

# Report on Participants' Views on the 3rd Annual Welcoming Ottawa Week (WOW) June 22 - 28, 2015

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## *I. Introduction*

The Welcoming Ottawa Week (WOW) is a community wide initiative that aims to: (a) extend Ottawa's genuine welcome to new immigrants; (b) create opportunities for new and old residents to connect culturally, socially and intellectually; and (c) to create platforms for Ottawa to showcase successes and discuss challenges. These results are in turn expected to bolster Ottawa's international reputation as a cosmopolitan, world class city that is welcoming to immigrants and nurtures a thriving diversity.

WOW was initiated by OLIP and proclaimed by Ottawa Mayor, Jim Watson in June 2013. WOW has grown significantly in its short history, soaring from 8 events in the inaugural year to 50 events this year. Moreover, this year, new types of partners contributed to WOW, school boards and private foundations have joined in planning the Week and in sponsoring of events.

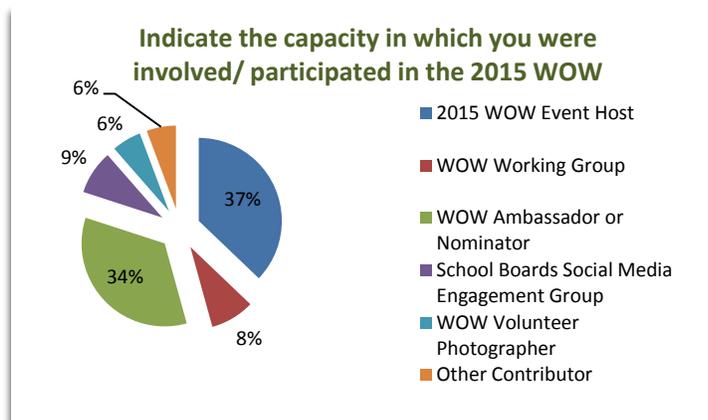
This year's Welcoming Ottawa Week calendar included several of the same popular events from 2014 WOW such as photo and art exhibitions, sporting activities, documentary screenings, art and cultural presentations, walking tours and thematic workshops – as well as new types of activities such as special events to commemorate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Francophonie Ontarienne.

We asked WOW Event Hosts, WOW working group members, WOW Ambassadors and Nominators and other WOW contributors to share their views on the 2015 WOW activities and to offer ideas on how WOW could continually be improved. An on-line survey was sent to 80 individuals, which yielded a forty three percent (43%) response rate.

## II. 2015 WOW Evaluation Survey Respondents

The 2015 WOW Evaluation Survey was sent to eighty individuals who consisted of:

- WOW Event Hosts: key contacts of OLIP partner organizations and stakeholder institutions, who hosted an event during the Welcoming Ottawa Week.
- WOW working group members, comprised of representatives of OLIP partner organizations operating in multiple sectors (see membership in attachment)
- WOW Ambassadors and their nominators
- WOW volunteer photographers, engaged by OLIP to take photos of selected WOW events
- School Boards’ joint committee on social media engagement of their networks in support of the 2015 Welcoming Ottawa Week
- Other contributors

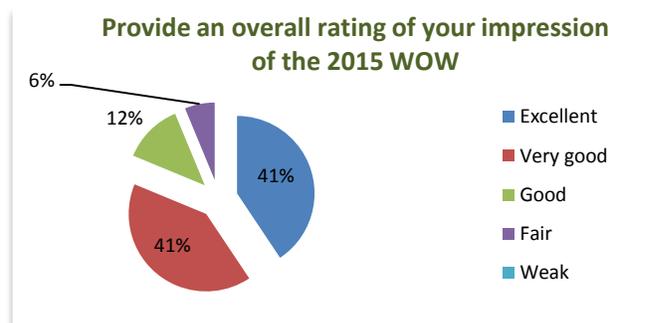


Thirty four individuals responded to the survey, reflecting a forty three (43%) percent response rate. The following paragraphs summarize respondents’ views and feedback.

## III. 2015 WOW Evaluation Survey Respondents Feedback

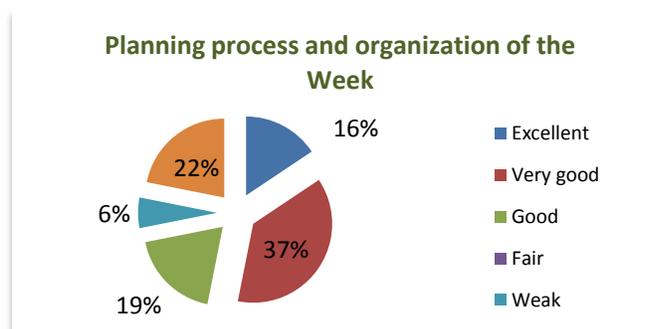
### 1. Overall Impression of 2015 WOW

Survey respondents expressed an overall high level of satisfaction of the 2015 WOW. Eighty two percent (82%) of respondents rated their impression of WOW either as “Excellent” or “Very good” (a significant increase from last year’s 69%). Twelve percent (12%) rated their overall impression as “Good” while 6% indicated as “Fair”.



### 2. Planning process and organization of the Week

Overall 72% of respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the planning and organization of 2015 WOW (16% indicating “Excellent”, 37% as “Very good” and 19% as “Good”). Six percent (6%) rated the planning and organization as “Weak”. Twenty two percent (22%) were unable to rate.

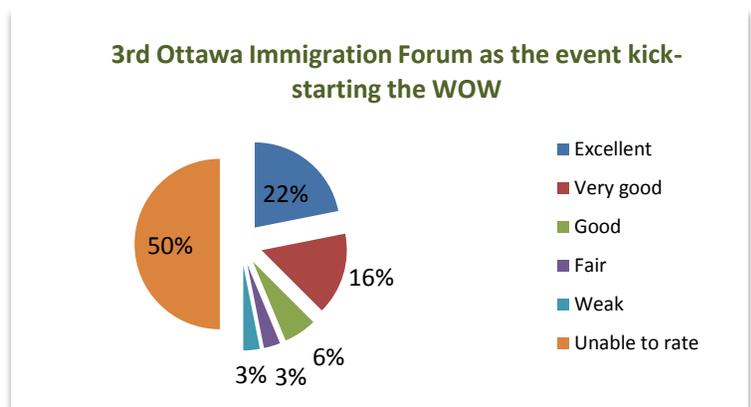


Some respondents felt the WOW planning should start a little early on in the year to allow for more time to promote the Week's events; and the WOW Ambassador nominations.

### 3. 3rd Ottawa Immigration Forum as the event kick-starting the WOW

Forty four percent (44%) of the respondents indicated a high level satisfaction with having the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ottawa Immigration Forum function as the event kick-starting the 2015 WOW (22% indicated as "Excellent", 16% as "Very good" and 6% as "Good").

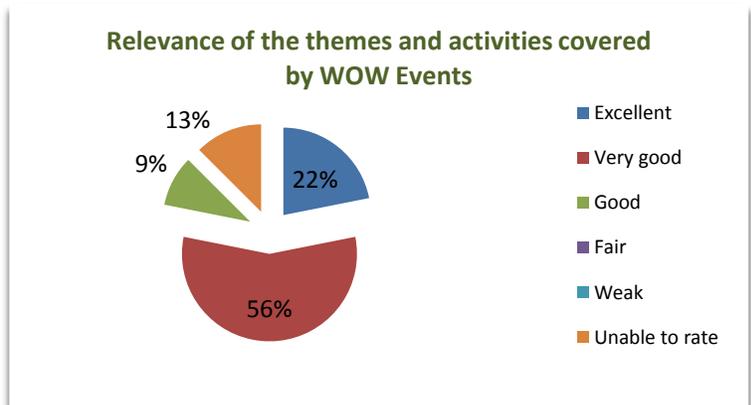
Six percent (6%) indicated their level of satisfaction as either "Fair" or "Weak". One respondent suggested hosting either a launch or closing event where all WOW Event Hosts are invited.



Fifty percent (50%) of respondents were unable to rate their level of satisfaction. This is due to the fact that a large number of the Survey recipients did not attend the Forum.

### 4. Relevance of the themes and activities covered by WOW Events

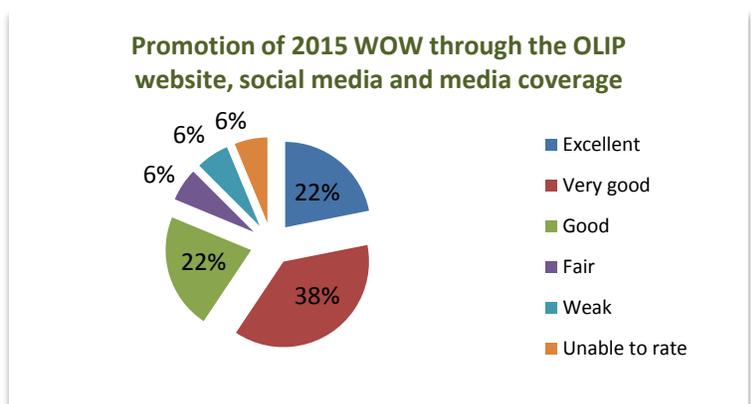
Eighty seven percent (87%) of survey respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the relevance of the themes covered by the WOW activities (22% rated as "Excellent, 56% as "Very good" and 9% as "Good"). Most respondents felt the Week catered to a wide diversity of interests. Other respondents indicated an appreciation for the diversity in the speakers and topics covered at the Ottawa Immigration Forum.



Thirteen percent (13%) were unable to rate the relevance of the themes and activities covered by 2015 WOW events.

### 5. Promotion of 2015 WOW Events through the OLIP website, social media and media coverage

Overall, 82 % of survey respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the promotion of 2015 WOW through the OLIP website, social media and media coverage ( 22% rated as "Excellent", 38% rated as "Very good" and 22 % rated as "Good").



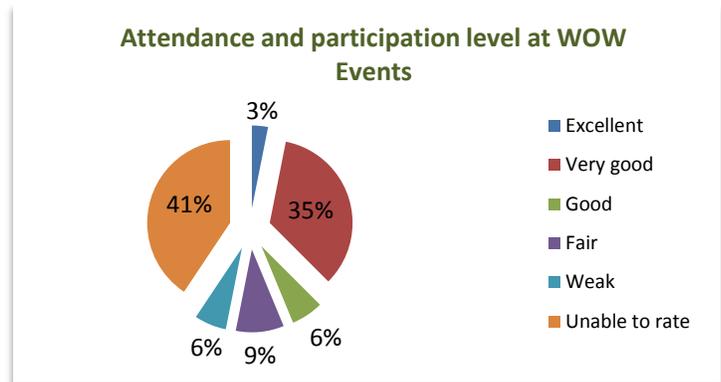
Eighteen percent (18%) indicated their

satisfaction as either "Fair", "Weak" or "Unable to rate".

## 6. Attendance and participation level at WOW Events

Forty four percent (44%) of respondents rated the attendance and participation level at WOW events as positive (3% indicated as "Excellent", 35% as "Very good" and "6% as "Good"). Nine percent (9%) indicated their level of satisfaction as "Fair", while 6% rated as "Weak".

Forty one percent (41%) of respondents were unable to rate.

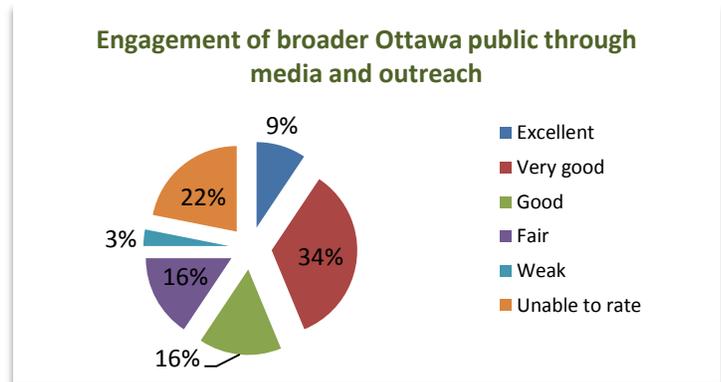


## 7. Engagement of broader Ottawa public through media and outreach

Overall, more than half of the respondents (59%) indicated a high level of satisfaction with the engagement of the broader Ottawa public through media and outreach (9% rated their satisfaction as "Excellent", 34% as "Very good" and 16% as "Good").

Sixteen (16%) rated the satisfaction as "Fair" and 3% as "Weak".

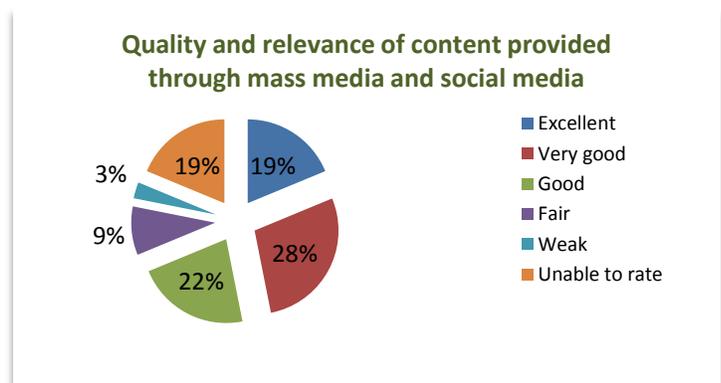
Twenty two percent (22%) of the survey respondents were unable to rate the level of engagement.



A few of the respondents pointed out the need to conduct more outreach to francophone communities; and others suggested live streaming select WOW events to allow for more individuals, who are physically unable to attend, to participate.

## 8. Quality and relevance of content provided through mass media and social media

Sixty nine percent (69%) of respondents generally viewed the quality and relevance of content provided through mass media and social media as positive (19% of respondents indicated as "Excellent", 28% as "Very good", and 22% as "Good"). Nine percent (9%) rated the quality and relevance of the content as "Fair" while 3% rated as "Weak". Nineteen percent (19%) were unable to rate.



Respondents offered the following feedback on aspects of the 2015 WOW:

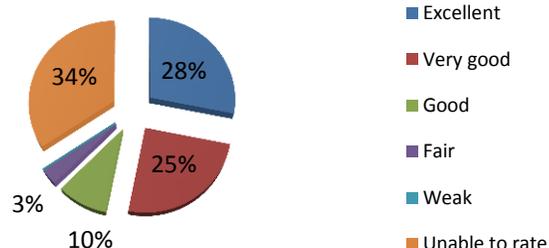
- Blog posts on the OLIP website were a great opportunity to showcase organizations, events, and insights;
- Excellent branding and promotional materials as such WOW logo and event calendar;
- Outstanding lineup of events- the WOW calendar included a diverse range of events;
- Excellent coverage of WOW Ambassadors at the Forum, mass and social media.

## 9. Photos generated and distributed throughout 2015 WOW

When asked to rate their satisfaction with WOW photos and their distribution, seventy three percent (73%) of respondents reported high ratings (28% rated as “Excellent”, 25% rated as “Very good” and 10% rated as “good”). Three percent (3%) rated as “Fair”.

Thirty four (34%) were unable to rate.

Photos generated and distributed throughout 2015 WOW

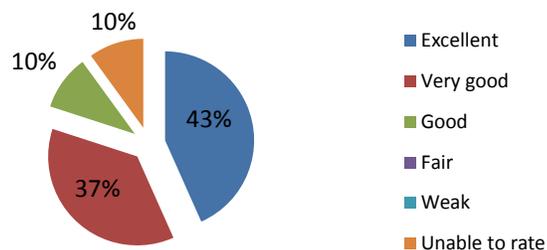


## 10. WOW Ambassadors Initiative

The highest rated aspect of 2015 WOW is the WOW Ambassador Initiative, with ninety percent (90%) of survey respondents indicating a high level of satisfaction (43% rated the initiative as “Excellent”, 37% rated as “Very good” and 10% as “Good”).

Ten percent (10%) of the respondents were unable to rate.

WOW Ambassadors Initiative



Some respondents suggested organizing an event where the general public can meet and greet WOW Ambassadors and their Nominators.

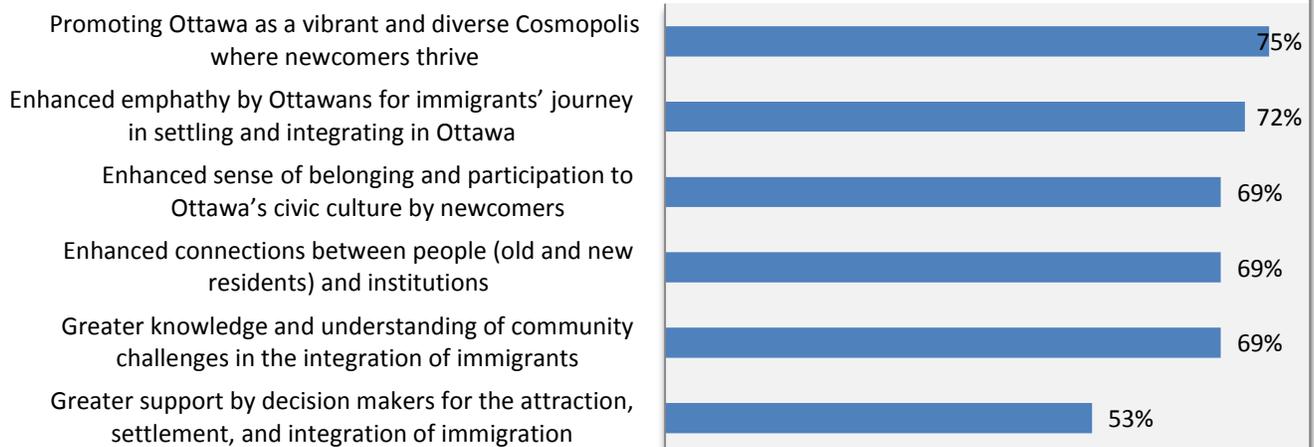
## IV. Contribution to long-term goals

Survey respondents were asked to rate six areas of impact, based on the extent to which 2015 WOW contributed to the long-term goals of the Welcoming Ottawa Week initiative. Based on the results, 2015 WOW succeeded in bringing impact in all targeted areas. The following summary and graph represents respondents’ views, based on our aggregation of the “very strong”, “strong”, and “good” scores.

1. Promoting Ottawa as a vibrant and diverse Cosmopolis where newcomers thrive (75%)
2. Enhanced empathy by Ottawans for immigrants’ journey in settling and integrating in Ottawa (72%)
3. Enhanced sense of belonging and participation to Ottawa’s civic culture by newcomers- (69%)
4. Enhanced connections between people (old and new residents) and institutions- (69%)
5. Greater knowledge and understanding of community challenges in the integration of immigrants (69%)
6. Greater support for the attraction, settlement, and integration of immigration (53%)

## Contribution to long-term goals

■ Areas of Impact



The following quotes from survey respondents are in reference to the impact achieved by 2015 WOW Initiative.

*"The work being done is significant and creating a stronger and more vibrant culture of diversity and inclusion in Ottawa. You have my admiration and encouragement going forward into the next year. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of WOW"*

*"Huge increase in visibility over last year – so WOW is really on a roll – very exciting"*

*"WOW is growing- it has easily tripled since its inception 3 years ago"*

*"I love how you brought so many organizations together" Congratulations on a great week! I'm already looking forward to next year's WOW. Thank you for inviting me to help out!"*

*"It caused me -- and others around me -- to deliberately stop and critically reflect on the impact we can have on each other, even though gestures we tend to see as small or insignificant"*

*"I like seeing people from different cultures come together for a common goal"*

*"I really like the WOW project, the organizing committee did such great work. Thank you so much for the care and visibility you gave to newcomers. You are wonderful"*

*"First of all, let me say how impressed I was with the whole experience. [...you] were phenomenal, each person the epitome of what it means to be welcoming. I think CBC certainly showed great interest, and their coverage was able to reach a wide audience. However it's showcased, it's important that the media tell these simple, good news stories about ordinary people. It's just one more thing that connects us."*

## V. *Event types to consider including in future WOWs*

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question "*What other types of events would you like to see in future WOWs*". Their responses are summarized below:

- More cultural performances, music and dance events showcasing Ottawa's cultural diversity.
- Share more immigrant integration testimonies.
- Incorporate events for seniors.
- Host an event where the general public can meet and greet WOW Ambassadors and their nominators.
- Organize more sporting events.
- An integrated one day job fair where employers and newcomers can connect. Job opportunities/leads resulting from the networking could be used as a measure of success or impact of WOW.
- An international student's event where students can learn more about services and resources available to them around the city.

## VI. *Suggestions for further improvement*

Survey respondents were asked to offer suggestions on how WOW could be improved. Their responses are summarized below.

- Start the planning and promotion process earlier in the year including time for preparing WOW ambassadors and nominators interviews, photo sessions and Forum.
- Issue a "WOW passport" - Event participants receive a stamp or sticker each time they attend an event which they place in a "passport". This passport is then placed in a draw for a chance to win some prize.
- Include an event in commemoration of World Refugee Day which occurs every June 20.
- Allow for a year round WOW Ambassador nomination process.
- Add large scale events by key stakeholders in the community.
- Enable a broader distribution of information and outreach outside of the newcomer and integration sector.
- Start WOW on a Saturday and end the following Sunday so that Event hosts have the option of organizing events on two weekends. E.g. For next year: Saturday, June 25 to Sunday, July 3, 2016.
- Engage International Student Office representatives from post-secondary institutions to join WOW working group or be a part of the planning process.
- Engage religious communities in WOW planning or promotion.
- Record and/or live stream events online so that people that are unable to attend in person can participate online.
- Enhance accessibility to WOW information on the OLIP website including providing links to events.
- Invite [more] bloggers to write about WOW on their blog or on OLIP website.
- Request event hosts to indicate the language the events will be held i.e. English, French or other – and reflect this information on the WOW calendar for easy identification.
- Issue short and simple WOW correspondences (not too much text).
- Schedule similar themed events on the same date and location.
- Host a launch or closing event where all WOW hosts are invited.
- Increase WOW promotion in francophone communities.

- Hold WOW at a different time of the year. This year, the Week occurred during Ramadan which made it challenging for some immigrants to participate.
- Engage primary and secondary students early on in the school year, with a project delivery around the time of WOW (June).

## **VII. Summary of Twitter and Facebook Analytics**

A WOW Social Media Coordinator was engaged by OLIP to develop and implement a WOW Social Media Strategy to be executed over a 3-month period: April – June 2015.

- 72,000 twitter impressions were recorded (i.e. number of times users saw the tweet on twitter).
- Over 3600 twitter profile visits were recorded over the 3 month period with 2,438 profile visits in June compared to 137 visits in March 2015.
- 185 direct mentions of @OLIP\_PLIO by twitter users, 46 times more in June compared to March 2015.
- Engagement with specific Facebook posts increased from 300 to 600 in reach.
- Growth in the number of people who clicked through social media into WOW or OLIP content.

Specifically:

- ✓ 200 accessed on-line content through Storify social media posts
- ✓ 195 clicked through general social media posts onto WOW Web page
- ✓ 172 linked from social media posts to the Ambassador Nominations forms
- ✓ 110 views on WOW Videos, via social media posts
- ✓ 65 linked to the Volunteer Photographer form, via twitter and Facebook
- ✓ 63 linked to the WOW Ambassador nominations information
- ✓ 50+ linked to WOW Blog posts
- ✓ 30 linked to Ottawa Citizen 2014 from Twitter and Facebook
- ✓ 44 linked from social media posts to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ottawa Immigration Forum on-line registration
- ✓ 26 linked to the WOW Call for Events

### **Recommendations for future social media engagement**

- Allocate more time for planning and implementing the social media strategy.
- Increase and sustain social media posts to 1-2 posts a day on twitter and Facebook.
- Enhance social media engagement content with questions, stories and pictures.
- Increase strategic use of hashtags such as #MotivationMonday, #GivingTuesday (especially in November) and #TBT on Twitter.
- Follow and tweet key politicians and individuals in the refugee field.
- Engage WOW contributors to write via OLIP channels.
- Train OLIP staff in new technology and tools for mobile social media engagement.