made significant progress in planning and implementing joint activities under the CAP.

OUR VISION

Waterloo Region will be a community where immigrants and refugees settle, work and belong.



OUR CONTRIBUTION TO CHANGE IN THE WATERLOO REGION COMMUNITY

In 2014 Immigration Partnership:

- Participated in community events, local advisory bodies and monitored local policy development.
- Embraced new tools for effectively communicating with the Waterloo Region community about issues of importance and community partner actions to foster awareness and connectivity.
- Raised community awareness about policy developments impacting business, employment, immigration and settlement.

In an ongoing evaluation of Immigration Partnership:

- Nearly two thirds of all community partners reported making new connections which helped in their work as a result of their involvement with Immigration Partnership.
- More than half of all community partners report having made organizational changes to better serve immigrants and refugees.

OUR **ROLE**

We do not deliver direct service.

Instead, our role is:

To educate.

To inform and facilitate.

To engage.

To communicate.

To influence and advocate.



STRATEGIC **COLLABORATION**

Southwestern Ontario Local
Immigration Partnerships



WATERLOO REGION **FACTS**

#5

Waterloo Region has the fifth highest proportion of recent immigrants in Ontario.



In 2011 there were 108,720 immigrants in Waterloo Region, accounting for 23.1% of the total population. This is projected to increase to up to 32.2% by 2031.



By 2031, the population is expected to grow by 38%. Natural growth is declining so immigration will be an increasingly important contributor to regional growth.

WATERLOO REGION **FACTS**

More than **one in five** residents do not speak English or French as their first language.



In 2011, **15%** of immigrants lived below the low income measure.



In **2011**, the unemployment rate of recent immigrants was **14%**, while overall rate for the region was **7%**.

Recent immigrants have higher levels of **educational attainment** than established immigrants and Canadian-born individuals.



Approximately **10%** of immigrants do not have access to a regular family doctor.



Almost **50%** of immigrants over 12 years of age have one or more chronic diseases/conditions.

Over **15,000** permanent residents arrived between **2006** and **2011**.

Between **2011** and **2013**, **1,347** refugees arrived; another **241** refugee claims were filed and nearly **9,000** international students arrived annually.



OUR DEFINITION OF IMMIGRANTS

All people who immigrated a long time ago or more recently, refugees and refugee claimants, immigrants who are and are not Canadian citizens and all newcomers to Canada, who are living in Waterloo Region.

Nearly **30%** of
immigrants
have been here less
than 10 years.





SETTLE

Strategic Directions:

1. Strengthen awareness of and access to community supports.
2. Strengthen awareness of and access to healthcare supports.
3. Strengthen awareness of and access to education and language supports.
4. Reduce housing-related barriers.

In 2014, Settle Steering Group members:

- Regularly brought together settlement and mainstream service groups to identify barriers to and gaps in the delivery of services to immigrants and plan collaborative actions to enhance coordination of services and improve user experiences.
- Mapped local supports and facilitated discussions aiming to heighten the alignment and availability of community supports for refugees and refugee claimants; participated in community consultations around the future of community partner Welcome Home.
- Monitored policy developments affecting the income security and health care of refugees and other immigrants with temporary status and shared relevant information across the community.
- Developed relations with the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integrated Network in support of a targeted health strategy for refugees, immigrants and other newcomers in Waterloo Region.
- Developed understanding of the local housing needs of immigrants and gaps in service delivery, coordinated efforts with the housing stability sector and worked on plans for a consultation involving settlement and housing groups and immigrants to develop common actions in this area.



In Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, **22.2%** of newcomer householders are in core housing need, which is double the rate of non-immigrants across Ontario.



STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

Homelessness and Housing
Umbrella Group

Waterloo Region Mental
Health Workgroup

Trauma Initiative

Building Local Information
Support to Ontario
Newcomers Project



WORK

Strategic Directions:

1. Increase awareness of and opportunities related to meaningful employment of immigrants.
2. Strengthen employer understanding of the value of creating a more diverse workforce.
3. Streamline/maximize employer access to immigrant talent.



In 2011, the median employment income for recent immigrants was **30.8%** lower than that of the Region.

On average, immigrants require more than **20 years of residence** before their employment income approximates the Region's median.

In 2014, Work Steering Group members:

- Regularly convened key employers and employment service providers to plan collaborative actions, facilitate improved coordination of services and enhance alignment of service provided and employer needs.
- Organized two lunch-and-learn Diversity Intelligence seminars for over 80 employers to increase employer capacity for hiring and retaining immigrant job-seekers.
- Organized three networking events for over 80 local employers and over 260 immigrant job-seekers.
- Participated in 10 other networking events attended by 1,500 employers to distribute marketing materials and engage employers on increasing diversity in the workplace.
- Monitored the development of the Waterloo Region Economic Development Strategy and collaborated with local strategic initiatives such as the EmployerOne survey of the Workforce Planning Board.
- Developed a pre-pilot project combining technology and in-depth recruitment knowledge to maximize employer access to immigrant talent.

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

Improving Prosperity for
Immigrant Women

Job-Developers Table

Global Skills Conference

Business Development
Bank of Canada



BELONG

Strategic Directions:

1. Increase public awareness of the value of a diverse and welcoming community.
2. Promote civic education, participation and leadership of immigrants.
3. Promote community-wide organizational change to ensure inclusive practices.

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

New Story Group

Community Coalition on Refugee
and Immigrant Concerns

Waterloo Catholic District School
Board Adult ESL Programs

Cambridge Cultural Diversity
Engagement Committee



In 2014, Belong Steering Group members:

- Regularly brought together immigrant community leaders, municipal representatives and service organizations to discuss barriers to inclusion and belonging and plan joint actions to raise public awareness of the benefits of diversity, to increase civic participation and leadership among immigrants and promote inclusive organizational practices.
- Prepared common educational materials on local democracy, municipal services and engagement opportunities and delivered information sessions in Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo for first-time voters and other newcomers in advance of the 2014 municipal elections.
- Researched initiatives and developed plans for a public education campaign to build awareness and understanding of the importance of a diverse community, and to recognize and celebrate diversity and the contributions made by immigrants to the community.
- Planned for outreach with local public sector organizations around Equity and Inclusion strategies, practices, successes and challenges to improve immigrant participation and representation.



Local research funded by the
Kitchener-Waterloo Community
Foundation identified the three building
blocks of belonging as including:
**authentic interaction, feeling
welcome** and **shared purpose**.

People, places and
events were identified
as the most important
supports for belonging.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Immigration Partnership's successes and achievements are due to the strong commitment and engagement of its many community partners:

Immigration Partnership Council: Peter Donahue, Wilfred Laurier University (Chair); Linda Terry, Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries (Vice-Chair); Pari Karem, YMCA Immigrant Services (SSG Chair); Ian McLean, Greater KW Chamber of Commerce (WSG Chair); Fauzia Mazhar, Community Member (BSG Chair); John Haddock, CKW YMCA (Past-Chair); Asnake Dabala, Community Member; Elif Gunce, Community Member; Jan Bockmaster, Conestoga College; Jan Varner, United Way; Jennifer Roggemann, Immigration Lawyer; Karen Spencer, Children and Family Services; Kelly McManus, University of Waterloo; Lucia Harrison, KW Multicultural Centre; Theron Kramer, Community Member; Anna Aceto-Guerin, Clear Path Employer Services; Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Region of Waterloo; Tammy Hynes, Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Sonja Erstic, Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade

Settle Steering Group: Pari Karem, YMCA Immigrant Services (Chair); Mira Miladzanovic, Reception House Waterloo Region (Vice-Chair); Ana Luz Martinez, KW Multicultural Centre; Pauleen Payne, Waterloo Catholic District School Board; Amanda Botelho, Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support; Laura Stoutenburg, Conestoga College; Leslie Josling, KW Counselling; Lynne Griffiths-Fulton, Reception House Waterloo Region; Sharon Schmidt, Welcome Home; June Moyo, ACCKWA; Sam Marzouk, Community Member; Eliseo Martell, Community Member; Liliana Araujo, Community Member; Heidi Newton, Region of Waterloo Public Health; Gael Gilbert, Supportive Housing of Waterloo; Sheri Phillips, Region of Waterloo Children's Services; Nicole Francoeur, Region of Waterloo Housing Services; Kristin Johnson-Perlock, Kitchener Public Library; Priscilla Muzira, ACCKWA; Eunice Valenzuela, Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support; Ed Kaut, Region of Waterloo Employment and Income Support





Work Steering Group: Ian McLean, Greater KW Chamber of Commerce (Chair); **Cindy Tarasow**, Pomegranate Canada Inc. (Vice-Chair); **Alexandra Dumitrache**, Christie Digital; **Anne Paterson**, Scotiabank; **Carol Simpson**, Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin; **Chris Farrell**, Waterloo Region Small Business Centre; **Hanan Awad**, Community Member; **Jeff Samoila**, Teledyne Dalsa; **John Rose**, Resourceful; **Leanne Casey**, Focus for Ethnic Women; **Lisa Favero**, Wilfred Laurier University; **Marilena Benak**, YMCA Mentorship Program; **Megan Valla**, Prica Global; **Nikki Sharpley**, Manpower; **Peter Krakowiak**, Scotiabank; **Phil Noelting**, Qwalify Inc.; **Sheila McIntosh**, Region of Waterloo; **Tina Allishaw**, Conestoga College; **Tracey Hare Connell**, Deloitte

Belong Steering Group: Fauzia Mazhar, Community Member (Chair); **Iman Arab**, Community Member (Vice-Chair); **Laura Reidel**, Community Member; **Ashwani Nandrajog**, Community Member; **Asma Alwahsh**, Community Member; **Bashir Shabaz**, Reception House Waterloo Region; **Bojana Savic**, Community Member; **Dan Vandebelt**, Region of Waterloo Public Health; **Diane Boston-Nyp**, Volunteer Action Centre; **Diana Palmerin-Velasco**, CKW YMCA; **Dina Etmanskis**, Community Member; **Janice Ouellette**, City of Kitchener; **Jassy Narayan**, Community Member; **Jim Bowman**, City of Waterloo; **Kelly Kipfer**, Waterloo Public Library; **Lisset Jacinto**, Waterloo Catholic District School Board; **Lorie Fioze**, Region of Waterloo; **Sarah Chen**, Victoria Hills Community Centre; **Suzan Snaggs-Wilson**, Scotiabank; **Tom Reitz**, Waterloo Region Museum; **Robin Tuffin**, CKW YMCA

Immigration Partnership's work is financially supported by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the Region of Waterloo and the United Way of Kitchener-Waterloo and Area. Immigration Partnership is hosted by the Region of Waterloo.

JOIN US

Immigration benefits everyone, and everyone has a role in making immigration work. Get in touch to explore ways our community partners can support you and how you can contribute to achieving the goals set out in our CAP.



**References for the data included in this report are available by contacting Immigration Partnership.*



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Ontario

Canada



Region of Waterloo



United Way
Kitchener Waterloo & Area