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The Settlement & Integration Needs of Immigrants: A Literature Review

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Introduction

In its first phase, the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) will develop a community-wide strategy for improving the social, civic, and economic integration of immigrants in Ottawa.

The development of the Ottawa Immigration Strategy involves the engagement of actors from numerous sectors and extensive knowledge gathering and consultation activities. This review of literature contributes to the strategy development process by reviewing existing knowledge about immigrant settlement and integration. The intention of this document is to discuss the Ottawa context, drawing where possible on literature related specifically to Ottawa. The document also draws on broader literature in order to explore key concepts related to immigrant settlement and integration. Additionally, because studies related specifically to Ottawa are limited in number, relevant literature from other Ontario cities and/or referring to the broad Canadian context is also explored.

The literature review places OLIP and the Ottawa Immigration Strategy in context by providing a current profile of immigrants in Ottawa. It also explores immigrant needs related to: settlement and integration, employment and economic inclusion, health and housing. Within each of these categories, an analysis of immigrants' needs and key considerations are provided. In addition, the specific Ottawa context related to each category will be outlined. Throughout the discussion, specific considerations related to factors such as age, gender, immigration status and ethnicity will be considered, recognizing that such factors intersect to create unique experiences and needs among the immigrant population. A discussion of the specific needs of Francophone immigrants is also included. The document concludes with a summary of emerging gaps and recommendations for future action.

Profile of Immigrants in Ottawa

According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada classifications, "immigrants" may broadly refer to individuals who come to Canada under the following categories: sponsored family members, internationally trained professionals (skilled workers), convention refugees, refugee claimants, privately sponsored refugees, temporary foreign workers, live-in caregivers, business immigrants, protected persons, humanitarian and compassionate cases, foreign students and provincial nominees. In 2008, Canada admitted 247,243 individuals as permanent residents. This included 149,072 economic class (including dependants) immigrants, 65,567 family class immigrants, 21,860 refugees and protected persons, and 10,742 others (i.e. humanitarian and compassionate cases) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2009).
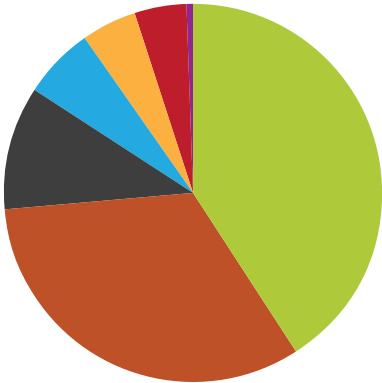
Ottawa has the fifth largest number of foreign-born residents and new immigrants in Canada, after Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary (Statistics Canada, 2006). According to the 2006 Ottawa census, out of a total population of 801,275, 178,540 (22%) of individuals were born outside of Canada (City of Ottawa, Census 2006). Of these individuals, 19% arrived before 2001 and 4% arrived after 2001 and are considered "new immigrants". Between 1996 and 2000, 21% of immigrants in Ottawa were refugees, 27% were family class, and 51% were economic class (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005).

OLIP recognizes that settlement and integration are processes that are experienced differently by each individual and the length of period in which a person will experience difficulties will vary in duration according to that individual and their circumstances. Additionally, children born to immigrant parents may experience the settlement and integration challenges of their parents. For this reason OLIP defines "immigrants" and "immigration" very broadly to refer to any individual who is engaged in the processes of settlement and/ or integration.

The following table indicates the number of immigrants living in Ottawa by region of origin[I] :

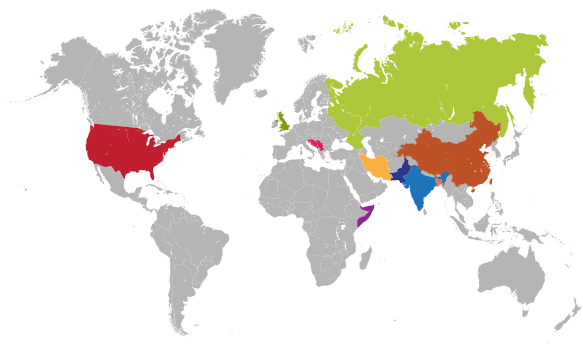|	
Asia and the Middle East	73,115
Europe	58,745
Africa	18,695
Caribbean and Bermuda	10,680
Central and South America	8,540
United States of America	7,865
Oceania	890

(Source: Ottawa Census, 2006)

Between 1996 and 2001, the top ten countries of origin for immigrants in Ottawa were:

1. China
2. India
3. Somalia
4. Iran
5. United States of America
6. Russia
7. United Kingdom
8. Former Yugoslavia
9. Pakistan
10. Bangladesh

(Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2005): Recent Immigrants in Metropolitan Areas: Ottawa– A Comparative Profile based on the 2001 Census.)

Immigration in Ottawa grew significantly over the last three decades. Between 1986 and 2001, the immigrant population in Ottawa grew at a rate of 65%, compared to 46% for Ontario and 39% for Canada. According to the City of Ottawa, by 2017 immigrants will account for 27% of the city's population, compared to 21% in 2001 (City of Ottawa, 2007).

Despite this growth, immigration to Ottawa has recently slowed. In fact, despite having the fourth largest immigrant population in Canada, Ottawa ranked sixth in terms of attracting new immigrants in 2006–2007 (City of Ottawa, 2009, 5). International net migration to Ottawa for 2006–2007 was at its lowest since 1988–1989. The City of Ottawa Annual Development Report states: "this constitutes the fourth consecutive annual decline for international migration, suggesting there may be a need to better promote the

city at a global level" (ibid, 6). The Social Planning Council (2009) also indicates that secondary migration, where immigrants relocate to other areas of Canada, is a challenge for Ottawa.

The importance of immigration and immigrants for Ottawa's labour force is evident. For example, in 2004 immigration contributed to 70% of Ottawa's labour force growth, while the Canadian born labour force contributed to just 30%. By 2011, immigrants will account for 100% of the city's net labour force growth (City of Ottawa, 2007). According to the Canadian Labour and Business Centre, LASI World Skills and the United Way of Ottawa (2003), 69% of immigrants in Ottawa are of "working age" (between 25-64 years of age) compared to 53% of the Canadian-born population. 70% of immigrants that settle in Ottawa explicitly intend to look for

1. For more detailed information regarding the changes in country of origin of Ottawa's immigrants, please consult the document "The Role of Immigration in Ottawa's Historic Growth and Development: A Multi-City Comparative Analysis of Census and Immigration Data" (Vineberg, 2010).

work, while the remainder are spouses, children, students or retired (Canadian Labour and Business Centre et al, 2003, 3). Immigrants in Ottawa also are more educated than their Canadian born counterparts; 79% of women and 86% of men possess a degree prior to their arrival (City of Ottawa, 2007). In fact, Ottawa receives the most highly educated immigrants of any Canadian city. For example, in 2001 the number of immigrants who arrived in Ottawa with an undergraduate degree was 2,276, equivalent to the total number of undergraduate degrees awarded by Carleton University in the same year. 223 immigrants, arriving in Ottawa in the same year, possessed a doctoral degree, which is more than the number of doctorates awarded by both Carleton University and the University of Ottawa in that year (Canadian Labour and Business Centre et al, 2003, 6).

According to the Social Planning Council of Ottawa (2009), a significant number of immigrants who arrived in Ottawa between 2001 and 2006 had some level of competency in English and/or French, with 93.2% possessing knowledge of one or more official language. 17.7% of these recent immigrants were bilingual in both English and French, while 7% of recent immigrants did not posses any English or French. In 2007 the City of Ottawa stated that nine out of ten immigrants "arrive with official language abilities" (City of Ottawa, 2005, 3). In addition to the capacity of immigrants in Canada's official languages, immigrants also bring with them a multitude of global languages. 69 mother tongue languages other than French and English are spoken in Ottawa. The Social Planning Council of Ottawa states: "language diversity of immigrants, instead of being a challenge, strengthens the Canadian position in the global market economy and the country's international development and peacekeeping roles" (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 21).

Of the 143,215 Francophones living in Ottawa, 16.3% (23,345) are immigrants. Francophone immigrants by region of origin predominantly originate from Africa (27.2%), Asia and the Middle East (25.3%), Europe (25.3%) and the Americas (22.1%) (Bisson, 2009, 42). Francophone immigrants are most highly represented in the 0–14 (9%) and 15–25 (17.7%) age groups. The distribution of immigrants in these age categories is larger for the Francophone populations than for Anglophones in Ottawa. Francophone immigrant seniors make up 13.8% of the Francophone population over 65 years of age (Bisson, 2009, 46).

In terms of sex distribution of recent immigrants in Ottawa, the number of women is slightly higher than men and is the same as that of the Canadian born population, at 51% for female immigrants who arrived between 1996 and 2001. The proportion of women to men, however, is higher for immigrants from some countries of origin, such as the Philippines and Japan. On the other hand, a larger proportion of immigrants from countries such as Iran, Egypt and El Salvador are men (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2005).

With regard to age distribution, in 2006, 40% of immigrants stated that they had arrived in Canada as children (0–14 years) or youth (15–24 years). In the same year, 11% of children and youth in Ottawa were born outside of Canada (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 23). In 2006, 17.5 of all immigrants were seniors (age 65 years and older), with immigrants making up 30.9% of the general senior population in Ottawa (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 27).

Lastly, Ottawa has the second highest number of refugees of the top five cities for immigration in Canada, with an annual average share of 17.9%, after Montreal, which has an annual share of 35.5%. Between 1996 and 2006 13,591 refugees settled in Ottawa as permanent residents (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 11–12).

Exploring Immigrant Needs

3.1.1 Settlement and Integration

The settlement and integration of immigrants is a broad and complex area. Prior to reviewing immigrant needs in this area it is important to define settlement and integration. While there is some variance in definitions of "settlement", it is generally accepted to refer to the "long-term, dynamic, two-way process through which, ideally, immigrants would achieve full equality and freedom of participation in society, and society would gain access to the full human resource potential in its immigrant communities" (OCASI, 2000).

Similarly, according to Integration-Net (2003), 'integration' is the process by which: "immigrants act as fully functioning members of Canadian society; and among other things:

> Have found and are maintaining employment appropriate to their skills and background;
> Are participating in mainstream organizations;
> Offer a portion of their time to the community;
> Feel comfortable with Canadian values, and;
> Participate in the political process (voting, running for office, etc.)"

Settlement and integration can be understood as part of a complex continuum. Rather than an end goal to be achieved, settlement and integration are part of a process that may take different forms depending on individual needs and experience, and do not occur in a fixed time frame. This process involves adaptation by both the immigrant and host society; both require support and have responsibilities throughout the process. The settlement and integration continuum involves: immigrants' needs being met (i.e. housing, education, nutrition, and healthcare); full and gratifying participation in the labour market and/or local economy; civic and community participation; and a sense of belonging in the community.

Relevant to the process of settlement and integration is the concept of "Welcoming Community", which broadly refers to "the extent to which a society is able to integrate/include immigrants, refugees and minorities" (Metropolis, 2007). This refers to the steps through which a community seeks to support the settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees, including racialized groups, and the adoption of approaches and policies across communities and organizations to ensure cultural competency. Building a welcoming community involves a number of complex considerations, and requires changes, adjustments and adaptations at a number of levels. There are several concepts that are useful for understanding how welcoming communities can be built:

Social Inclusion: In a paper entitled "Immigrant Settlement and Social Inclusion", part of the Laidlaw Foundation's working paper series on social inclusion, Ratna Omidvar and Ted Richmond (2003) provide an excellent **definition of the concept**:

"Social inclusion is about making sure that all children and adults are able to participate as valued, respected and contributing members of society. It is, therefore, a normative (value based) concept . . . [it] reflects a proactive, human development approach to social well-being that . . . requires investments and action to bring about the conditions for inclusion . . . [I]t calls for validation and recognition of diversity as well as recognition of the commonality of lived experiences and the shared aspirations among people . . ."

Omidvar and Richmond also describe five "cornerstones" of social inclusion, which are useful for understanding how the concept translates into everyday life.

> **"Valued recognition"**: involves according respect and recognition to individuals and groups, including valuing their differences.

> **"Human development"**: includes supporting the development of "talents, skills and capacities" and the choices of individuals to have a life that is of value to them and to contribute in a way that they find fulfilling and others recognize.

> **"Involvement and engagement"**: involves having agency in decision-making about one's self, family and community in addition to participation in the life of the community in which one is living.

> **"Proximity"**: refers to the existence of and access to common spaces that allow for positive human interactions and making connections.

> **"Material well-being"**: means that individuals and their families are able to participate in all aspects of community life that appeal to them. This includes housing security and sufficient income to meet ones needs.

Social inclusion is connected to both settlement and integration. As a conceptual framework it deepens understanding of the importance of participation, agency and fulfilment with regards to individuals, families and communities.

Discrimination and Oppression: Discrimination, including discrimination based on race, is a major barrier to immigrant settlement and integration, and to fostering welcoming communities. In order to understand ways to eliminate this type of discrimination, it is useful to remember that "race" is a social construct rather a biological fact. It has been used to differentiate groups of people based on both real and perceived physical, cultural and social characteristics. Groups that experience racism are therefore "racialized". According to Hyman (2009) "racialization" refers to the process through which certain groups are identified as different and may thus be treated differently.

An anti-racism approach can be useful in order to break down the manifestations of racism in communities, organizations and, in particular, systems. Multiverse, a web-based resource based in the UK to support diversity in the education system, defines an anti-racism approach as being:

> "based on the belief that racism rationalises and maintains injustices and differential power accorded to particular racial groups… the antiracist approach is to tackle structural racism. This requires a dismantling of institutionalized practices of racism - whether in employment or education or in social welfare. It also entails a direct confrontation with racist ideologies…"

It is important to not only look at the social effects of racism, but also at how other types of social oppression interact, considering factors such as gender, class and sexuality. A broad-based approach to diversity is needed that takes a holistic view of both individuals and communities. In order to build a welcoming community, discrimination, oppression and exclusion based on racialization, sexual orientation, age, gender and ability must be directly and effectively addressed.

3.1.2 Settlement and Integration: Immigrant Needs

The diversity of the immigrant population in Ottawa means that immigrants have a variety of needs to support their settlement and integration. The Social Planning Council of Peel (2000) gives an excellent overview of the factors affecting the settlement and integration of immigrants, helping to create a general understanding about areas of need and providing an excellent framework for examining the local Ottawa context. They draw upon Esguerra and Lynch's (1990) three stages of settlement framework to describe categories of services required by immigrants based upon their settlement stage. The survival phase involves language training, finding affordable accommodation, employment and educational opportunities. The learning phase includes access to information and services and learning about the values of the new society. Finally, the integration phase involves both integration on the part of immigrants and accommodation on the part of long-time residents. The integration component also contains an emphasis on access to opportunities for services and social participation in 'mainstream society' (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2000, 36).

In terms of particular immigrant needs, the authors identify three categories: 1) language training; 2) settlement support; and 3) social integration. Crosscutting these categories are varying levels of need for emotional, political and technical support (Social Planning Council of Peel, 40). Although these needs are common for all immigrants, the heterogeneity of the immigrant population means that different needs coexist. There is "a complex demand for services and the need for highly customised services for different types of immigrants" (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2000, 41). For example, refugees may have particular needs for mental health services or services related to personal or social isolation. This demonstrates that one size does not fit all, and that settlement and integration are not linear processes but complex negotiations that take place over time.

Further exploring specific immigrant service needs, the Social Planning Council of Peel held 31 interviews with agencies in the Peel region of Ontario, and four focus groups with immigrants. They found that the concerns of most importance to immigrants and their needs for related services were (in order of importance): employment, language training, settlement and integration, housing, counselling, and children's education (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2000, 42).

In 2006, Citizenship and Immigration Canada sponsored a series of focus groups with immigrants and consultations with immigrant serving organizations in Ontario cities, including Ottawa. In a report entitled "Consultations on the Settlement and Language Training Needs of Newcomers in Support of the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement", findings related to the needs of immigrants are outlined. Nine key immigrant needs were identified. These include:

1. **Information and Guidance**: Participants stated a need for balanced and accurate information in the pre-departure phase in order to help them to make informed decisions about migration. The need for information continued during and beyond their settlement in Canada, and relying exclusively on written information sources was seen as insufficient to meet this need.

2. **Employment**: This was identified as the biggest priority area for the majority of immigrants. The three main barriers to employment were considered to be credential recognition, recognition for previous work experience, and obtaining references. The participants recommended bridging programs with minimal salaries as a means of providing Canadian experience, to enhance immigrants' knowledge of the Canadian workforce, and

to provide opportunities to demonstrate their existing skills.

3. **Languages**: The participants indicated that they were generally happy with existing language programmes (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada, English as a Second Language), but recommended some improvements. These included better student assessments to allow for the provision of curricula that are more targeted to the specific skills and needs of students. They also recommended that Canadian idioms, customs, etc., be taught as part of language classes.

4. **Initial Orientation**: The participants indicated that better support was needed for the initial steps of settlement, including finding housing, obtaining a provincial health insurance (OHIP) card, and acquiring a social insurance number. They also reiterated the need for more transparent information in the pre-arrival phase, and for enhanced Francophone services.

5. **Financial Stability**: This was a concern for immigrants, and was closely related to the employment category. Immigrants are very eager to work, especially in jobs that they consider to be on par with their skills, training and experience. They also spoke about barriers in the Canadian banking system, with necessities such as obtaining a credit card or bank account.

6. **Cultural Integration**: The participants indicated that greater awareness among Canadians is needed regarding immigrants and the challenges they face. They spoke about the importance of community and multicultural centres, personal networks and local support groups.

7. **Social and Emotional Support**: The need for a range of mental health services was also identified by the participants. They also indicated the need for new and enhanced opportunities for social interaction among immigrants and with those born in Canada. Affordable and accessible after school programs were also identified as a need.

8. **Health Care**: Participants expressed surprise about the three-month waiting period for OHIP, and that not all services are covered by the provincial plan. They also expressed quality-based concerns related to issues such as wait times, difficulty in finding family doctors and finding doctors that speak their language.

9. **Housing**: There were a number of challenges identified with housing. For example, participants expressed a lack of understanding about the various types of housing that were available. They identified an inability to find rental accommodations and a poor availability of affordable and adequate housing. Lack of references was also a challenge related to securing housing.

3.1.3 Settlement and Integration: Key Considerations

A number of key considerations regarding settlement and integration needs can be identified, including barriers, challenges and varying needs according to factors such as age, gender, and immigration status. Shaffir and Satzewich (2010) conducted interviews with immigrants, immigrant service providers and ethno-cultural associations in Hamilton, Ontario. When exploring barriers to settlement and integration faced by immigrants in Hamilton, a number challenges were raised. Participants felt that the duration of English programs did not match the needs of many immigrants, in particular refugees, and that more time within the scope of existing programs is needed in order to actually learn the

language. They also felt that lack of access to childcare was prohibitive to both attending language classes and finding employment.

As previously indicated, immigrant needs vary according to a number of intersecting factors, including phase of the immigration process, life cycle, gender and ethnicity. In their 2006 consultations with immigrants, Citizenship and Immigration Canada asked immigrants for feedback on their needs according to phase of immigration. In the pre-arrival phase, immigrants expressed a need for better and clearer information about migration to Canada. The report states: "[t]he gap between reality and what is being told to immigrants is huge and colours many different aspects of an immigrant's experience, understanding and acceptance of life in Canada" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006, 4). Many participants felt that their settlement challenges could have been minimized if they had received "targeted", accurate and balanced information prior to leaving their home countries. For example, they felt that if they had more information, they could have begun accreditation processes, job searches and language training prior to arrival.

During the immediate post-arrival phase, participants noted that their needs were related largely to survival, such as finding housing, employment and beginning to learn the language. Participants indicated that after six months they needed more targeted services, specific to their individual or family context. This could come in the form of information access and personal guidance. When asked about what they envisioned needing beyond the consultation, they stated that they needed to find "good jobs". They also mentioned

needing support and advice about long term decisions, such as finances, education and housing.

Not surprisingly, immigrants experience different needs and have different priorities according to their gender, age and stage of life. For example, female respondents in the Citizenship and Immigration Canada consultations spoke of childcare issues posing a barrier to them finding work and obtaining financial stability. They stated a need for childcare services that are more affordable and that provide flexible hours to accommodate women who work shifts. Women also spoke of the need for counselling and mental health services, and for social opportunities to support their emotional well-being. The Social Planning Council of Peel also

> "Not surprisingly, immigrants experience different needs and have different priorities according to their gender, age and stage of life."

describes specific factors effecting the integration of women. For example, immigrant women are often less likely than their male counterparts to speak an official language and have more trouble finding jobs, often ending up in low-paid employment. This, in turn, may lead to increased dependence on their spouses. They might also experience difficulty adapting to changes in gender and family roles. Additionally, gender-based violence, common in all societies, may be aggravated by the stress of migration (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2000, 28).

Immigrant men also experience specific challenges to settlement and integration. As will be described below in

greater detail, finding employment, especially in their chosen field, is often extremely difficult for immigrants. Under and unemployment has a particular impact on immigrant men and can be a predictor of mental illness, with work providing not only economic benefits but also a sense of self-worth, socialization, and a sense of belonging. According to the Social Planning Council of Peel, satisfactory employment in the host country correlates more highly with emotional well-being than both pre-migration stress and family separation (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2000, 29). A drop in men's socio-economic status through unemployment or under-employment may therefore negatively affect both them and their families.

The Social Planning Council of Peel also describes specific needs related to families. After immigration, families are extremely vulnerable, requiring targeted support. Challenges faced include changes in gender relations as a result of entering a new society, intergenerational conflict (between children, parents and grandparents), loneliness and lack of support specifically for families as a unit, and high stress levels and/or low self esteem having a negative impact on families. The Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2006) report adds that family violence is a significant concern that may be underreported in immigrant focus groups.

Seniors, defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada as being over 50 years of age at the time of migration, also have numerous and specific needs. Unsurprisingly, healthcare is a key concern for seniors. Many of the challenges they face are compounded by their lack of competency in one of the official languages. Additionally, many immigrants in this category come to Canada looking for work and face an added barrier of age in addition to obtaining educational records from their country of origin. Financial security is a major concern for seniors, as they must live in Canada for at least ten years before qualifying for Old Age Security and many seniors arrive with few financial resources. Finally, many seniors

also experience a change in the age-related status that they were accustomed to in their home country, which can cause stress and disorientation.

Refugees are also a vulnerable group requiring specific support and services. Refugees did not freely choose to migrate, and may often be separated from family. Many refugees have physical or mental challenges and may have been victims of torture or sexual violence prior to arriving in Canada.

The varying needs of immigrants, in addition to the constantly changing profile of immigrant populations, mean that service providers and communities must be open, responsive and aware. Citizenship and Immigration Canada states that organizations that participated in their consultations: "encouraged the development of a service delivery model that is flexible and innovative so that on-the-ground services can be shifted to meet the changing needs of immigrants as they are recognized and assessed" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006, 10). This, they stated, should be accompanied by the capacity to monitor, evaluate, and improve services on an ongoing basis.

3.1.4 Settlement and Integration: The Ottawa Context

Many of the general needs outlined above also apply specifically to immigrants living in Ottawa. The unique qualities of Ottawa as the national capital, a bilingual city, and possessing highly educated immigrant and local-born populations, among other factors, also create unique needs for its immigrants. The City of Ottawa (2007) states that the key challenges for immigrants living in Ottawa are: finding employment, accessing training, finding housing, accessing health services, recognition of foreign credentials and training, recognition of foreign experience, racism, and discrimination. It is

useful to explore these barriers and the related implications for service needs.

Language training and support figure heavily for immigrants both in terms of employment and social integration. As stated above, a large proportion of immigrants arrive with abilities in one of both official languages. These abilities vary however, and may not translate to effective communication in day-to-day life or for employment. The City of Ottawa states: "More than nine out of ten immigrants arrive with official language abilities. Language barriers are not limited to

soft skills training and other practical information. They also recommend an increase in access to free and/or affordable second official language training, recognizing that the Ottawa labour market largely demands competency in both French and English. Additionally, they recommend that childcare be provided with language training so as to not create a barrier to participation. Access to sufficient French as a Second Language classes was also a major concern (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 89). As the majority of what is written about language tends to focus on English language programs, it would seem that more research is

"According to the Social Planning Council of Ottawa, language programs that are appropriate to people's life situation and experience level, and that include information about Canadian culture, soft skills training and other practical information are most needed."

language. Also included are: accent, rhythm of speech, job/ position specific language skills, sector jargon, Canadian idioms and slang and cross-cultural communication" (City of Ottawa, 2007, 3). This is consistent with a number of other sources (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2000; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2006; Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009), who cite the need for language training that focuses on employment or specific skills, and for investment in opportunities that promote language learning that also covers Canadian expressions/idioms and culture. For example, the Social Planning Council of Ottawa states that there is a need for adequate language training programs and related support services. They envision language programs that are appropriate to people's life situation and experience level, and that include information about Canadian culture,

needed regarding both access to French language training and the needs of immigrants in this regard.

Youth and seniors in Ottawa also have specific challenges related to settlement and integration, meaning that they have unique needs. As mentioned above, 40% of immigrants to Ottawa stated that they arrived as children or youth. According to the Social Planning Council of Ottawa, much immigration policy is focused on labour market issues, although many immigrants, including skilled workers, arrive with their families. They state that "[a]n important fact for service providers is that, out of 11,260 recent immigrants aged 0-24, 57.3% were children aged 0-14" (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 23). This points to the need for specific services for children and youth, and for their

families, especially those that pay specific attention to the needs for visible minority immigrants.

Also described above, seniors make up a significant portion of the immigrant population in Ottawa. Additionally, in 2006 32% of immigrant seniors were from racialized groups, with female immigrants as the majority in the 65 and over age group. Many of these women live alone. The majority of immigrants who do not speak English or French are over 65 years of age (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 29). Seniors therefore have a high risk of social isolation. Those that do not speak English or French may also have trouble accessing a variety of essential services, including healthcare, due to language barriers. Housing and financial security are also an issue for seniors in Ottawa, who might have limited or no pensions. Overall, there is a need for seniors' services that account for cultural and linguistic diversity so as to ensure access to appropriate services that adequately meet the specific needs of immigrant seniors.

As noted above, immigrants in Ottawa face a number of challenges related to employment and economic inclusion, housing and health and well-being. These will be described in further detail below.

3.2.1 Employment and Economic Inclusion

As is evidenced in the above overview of immigrant needs in Canada broadly and Ottawa specifically, employment and economic integration are a significant area of concern for immigrants. The challenges faced in the area of employment and economic integration not only have implications for immigrants and settlement and social service providers, but also for employers and for Ottawa overall. The following section outlines immigrant needs related to employment and key considerations for immigrant employment. It also reviews the Ottawa context specifically, by outlining Ottawa's needs in terms of building its labour force, and provides more details about the employment and economic integration situation of Ottawa's immigrants.

First, it is useful to briefly explore the dimensions of immigrant employment and to define 'economic inclusion'. Employment refers not only to employment in which one is paid by a third-party organization, business or individual but also to self-employment including entrepreneurship and social enterprise. Social enterprise has a number of definitions, and can be summarized as: "a business or service with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners" (Community First Online). Economic inclusion has much in common with the definition of 'social inclusion' provided above.

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In their document, prepared by Malcolm Shookner, entitled "An Inclusion Lens: Workbook for Looking at Social and Economic Inclusion and Exclusion" (2002), the Atlantic Region Population and Public Health Branch of Health Canada provides a useful framework for understanding economic inclusion and exclusion:

Exclusion

> Poverty
> unemployment
> non-standard employment,
> inadequate income for basic needs and participation in society
> stigma
> embarrassment
> inequality
> income disparities
> deprivation
> insecurity
> devaluation of caregiving
> illiteracy
> lack of educational access.

Economic Inclusion and Exclusion

Inclusion

> Adequate income for basic needs and participation in society
> poverty eradication,
> employment,
> capability for personal development,
> personal security,
> sustainable development,
> reducing disparities,
> value and support for caregiving.

As was described above, despite their high levels of education, immigrants, especially recent immigrants, often face economic exclusion brought on by significant challenges in accessing the labour market. Despite the fact that the educational profile of immigrants has increased since the 1990s, immigrants have experienced worse labour market outcomes than those arriving prior to that decade. In the early 1980s immigrants, including recent immigrants, experienced greater labour market participation than their Canadian-born counterparts. By 1991 this had reversed and the participation rate fell below the national average. This has persisted since the early 1990s. Alboim and McIsaac state that "[t]hese reduced outcomes seem incongruous in light of the labour market and skills shortages experienced throughout Canada" (Alboim and McIsaac, 2007, 3).

Additionally, prior to the 1990s immigrants generally caught up to their Canadian-born counterparts in terms of earnings

within 10 years. This trend has not continued in recent years. Many immigrants have had to find jobs in low-skilled areas, with more educated immigrants taking low-skilled jobs than their Canadian counterparts. The recession of the early 1990s seems to have had a strong impact on immigrants, and they did not rebound in a similar way as the Canadian-born population. Alboim and McIsaac state: "Overall, there have been deteriorating labour market outcomes for all new labour market entrants; among recent immigrant men, for example, this accounts for 40% of the decline in entry-level earnings" (ibid, 40).

Immigrants, through their workforce participation, may contribute a great deal to the local economy. For example in 2000 the immigrant population generated $4.1 billion in wages, salaries and self-employment income (ITWP Brochure). This income feeds back into the community through consumer purchases and taxes. Labour market exclusion of immigrants, however, not only has an impact on the economic stability of immigrants but also on the economy. The Conference Board of Canada stated in 2006 that the underutilization of newcomers accounts for a loss of between $2 and $3 billion of the Canadian economy.

3.2.2 Employment and Economic Inclusion: Key Considerations

The exclusion of immigrants from the labour market, not surprisingly, has a significant impact on immigrants themselves. In focus groups with immigrants and immigrant associations in Hamilton, respondents stated that finding employment was their most significant concern. While many stated that they were aware that finding work in Canada would be somewhat challenging, they found they were "unprepared for how difficult it is to actually negotiate the process of finding work" (Shaffir and Satzewich, 2010, 29).

There are a number of barriers that impede immigrant labour market participation in the areas in which individuals have been trained and/or have experience. These include: "employer and regulatory requirements for Canadian work experience; credential recognition; licensing for regulated professionals; lack of labour market language training; lack of customized upgrading and support opportunities; lack of information overseas and in Canada" (Alboim and McIsaac, 2007, 4). It is important to note that the local context also interacts with these barriers- for example in Ottawa highly educated immigrants are competing with an increasingly educated Canadian-born population, especially within the knowledge economy.

According to Alboim and McIsaac, the lack of Canadian experience is most commonly cited by immigrants as a barrier to finding appropriate employment. The requirement for immigrants to obtain Canadian work experience before finding work in their field can lead to a vicious cycle: "For professionals, prolonged under or unemployment can lead to deskilling, seriously affecting their prospects of re-entering the profession. It can also result in chronic occupational dislocation, lower income, and downward social mobility" (Alboim and McIsaac, 2007, 4). The Canadian experience requirement is, of course, sometimes appropriate, such as in cases when knowledge of Canadian policy or law is required. However, "it is often used as a means to mitigate risk when a candidate's experience is unknown or unfamiliar, and it is sometimes exploited in a discriminatory fashion to exclude candidates" (ibid, 4). Interestingly, respondents in Hamilton focus groups with immigrants largely felt that mistrust by employers towards immigrants was the most significant barrier to them finding adequate employment (Shaffir and Satzewich, 2010, 30).

The second most commonly cited barrier in Alboim and McIsaac's study is the recognition of foreign credentials.

The authors state that the challenge with foreign credential recognition is that there is no standardized approach in Canada, meaning that there is no "portability" between institutions and provinces. This means that what might be accepted in one context might not be valid in another. There is also no standard mechanism through which individuals can prove their experience or skills. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that non-recognition of credentials costs the Canadian economy $3.42 and $4.97 billion a year.

Another significant factor influencing the decrease in labour market success of immigrants in Canada since the 1990s may be the aforementioned shift in the region of origin of Canada's recent immigrants which has increased the diversity of this population. Alboim and McIsaac state that while the issue is complex, "there is ample research that documents the correlation between race and poverty in Canada and, increasingly, that points to racial discrimination within the labour market" (ibid, 5). These factors, of course, intersect with others such as lack of Canadian experience, foreign credential recognition, and language.

During focus groups held by the Social Planning Council of Peel (2000), participants identified three types of barriers related to employment. Primarily, they identified issues faced by both Canadian-born individuals and immigrants as a category that includes the frustration of needing experience to get a job, but not being able to get a job without experience. The second type of barrier they identified involved challenges that are specific to immigrants and racialized groups, including obstacles related to language. Finally, the third barrier they described was discrimination. Many participants felt that employers had pointed to apparent language issues or lack of Canadian experience as an excuse to hide their prejudice. Other participants had experienced overt racism. Similar to the issues outlined above, these experiences point to a need that goes beyond services for immigrants to address systemic issues and to fight discrimination.

3.2.3 Employment and Economic Inclusion: The Ottawa Context

Many of the barriers affecting immigrants in Ottawa are the same as those listed above. The Social Planning Council of Ottawa identified five factors impacting the economic exclusion of immigrants in Ottawa. They include both general labour market barriers, such as lack of Canadian experience and foreign credential recognition, and labour market barriers specific to ethnic minorities, such as access to social capital, cultural context in the workplace and hiring practices, racism and discrimination. Importantly, they also identify barriers related to the nature of Ottawa's economy and labour market. These include the existence of the Federal Government as a major employer, the frequent requirement for English and French bilingualism, an increase in precarious jobs (such as part-time or short-term jobs) and a decrease of opportunities in specific sectors with a high number of immigrant employees (such as the high tech sector) (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 87).

The Ottawa Labour Market

The need for immigration to maintain Canada and Ottawa's labour force is often cited, most notably through the statement that, by the year 2011, 100% of Canada and Ottawa's labour force growth will be due to immigration. The City of Ottawa (2007) states that population trends will increasingly mean that cities, and especially employers, will rely on immigrants for their success. They also state that although 51% of private sector managers view the shortage of skilled workers as a problem, only 15% considered hiring new immigrants[2] as a solution.

In its White Paper series informing Ottawa's Economic Strategy Update (2010), the City of Ottawa indicates a challenge of attracting and retaining sufficient talent to meet Ottawa's needs, particularly as a knowledge economy. It states that despite the diversity of Ottawa's labour market, the resident workforce is underutilized. In particular, certain populations, including recent immigrants and visible minorities, are underused. It also states that the existing resident population is insufficient to meet upcoming labour market needs: "more immigrants will be required and those in the labour force now will need to be encouraged to stay". While Ottawa (including Gatineau) attracted approximately 35,000 immigrants between 2001 and 2006, according to its proportion of Canada's population it should have attracted 40,000 in order to meet its needs (City of Ottawa, 2010, 2). Attraction and retention is a significant challenge for Ottawa. In fact, as mentioned above, despite having the fourth largest immigrant population in Canada, it ranked sixth in terms of attracting new immigrants in 2006-2007 (City of Ottawa, 2009, 5).

According to the City of Ottawa's Annual Development Report (2009), there were 522,000 jobs located in Ottawa in 2006, with 40,000 new jobs having been created between 2001 and 2006. During this period the high tech sector declined significantly, with the highest hit sub-sectors including software and communications (-4800 jobs), micro-electronics (-4200 jobs) and telecommunications (-1500 jobs). Federal employment increased during this period. In 2008, the number of employed residents in Ottawa was 500,000 with 671,000 employed residents in Ottawa-Gatineau. The sectors with the most significant gains in employment for this period were public administration (16,700) and health and education (10,100). Gains were also seen in the retail trade (5000) and professional, scientific and technology services sector

(4900). Sectors that lost the most jobs during this period include manufacturing (-4200), information and cultural industries (-4000) and construction (-3400).

The decline in the high tech sector and increase in federal employment has implications for immigrants. The requirements related to finding employment in the federal public service, including the preference for Canadian citizenship and bilingualism, often pose barriers to new immigrants. The City of Ottawa suggests that: "As immigrants will comprise an increasing proportion of Ottawa's population and workforce growth, this impediment needs to be addressed" (City of Ottawa, 2010, 2). Overall, the City of Ottawa points to the increase in importance of small and medium sized enterprises for the knowledge economy, and the need to increase the flexibility of the workforce and to encourage entrepreneurship.

Immigrant Labour Market Participation in Ottawa

Similar challenges to those identified above regarding immigrant economic exclusion are faced by immigrants in Ottawa. The City of Ottawa states that the average salary of immigrants who arrived during the period of 1996-1999 was only 68% of the average Canadian-born household. In 2005, immigrants with employment income earned $0.83 for every dollar earned by the general population. The disparity in income was significantly larger for recent immigrants, who in 2005 had a median income of $14,921 compared to $28,779 for immigrants in general and $34,343 for the general population. Racialized immigrants earned less than the overall immigrant population, at $24,008 (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 60).

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2. New or recent immigrants are defined in the 2006 Canadian Census as immigrants who arrived after 2001.

As indicated above, Ottawa receives the most educated immigrants of any city in Canada. Similar to the rest of Canada, education does not necessarily translate into labour market access in the area of one's training. In 1996, for example, recent immigrants with a university degree were four times more likely than their Canadian counterparts to be unemployed. Many immigrants must take on "survival jobs" when they cannot access employment in their areas of training or experience. More than ¼ of university trained recent immigrants work in jobs that only require high school or have no educational requirements. In fact, university educated recent immigrants in Ottawa are twice as likely as the Canadian-born population to have jobs that do not require a university education. This underutilization of immigrants' talents and skills, and the lower wages they earn in survival jobs, "not only affects the economic well-being of immigrants and their families, but the larger community as well through reduced consumer spending and greater social and community service requirements (Canadian Labour and Business Centre et al, 2003, 11). In 2006, the unemployment rate of recent immigrants was three times that of the general population (14% vs. 6%). The Social Planning Council of Ottawa states: "[d]espite high levels of educational attainment of the immigrant population, labour and income indicators demonstrate that immigrants, particularly new immigrants, are disproportionately affected by unemployment" (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 42). Additionally, in 2006, 28% of recent immigrant men and 40% of recent immigrant women living in Ottawa were underemployed, compared to 10% of Canadian-born men and 12% of Canadian born women. In particular, four immigrant groups are affected by unemployment in Ottawa: young people between the ages of 15-24 years, women, recent immigrants and university educated immigrants.

Recent immigrants are also over-represented in part-time and seasonal work: general population (39.1%); immigrants overall (41.2%); recent immigrants (59.4%). Recent female immigrants were particularly likely to be employed in part-time and seasonal work, at 64.2% in 2006 (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 59). Notably, the percentage of self-employed immigrants is slightly higher than in the general population (13.4% vs. 10.3%) (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 57).

The Social Planning Council of Ottawa states that contributing factors to this elevated level of un- or underemployment among immigrants include: highly selective requirements, such as having Canadian experience, for foreign-born workers; a high-level of job specific language required and a lack of available training in this area; the lack of recognition of foreign credentials; and a lack of services to support job market participation by families (such as culturally sensitive childcare, senior care, etc.). These clearly have implications for service needs. For example, labour-market participation by immigrant women seems to correlate to whether they have young children at home. This may indicate both a preference to have one parent at home and a need for better services to support entry into the labour force, such as affordable and culturally appropriate childcare.

These elevated unemployment rates clearly have implications for systemic and service needs. The Social Planning Council of Ottawa states that: "[t]he significant gap in unemployment rates between recent immigrants on the one hand, and all immigrants and the general population on the other, points to the urgency of a strategy to address the barriers to sustained employment of recent immigrants as a priority (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 49).

In a consultation entitled "Rethinking Poverty Two (RP2) - Immigrant Perspectives" (2009) the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa held focus groups exploring immigrant needs. Participants made a number of

suggestions for improvements in requirements related to employment:

> The inclusion of skilled immigrants in professional associations;
> Improved employment equity through accountable hiring processes;
> Making the transition to employment easier through better supports (e.g. micro loans, language training, scholarships etc);
> Changing the policies related to language and security clearance which create significant barriers to immigrants entering the public service;
> Better support for transitions from volunteer to paid positions.

As outlined above, barriers to employment for immigrants both in Ontario broadly and Ottawa specifically seem to require both program support and significant systemic change both on a policy level and on the level of awareness and attitudes among employers.

Policy, Good Practice and Needs

The need for immigration to address labour market requirements across Canada and in Ottawa specifically has implications for policy and practice. Finding solutions requires the participation of a number of key stakeholders, including federal departments (such as Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada), provincial counterparts (such as Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities), municipalities, regulatory bodies and post-secondary institutions, community based service organizations and, of course, employers.

With regard to best practices related to supporting immigrants to better integrate in the workforce and in the economy, Alboim and McIsaac state that: "Of the wide array of employment support programs, the most successful are work experience programs that directly involve employers" (Alboim and McIsaac, 2007, 9). Mentorship programs are also important for helping new immigrants to build the social capital necessary to improve their chances of integrating in the economy.

The City of Ottawa further suggests the greater involvement of senior government, to examine issues such as language, citizenship and security clearance requirements and credential recognition. They also point to the need for greater and more widely available information about "the imminent talent needs of the public, private and non-profit sectors" (City of Ottawa, 2010, 3). Additionally, they recommend that entrepreneurship should be encouraged among new labour market entrants not as a last resort but as a first choice.

3.3.1 Immigrant Health and Well-Being

Health, well-being and access to health services are important concerns for immigrants, as they are for the general population. Immigrants generally arrive in better overall health than the Canadian-born population. Describing this phenomenon, referred to as the "healthy immigrant effect", Ng et al (2005) state that this is partially due to pre-arrival health screening of immigrants. In their study "Dynamics of Immigrants' Health in Canada: Evidence from the National Population Health Survey", Ng et al explore "patterns of change in health status, health care use and health related behaviours among immigrants with those of the Canadian born population" (Ng et al, 2005, 2). The study shows that immigrants, particularly those of non-European origin[3] , were twice as likely, compared to the Canadian born population, to report a decline in health, changing their perceived health rating

from "very well" to "fair" or "poor" over a ten year period. This perceived decline in health among non-European immigrants was reflected in increasing contact with doctors by the same population (Ng et al, 2005, 4) The authors identify a number of potential causes of this deterioration in immigrant health, ranging from common age-related problems, to problems arising "as immigrants are integrated and adopt behaviours that have negative health impacts" (Ng et al, 2005, 3). The study, however, was unable to link the decline in immigrant health to behaviours such as smoking or physical inactivity, although weight gain was a possible contributor. The authors also refer to social determinants of immigrant health as potential causes of the decline in perceived health, such as financial difficulties, trouble finding employment and lacking networks or social support.

It is important to note that the deterioration in health during the study period "applied only to immigrants with non-European origins" (Ng et al, 2005, 5). The authors note that it is highly likely that the decline in health was related to socio-economic status. Hyman (2009) explicitly discusses race and ethnicity, in particular racism and discrimination, as a determinant of immigrant health. She cites a large body of work that suggests that disparities in health among "racialized"[4] populations persist even after adjusting for other contributing factors such as age, gender, education level, income, etc. Further, she indicates that: "racial and ethnic health inequities are increasingly being documented in recent cohorts of racialized immigrants" (Hyman, 2009, 7).

Mental health is also an important concern for immigrants. When discussing immigrant integration and the circumstances surrounding migration, the Social Planning Council of Peel identifies a number of risk-factors that might impact the mental health of immigrants, increasing the need for appropriate support. These risk-factors include: a drop in socio-economic status after migration; the inability to speak the language(s) of the new country; family separation; unfriendliness of the host society; isolation from their cultural community; experience of trauma or stress before migration; and migrating as an adolescent or senior (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2000, 26). They state that when these risk factors are present, the period of three to eighteen months after arrival is critical to ensure that immigrants receive the proper mental health and other supports. Importantly, they note that the lack of friendly reception and the existence of discrimination and racism in the host society can have a significant impact on the well-being of immigrants and their integration.

Access to health services is an issue of concern for immigrants. In their study on access to health services in Canada, Sanmartin and Ross (2006) explore difficulties in accessing healthcare for new immigrants, long-term immigrants and the general population. They distinguish between "immediate care", which includes treatments for minor, non-life threatening health problems (such as minor cuts, burns, fever) from family doctors, walk-in clinics or urgent care, and "routine care", which is provided by a family or general practitioner for routine issues such as chronic illness or annual exams. They discovered that 43% of new immigrants (in Canada 5 years or less) experience difficulty accessing immediate care while 16% had difficulty accessing routine care. For longer-term immigrants, 23% experienced difficulty

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3.   The authors distinguish between immigrants of European and non-European origin, stating that categorization according to region of origin and refugee status would have been preferable. They state that the data available did not allow for these more accurate distinctions.

4.   Racialization" refers to the process through which certain groups are identified as different and may thus be treated differently. Unlike the term "visible minorities", the term "racialized" indicates that "race" is a social construct (Hyman, 5).

accessing immediate care, and 12% had difficulty accessing routine care. These figures are compared to the Canadian-born population, where 23% experienced difficulty accessing immediate care, and 15% experienced difficulty accessing routine care. This points to a significant gap in accessing immediate care for new immigrants. They speculate that the difference in difficulty accessing immediate and routine care for new immigrants might point to the fact that new immigrants in fact make less use of routine care and therefore experience fewer barriers to access. They also suggest that difficulties in access might be routed in "knowledge barriers" such as not knowing where to access services (Sanmartin and Ross, 2006, 116). They also state that: "new immigrants were ten times more likely than Canadian-born respondents to identify barriers related to personal circumstances, such as transportation, language, cost or lack of information about where to go for care" (ibid).

Also related to barriers to preventive health services for immigrants, Pottie et al (2007) discuss barriers to effective service access. They point to the need to recognize gender-specific barriers when planning for preventive services for immigrants (Pottie et al, 2007, 60). They also indicate that barriers are found at the level of immigrants, service providers and the community, referring to barriers across the continuum of service delivery and access: patient, broker, physician, pharmacist. They caution that encountering barriers across the process of accessing health care can lead immigrant patients to become disengaged with the health system (Pottie et al, 2007, 60). Hyman also addresses quality of care as a determinant of immigrant health care access. She identifies organizational policies, such as lack of interpretation services, financial barriers, and poor cultural competency among providers as significant barriers to healthcare access for diverse racial and ethnic groups (Hyman, 2009, 8).

3.4.1 Housing

Accessing affordable housing is also a significant challenge faced by immigrants in Ottawa. As outlined above, even immigrants with sufficient funds often encounter barriers due to lack of credit and Canadian references. In Hamilton focus groups many respondents cited shock that despite having funds "in hand" they were not able to secure housing without a Canadian co-signer due to lack of credit, employment or Canadian references. For those for whom cost is also a barrier, finding housing can be a major challenge. The Social Planning Council of Ottawa (2009) discusses housing affordability as an issue facing immigrants in Ottawa. In Ottawa overall, there has been an increase in the number of people who are living alone, including female seniors. In 2006, one or two person households accounted for 60% of Ottawa households. Despite this fact, many immigrant families are younger, having children, have larger families, and are living in dwellings with a smaller number of rooms than the Canadian-born population. Many immigrants live in multi-family households both due to family tradition and a lack of affordable housing for large families. In 2008, 9,629 households were on the waiting list for social housing in Ottawa, with a wait time of approximately five years (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 83).

The Social Planning Council of Ottawa states that adequate and affordable housing for immigrants is a significant barrier to settlement and integration, and is a contributing factor to poverty (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 83). Between 1980-2001 there was a decline in home ownership among immigrants in Ottawa, but an increase for Canadian-born residents. Recent immigrants also pay a higher proportion of their income towards shelter than Canadian-born residents of Ottawa; in 2006 almost half of recent immigrants spent 30% or more of their income on shelter (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 83). Additionally,

Ottawa's rent levels are currently the third highest in Canada. The Social Planning Council of Ottawa states that this leads to a "cycle of deprivation" where other necessities are sacrificed in order to pay rent. Poor and unaffordable housing, with obvious implications for income levels, also affects health and wellness, for example by cutting into food income.

The Social Planning Council of Ottawa report, similar to the above-mentioned reports from various Ontario cities, states that discrimination, especially towards visible minority immigrants and particularly visible minority immigrant women with children, is a significant problem in the Ottawa housing market. They state that: "[t]he result of these practices is lesser choices in the housing market for immigrants that can lead to inadequate housing and poorer access to services" (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009, 84). They also state that there is a need for better information for immigrants regarding housing law and rights, including rental terms and lease terminology. This knowledge would help to mitigate some of the challenges related to finding housing and would empower immigrants when dealing with landlords.

3.5.1 Considerations for Francophone Immigrants

The needs and challenges of immigrants, described above, apply to both Anglophone and Francophone immigrants to Ottawa. It is important to note, however, that Francophone immigrants encounter specific challenges related to settlement and integration.

One major consideration for Francophone immigrants is the availability of and access to services that are available in French (CESOC, 2007; Bisson, 2009). This is not only a challenge across Ontario but also in Ottawa. As identified by Bisson, the shortage of formal services that are available in French often means that "informal" sector organizations, such as religious groups and cultural associations, fill the role of offering settlement advice. It is noted, however, that such organizations do not receive funding support to do so, and the information and support offered is generally on a voluntary basis.

An additional challenge facing Francophone immigrants is related to the demand for proficiency in English. CESOC (2007) notes that Francophone immigrants cite a gap between information they receive about Canada as a bilingual country prior to arrival, and the actual ability to live and work as a Francophone upon arrival. Immigrants are told that Canada is truly bilingual; however, day to day life in many Ontario cities, including Ottawa, requires the ability to understand and speak English. There is also a challenge related to the availability of language instruction for Francophones to learn English.

Furthermore, 16.4 % of Francophone immigrants in Ottawa are members of racialized groups (Bisson, 2009, 50). CESOC states that, because Francophone communities in Ontario cities are increasingly made up of racialized individuals, greater awareness raising is needed in established Francophone communities in order to ensure that communities are welcoming.

Finally, access to employment is also a significant challenge for Francophone immigrants, much as it is for the overall immigrant population. In Bisson's interviews with religious, settlement and cultural organizations serving Francophone immigrants in Ottawa, he found that access to employment is a significant concern. As stated above, the requirement for bilingualism also poses an additional barrier to Francophone immigrants entering the labour market in Ottawa.

Conclusions

This review of literature has provided an overview of the profile of immigrants in Ottawa, their challenges and needs, the funding landscape for immigrant programs and services and existing services and community capacity in Ottawa to serve immigrants. It has also discussed Ottawa's future labour market needs as well as the barriers facing immigrants in the areas of employment and economic integration. As indicated above, this overview helps to build an understanding of the Ottawa landscape as it effects and supports immigrants through the process of immigration, settlement and integration across their life cycle.

The findings from the literature indicate that immigrants are crucial for Ottawa's growth and prosperity, and make up a significant portion of the existing population. They also draw attention to the assets of immigrants as predominantly well educated and skilled, and to their needs as they navigate the process of settlement and integration in a new community. Importantly, it is evident that immigrants are by no means a homogenous group and that their past experiences, stage of life, gender and ethno-cultural identity, among other factors, intersect to influence their needs and experience.

The literature also points to a number of gaps between immigrant needs and existing supports. Despite the apparent assets that exist in the Ottawa community to support immigrants, further support is needed in areas such as: comprehensive language training for both French and English; accessible and culturally sensitive childcare with flexible hours; adequate housing and access to housing without discrimination; crucial information in the areas of legal rights and finances; access to health services across the continuum of care; the enhancement of specific services targeting underserved and vulnerable groups, such as youth and seniors; and an increase in Francophone services to properly support the Francophone immigrant population.

Finally, it is obvious that the challenge of immigrant employment and economic integration cut across every dimension of this discussion, from needs and services to Ottawa's future as a prosperous community. Understanding the barriers that immigrants, particularly recent immigrants, face to accessing employment that is relevant to their experience, despite the documented need for immigrants to sustain Ottawa's workforce, is challenging. A number of barriers were discussed above, including lack of Canadian experience, foreign credential recognition and language. Also discussed in a great deal of the literature is the issue of "mistrust" or discrimination facing immigrants as they attempt to enter the workforce or to establish themselves as entrepreneurs. This points to the need for greater public awareness and collaboration with employers themselves.

Many of the issues and challenges facing immigrants that are outlined in this review do not exist in isolation. These factors interact and impact others, indicating a need for a more holistic response that is prioritized at the community, services and policy levels.

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