

University of Windsor

Scholarship at UWindsor

Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology
Publications

Department of Sociology, Anthropology and
Criminology

Fall 9-15-2014

Enhancing the Welcoming Capacity of Windsor Essex

Glynis George
Univeristy of Windsor

Jane S. Ku
University of Windsor

Erwin Selimos
University of Windsor

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/socanthpub>



Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#), and the [Sociology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

George, Glynis; Ku, Jane S.; and Selimos, Erwin. (2014). Enhancing the Welcoming Capacity of Windsor Essex.

<https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/socanthpub/8>

This Unpublished Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology at Scholarship at UWindsor. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology Publications by an authorized administrator of Scholarship at UWindsor. For more information, please contact scholarship@uwindsor.ca.



Enhancing the Welcoming Capacity of Windsor Essex
Dr. Glynis George, Dr. Jane Ku, Erwin Selimos
Final Report

Community Partnership Study:

Multicultural Council of Windsor Essex,
South Essex Community Council
University of Windsor: Dr. Glynis George, Dr. Jane Ku, Erwin Selimos

Funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation

Executive Summary

Purpose of Research Study

The main goals of this research study were to:

- Highlight the range and complexity of experiences of welcoming among newcomers and immigrants living in Windsor Essex
- Initiate further dialogue about the state of Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity
- Provide useful direction for enhancing the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex to newcomers and immigrants

We explored the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex by examining several important benchmarks as outlined by Esses et al (2010), "Characteristics of a Welcoming Community."

- Positive community attitudes toward immigrants, cultural diversity, and the presence of newcomers in the community
- Links between main actors working toward welcoming communities
- Presence of diverse religious and cultural organizations
- Social engagement opportunities
- Opportunities for the use of public space and recreational facilities
- Favourable media coverage and representation

Major Findings

Our analysis revealed a complex picture of Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity.

- Immigrants and newcomers demonstrated specific needs and experiences tied to their status as new residents.
- However, differences between immigrants and newcomers were often considerable that they should not always be lumped together.
- Furthermore, many immigrants and newcomers share with other non-immigrant residents a sense of exclusion due to factors such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of transportation.

Windsor Essex demonstrates some capacity for fostering immigrant and newcomer belonging in all benchmarks. But these capacities are uneven and there are considerable gaps.

- There are positive perceptions towards immigrants and multiculturalism, and support for an inclusive community. However, there seems to be lack of deep commitment or sense of responsibility towards welcoming immigrants.
- There is a lack of congruence between what mainstream actors and newcomers see in terms of how well services are coordinated to support a welcoming community.
- The presence of religious and cultural organizations was a source of multicultural pride. These organizations provide important social support for newcomers. However, religious and cultural organizations are not well connected to mainstream service providers and settlement agencies.

- Newcomers demonstrate limited opportunities for social engagement with long-term Windsor residents.
- Newcomers' opportunities to use public space and recreational facilities are relatively narrow and limited. Public spaces are well used by immigrants, particularly public parks. But access to public spaces continues to present barriers, financially and socially. Immigrants are not well represented in public spaces nor are they seen as rightful occupiers of public spaces.
- Immigrants express frustration with how they are portrayed in the media. However, these frustrations can be harnessed to work in line with media outlets' expressed desire to include immigrant perspectives. Much work is required to ensure more realistic coverage and representation of newcomers and visible minorities.
- There is a lack of knowledge in our society about newcomers and immigrants.

Recommendations

The welcoming of newcomers **requires the support of the whole community** and there is some ways to go before we get there.

- Promote the creation and implementation of a community-based strategy towards welcoming immigrants that:
 - Reflects a commitment to advancing welcoming
 - Acknowledges and includes immigrant issues into all civic and public sector institutions and issues
 - Is flexible, sensitive, appropriate, and sector-specific
 - Includes immigrant participation in the design and implementation of the strategy
 - Is flexible to adapt to changing immigrant patterns
 - Includes or supports a **communications plan** to foster relations with media and to cultivate a more diverse depiction of the city and county
 - Involves the coordination and planning of strategies, and the sharing of resources to maximize the community approach
 - Supports the work of the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership
 - Encourages diverse stakeholders to recognize and acknowledge their own stake and leadership in welcoming immigrants and bringing together diverse stakeholders
 - Promotes social networking and engagement opportunities that integrate newcomers and long term residents
 - Provides opportunities for decision making and representation among newcomers and long term residents
 - Encourages the city and municipalities to take a greater leadership role in advancing welcoming and belonging and the social planning it requires

Context of the Research Project: Setting the Scene

In the last decade Windsor Essex has undergone significant changes that have rendered it a region in transition. An economic downturn and larger global economic changes have challenged the extent to which Windsor Essex can support its current population. Currently, social and economic development initiatives are underway that are attempting to refashion the region so that it can thrive and prosper in the context of 21st century globalization.

It is not enough to understand that newcomers and immigrants play an important role in the overall development and future of the region. We need to explore how immigrants are incorporated into Canada and their neighbourhoods by exploring the dynamic between urban capacity, multicultural engagement, and cultural diversity (Abu-Laban & Nieguth, 2000; Das Gupta, 1999; Dua, 1999; Gilbert & Wood, 2005; Isin & Siemiatycki, 1999; Landolt et al., 2009; Reitz & Bannerjee, 2007; Roland & Wong, 2010; Veronis, 2006). This project is thus rooted in recent policy shifts that aim to nurture belonging and enhance welcoming capacity in second-tier cities in Ontario and Canada (Andrew et al., 2012; Esses et al., 2010; Vatz Laarousii & Walton-Roberts, 2005; Leo & August, 2009; Tossutti & Esses, n.d.; Walton-Roberts, 2005; Wiginton, 2012; Wulff et al., 2008). Windsor Essex is one of more than 16 regional areas where federal initiatives have directed their attention in the effort to build immigrant capacity and support the welcoming of immigrants. Many recognize that immigrants have much to offer and that the settlement, integration, and welcoming of immigrants requires considerable investment and community capacity-building.

This research project was part of a community-wide initiative between the University of Windsor, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology, the Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County, and the South Essex Community Council. It emerged from the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership's strategic objective 3—"Strengthen Local Awareness and Capacity to Integrate Immigrants" (Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership, "Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership 2013- 2104 Action Plan, 2013). WELIP acted as a community partner supporting the research throughout the project. The Ontario Trillium foundation funded this research.

Three goals animated this project: to draw attention to the range and complexity of experiences of welcoming among newcomers and immigrants living in Windsor Essex; to initiate dialogue about the region's capacity to welcome newcomers and immigrants; and to suggest ways for enhancing Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity. Specifically, this study evaluates the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex by examining several important benchmarks as outlined by Esses et al (2010) in their report entitled "Characteristics of a Welcoming Community." These benchmarks include:

- Positive community attitudes toward immigrants, cultural diversity, and the presence of newcomers in the community

- Links between main actors working toward welcoming communities
- Presence of diverse religious and cultural organizations
- Social engagement opportunities
- Opportunities for the use of public space and recreational facilities
- Favourable media coverage and representation

Although these benchmarks represent distinct categories of analysis, in practice they are all inter-related. For example, community attitudes toward immigrants may be impacted by the degree of intercultural social connections found in a community or by the prevalence of positive and negative media representations.

At partnership meetings it was established that the research project should focus broadly on immigrants (primarily newcomers) and mainstream stakeholders across various domains, which are categorized as:

- BIA (Economic Development)
- Community Revitalization
- Employers
- Settlement
- Education
- Social Services
- Ethnic Organizations
- Poverty Organizations
- Health
- Legal
- Municipal

How to Read this Report

This report does not offer sector-wide evaluations, assessments, or inventories of services and access. But it does highlight some of the gaps and difficulties raised through our consultations. In this report, we highlight how each benchmark is experienced by newcomers to the region, discuss the barriers that limit Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity, and point to areas that require further understanding and research. Proposed recommendations are intended to be taken up by a range of stakeholders and we encourage municipalities, mainstream service providers, and organizations to take a leadership role in this process.

Working Definitions

A **welcoming community** can be conceptualized as a collective effort to create a place where individuals feel valued and included (Esses et al, 2010). It is a communitarian approach that conceptualizes immigrant belonging as the responsibility of the whole community, and not just that of the immigrant. A welcoming framework resonates with efforts to enhance the capacity of smaller cities

to attract and retain immigrants. Building a welcoming community requires that the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, as well as local residents and immigrants themselves share the responsibilities in engaging with immigrant settlement (Esses & Tossutti, n.d.; Wiginton, 2012).

To understand how **belonging** may be developed, we include definitions of the specific ways in which we can view belonging. Belonging refers to both a sense of self and identity, and the affective, social, political, and economic ties that link individuals and groups to diverse domains of community life (May, 2011). This study builds on the insight that a sense of belonging is based on more than available language or settlement 'services'. Rather, cultivating a sense of belonging requires inclusion into activities and events which represent the heart of a community.

We identify **mainstream** and **immigrant** as two main categories of participants in this project. However, these categories often overlap. 'Mainstream' participants are those who represent agencies whose services are directed toward a broader public. These categories are also politically problematic in constructing immigrants as non-mainstream. An 'immigrant', on the other hand, is anyone who moved to Canada from another country. We also differentiate between **newcomer immigrants** and **immigrants**. A 'newcomer immigrant' is defined as someone who has moved to Canada from another country within the last five years. A newcomer is also a category defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada as someone who has not yet been able to apply for citizenship status and remains eligible for settlement services.

Profile of Immigration to Windsor Essex

Located in Southwestern Ontario, the region of Windsor and Essex County is comprised of the City of Windsor and seven county municipalities including Amherstburg, Essex, Kingsville, Lakeshore, LaSalle, Leamington, and Tecumseh. According to most recent census data, the region has a population of 381, 350. The majority of residents live in the City of Windsor (209, 218). Lakeshore, with a population of 28, 746, is the largest municipality in the county, followed by Leamington (27, 138), LaSalle (25, 285), Tecumseh (24, 289), Amherstburg (20, 339), Essex (20, 085), and Kingsville (19, 619).

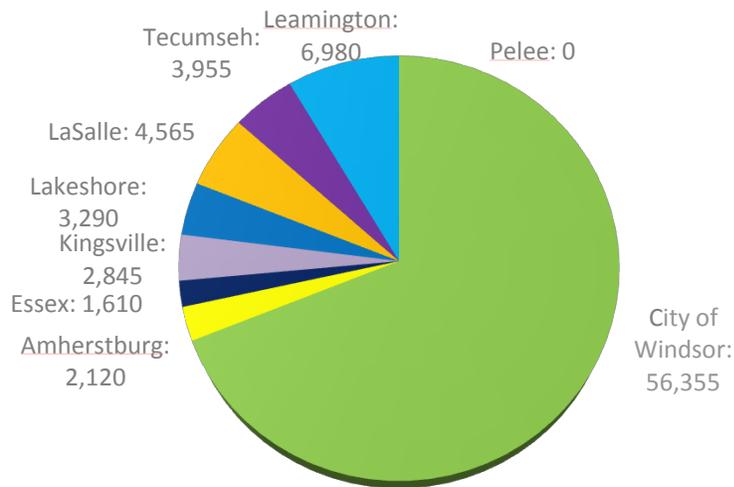
Windsor Essex has a rich and deep cultural history. Prior to the arrival of Europeans Windsor Essex was inhabited by First Nations people. The region became a central site of both French and English colonization of North America. As a reception site for black slaves both before and after the American Civil War, the Underground Railroad also figures importantly in local historical accounts of the region. Throughout the 20th century, many immigrants arrived to work in the burgeoning manufacturing sector and its related spin-off industries. Between the 1960 and 1990s, many European immigrants, including British, French, Italians, Greeks and various Eastern European groups arrived in the region. This period also saw the arrival of immigrants from the Middle East, most notably Lebanon. By the mid-1980s, in line with national immigration trends, an increasing amount of immigrants from non-European countries began arriving in the region. Since the late-1970s, seasonal agricultural farm workers, particularly from Mexico and Jamaica, have also been coming to region under the parameter of the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program to work in the region's greenhouse industries. Although not permanent residence, seasonal agricultural workers make important contributions to local life, especially in the county (Basok, 2004).

The diversity of immigration past and present is reflected in the linguistic, religious, and ethnic diversity that comprises Windsor Essex today – and makes it exemplary of multicultural Canada. The most frequently spoken language at home in Windsor Essex is English, while the most common non-official languages include Arabic, Italian, German, Spanish, Chinese (n.o.s.), and Serbian (Census of Canada, 2011). According to 2011 Census data, 44.5% of residents in Windsor Essex are Catholics. The next four largest religious affiliations include Anglican (5.5%), United Church (4.8%), Muslim (4.2%), and Other Christians (9.9).¹ It is important to note that these designations do not illustrate important distinctions within each category. According to the 2009 Windsor Essex County Health Unit's Population Report, over 40, 000 residents reported of being either of British or French origin, and 28, 000 as either of Italian or German origin. Approximately, 35, 000 reported 'Canadian' as their ethnic origin (p. 26). These numbers do not take into account those who identify as having several ethnic origins. Windsor Essex also has a large visible minority population, many of whom were born in the area or in Canada. Arabs represent the largest visible minority group in Windsor Essex, followed by South Asians, Chinese, and blacks respectively (Census of Canada, 2011). Similar to issues with religion, the categories of visible minority does not take into account the many differences within groups with respect to religious affiliation, ethnic origin, and place of birth.

Windsor Essex's immigrant population

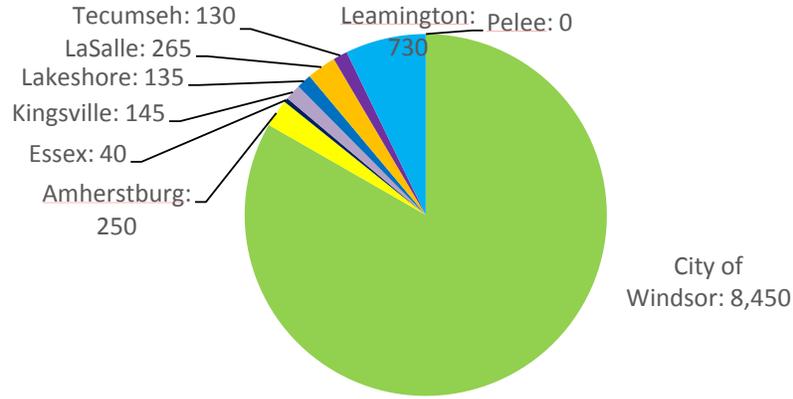
Windsor Essex remains an important immigration site in Ontario, often cited as the province's most important second-tier immigrant settlement destination (Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership, 2010, p. 14). Windsor Essex's total immigrant population is 81,730, meaning that 21.4% of all residents in Windsor and Essex County were born outside of Canada. Almost 70% of immigrants in Windsor Essex reside in the City of Windsor. Communities in the county, especially Leamington, have sizeable immigrant populations. Figure 1 outlines the distribution of immigrants based on municipality of residence.

Figure 1: Distribution of immigrants in Windsor Essex based on municipality of residence
Source: Census of Canada, 2011



Recent immigrants to the region tend to reside in City of Windsor. For example, between 2006 and 2011, Windsor Essex received 10,140 immigrants. Eighty-three percent of these more recent immigrants moved to the City of Windsor. Figure 2 outlines the number of immigrants arriving in Windsor Essex between 2006 and 2011 based on municipality of residence.

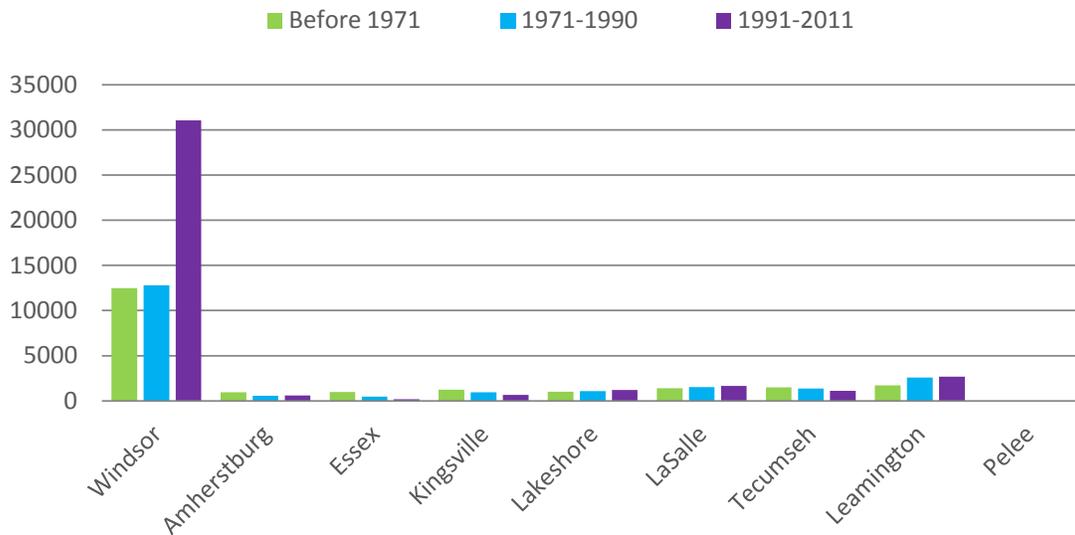
Figure 2: Number of immigrants in Windsor Essex based on municipality of residence, 2006-2011
 Source: Census of Canada, 2011



Period of arrival

Nearly half of Windsor Essex’s current immigrant population arrived after 1991. As Figure 3 demonstrates, 26% percent of all foreign-born residents who currently live in Windsor Essex came to the region before 1971, 26% arrived between 1971 and 1990; 47.9% came between 1991 and 2011.

Figure 3: Immigrant population of Windsor Essex by period of arrival
 Source: Census of Canada, 2011



Source countries

Immigrants living in Windsor Essex come from all over the world. The United States, Italy, the United Kingdom, Lebanon, Mexico, Iraq, India, and China represent the major source countries of all immigrants to Windsor Essex, regardless of year of arrival. However, the major source countries of immigrants arriving to the region between 2006 and 2011 has shifted to include the United States, Iraq, China, India, Philippines, Mexico, Pakistan, and Haiti (Census of Canada, 2011). Immigrants from Mexico differ from immigrants from other source countries in that they are more likely to settle in Leamington rather than the City of Windsor. Figures 4 and 5 demonstrate these important shifts in source countries.

Figure 4: Major source countries of immigrants to Windsor Essex
Source: Census of Canada, 2011

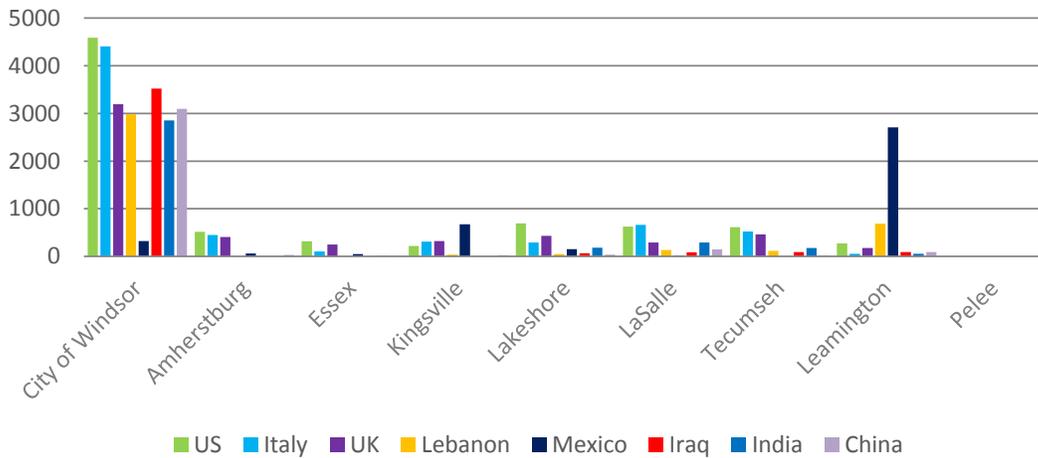
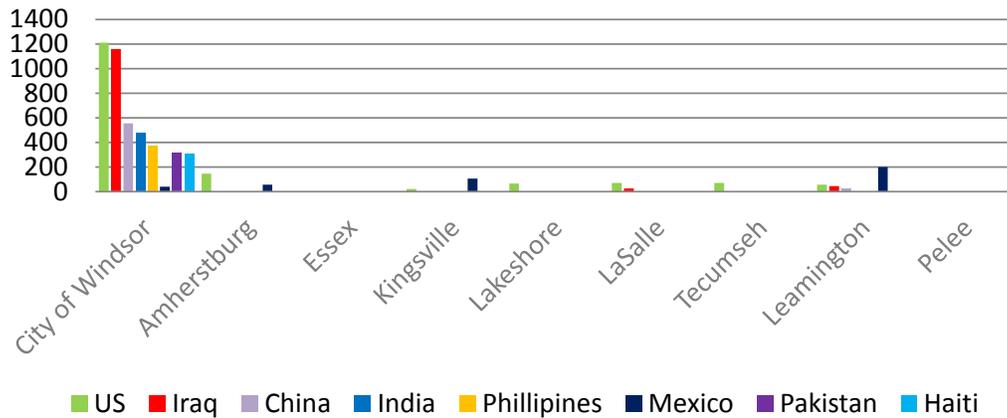


Figure 5: Major source countries of immigrants to Windsor Essex, 2006-2011
Source: Census of Canada, 2011



It is important to note that the category 'major source country' does not reflect the diversity of immigrants living in Windsor Essex. In order to demonstrate this diversity, here is a brief list of the 'source countries' of some of the people we spoke to during our research project: Somalia, Nepal, Pakistan, China, Venezuela, Lebanon, Iraq, Poland, Bangladesh, Iran, Burma, Ukraine, Israel, Kosovo, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Jordan, Argentina, Mexico, Senegal, El Salvador, Armenia, Syria, Ethiopia, Bhutan, Vietnam, India, Hungary, Nigeria, Mexico, Haiti, Croatia, Uzbekistan, Jordan, Philippines, Rwanda, the United States of America, Germany, Palestine, and Romania. Several participants were 'stateless' before receiving Canadian citizenship. Finally, a list of 'source country' also does not fully explain differences regarding socioeconomic status, ethnicity, language, and religion among immigrants who may come from the same country of origin.

Migration Pathways, Settlement Services, and Settlement Supports

Newcomers to Windsor Essex come to the region through various migration pathways, immigration channels, and government programs. Many come as economic immigrants, while others may be sponsored by family members or arrive through Canada's live-in care program. Some are 'placed' here, as is the case for some government-assisted refugees. Many newcomers come directly to Windsor Essex, while others move to the region after having already lived in other parts of Canada. Many immigrants to Windsor Essex have lived in multiple countries even before taking up residency in Canada. Thus, Windsor Essex may represent one settlement destination among many.

When newcomers arrive in Windsor Essex, they are often directed either officially or through informal connections to various agencies that provide settlement services. It is in one or more of these sites that newcomer immigrants access services that are designed to build their capacity and, at the same time, socialize them to Canadian values. The main settlement service providers in Windsor Essex include Windsor Women Working with Immigrant women (W5), The Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County (MCC); The New Canadians' Centre for Excellence, Inc. (NCCE, Inc.), South Essex Community Council (SECC), YMCA, Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor, Inc., (WEST), the Unemployed Help Center, and College Boreal (the latter provides settlement services in French).

Most of these settlement organizations are clustered in downtown Windsor. Some have satellite offices in strategic locations throughout the city and the county. One organization is located in Leamington. These settlement organizations are now joined by other organizations (i.e., school boards, colleges and university, and other community organizations), often in collaboration, in providing key services to newcomers. The diversification of settlement services across various organizations makes the distinction of 'settlement' and 'mainstream' increasingly complex and overlapping.

Language classes form the bulk of settlement funding, but there is also significant focus on citizenship and employability training. The majority of settlement and language programs are funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). CIC guidelines define service eligibility and program parameters. Settlement services are largely directed towards newcomers, who are defined by CIC as

someone who has not yet been able to apply for citizenship status and remains eligible for settlement services. The Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration also funds programs related to settlement, as well as an array of programs offered to all eligible residents in Ontario, including access to health care and education.

Newcomers are entitled to many social supports offered outside of the 'settlement' sector, including childcare subsidies, access to housing support programs, and employment and financial assistance. These programs play an important role in newcomer settlement experiences and are delivered by the City of Windsor, which serves as the service system manager for residents of the City of Windsor and the County.

Exploring the Benchmarks

In order to assess Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity in relation to the identified benchmarks, we utilized a multi-method research approach which included:

- A. In-depth interviews and focus groups with newcomers and immigrants
- B. In-depth interviews with key sector stakeholders
- C. Analyses of local media
- D. A survey of mainstream organizations
- E. Document review

The objective of the research was to elicit the complexity of issues, perceptions and practices that inform the welcoming process and the various and overlapping categories that constitute immigration and Canadian multiculturalism. The use of these various methods allowed for a research approach that could capture the dynamic relationship between systemic issues and the subjective experiences of newcomers and immigrants themselves.

A. Interviews and Focus Groups with Newcomers and Immigrants to Windsor-Essex

We conducted 54 in-depth interviews and 11 focus groups with newcomers and immigrants to Windsor-Essex. Interview and focus group participants were recruited through settlement service agencies in both the City of Windsor and the county. Through both interviews and focus groups, we spoke with a total of 140 newcomers and immigrants to the region. This represents a relatively large number for a qualitative study. However, we wanted to include and consider the significant diversity of experiences, backgrounds, and identifications that characterize immigrants to Windsor Essex. Our sample was in no way intended to be representative of all immigrant experiences in Windsor Essex. The stories shared with us build up a strong and rich picture of the complexities of newcomer experiences of welcoming and belonging to the region.

Drawing on the selected benchmarks, interviews and focus groups were designed to explore participants' everyday experiences of living in Windsor Essex. Topics of discussion included reasons for moving to Windsor, family, friends, employment experiences, perceptions of the community, experiences with various local institutions (e.g., schools, social services, immigration services), leisure activities, use of public space, attitudes toward multiculturalism, and feelings of belonging.

As mentioned above, Windsor Essex attracts a sizeable population of migrant agricultural workers who tend to live and work in the county, primarily in the greenhouse agricultural industry. Their experiences were not included in this study. However, their presence does have a significant impact on how welcoming and immigrants are viewed in the county and particular towns such as Leamington.

B. Mainstream and Settlement Sector Interviews

In addition to immigrant and newcomer interviews and focus groups, we conducted 65 interviews with sector-specific representatives and community leaders. Through these interviews we talked to a total of 73 people representing organizations from both the city and county in the following sectors: business improvement associations, community revitalization groups, local employers, post-secondary educational institutions, ethno-cultural organizations, hospitals and community-based health organizations, legal organizations, settlement services, various departments of municipal governments in both the city and county, social services, union/labour organizations, and economic and workforce development agencies.

Similar to our newcomer interviewees, mainstream and settlement sector representatives demonstrated a range of connections to the Windsor Essex region. Many of our mainstream and settlement sector participants were themselves born and raised in Windsor or Essex County, others were born in Canada but outside Windsor-Essex, and still some were themselves immigrants to Canada. Drawing on the selected benchmarks and goals of the project, we asked participants to share their perceptions on the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex and explore the challenges and opportunities of linking newcomers to 'mainstream' organizations and residents of Windsor Essex in order to enhance its welcoming capacity.

C. Local Media Analysis

One way of exploring issues of representation is to analyze the way multiculturalism, cultural diversity, and immigrants and newcomers are depicted in local mainstream media (see Benchmark 6). As the only daily newspaper in circulation in the region, the Windsor Star is a key source of information about local issues and events and an important resource for community knowledge. The Windsor Star has been circulating in the region for the past 123 years. Currently, it is offered in print and online, and publishes six days a week. According to joint research conducted by the Canadian Newspaper Association and the Canadian Community Newspaper Association, in 2012 the Windsor Star circulated on average 313, 017 print newspapers per week. According to its own website, the Windsor Star enjoys on an online visitor base of 219, 000 (Newspapers Canada, n.d.).

To assess representations of newcomers and immigrants, we performed two types of analyses on the Windsor Star:

1. Representations of Multiculturalism

A database search of the newspaper, using the keyword 'multiculturalism', was conducted. The database search revealed that 204 articles containing the word 'multiculturalism' appeared in the Windsor Star between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2012. From these 204 articles, 85 editorials, columns, and letters to the editor were selected for in-depth thematic analysis. The purpose of this analysis was to identify how multiculturalism was framed in relation to Windsor Essex as a place.

2. Representations of immigrants and refugees

A database search of the Windsor Star, using the keywords 'immigrant', and 'refugee', was also conducted. The database search revealed that 2017 articles containing the word 'immigrant' and 1255 articles containing the word 'refugee' appeared in the Windsor Star between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2012. From these, 306 and 153 editorials, commentaries, and opinion pieces containing the keyword immigrant and refugee respectively were subjected to a thematic analysis. The purpose of this analysis was to identify the ways immigration and refugee migration was framed in relation to Windsor Essex as a place.

D. Survey

In collaboration with our partners, we distributed a short survey to local organizations. The survey consisted of 25 questions that explored the degree to which organizations across sectors interface with immigrants and newcomers, how organizations in Windsor Essex engage in outreach to immigrants and newcomers, and the level of mainstream organizational commitment to diversity and inclusion. Respondents were recruited through the Multicultural Council of Windsor Essex's network-base via email solicitation. A total of 72 organizations from both the city and the county representing the various target sectors for this research project completed the survey.

E. Document Review

We also conducted systematic review of policy documents, community reports, and academic journal articles. Document review served several purposes for this research project. First, it enabled us to establish general trends in settlement and immigrant integration in Canada and Ontario, and better understand the overall policy context within which welcoming initiatives are embedded. Second, it provided us with the opportunity to explore how other regions, communities, and municipalities, both similar and different to Windsor Essex, have sought to encourage immigrant retention and belonging at the local level, allowing us to compile examples of promising practices in welcoming newcomers and immigrants (see recommendations).

Defining the Six Benchmarks	
Benchmark 1: Positive community attitudes toward immigrants, cultural diversity, and the presence of newcomers in the community	“Positive attitudes can be seen in feelings, opinions, and/or behaviours toward newcomers. They are important to consider because attitudes can determine the public’s reactions toward newcomers” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 34).
Benchmark 2: Links between main actors working toward welcoming communities	“Links refer to connections that involve cooperation, information, and resource sharing. Main actors who can shape a welcoming community include community members, service providing organizations, regional governments (e.g., municipalities), and provincial and federal governments” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 44).
Benchmark 3: Presence of diverse religious and cultural organizations	“More than ever, the presence of religious organizations should be considered when describing the characteristics of a welcoming community. In fact . . . participation in religious services was found to be an important predictor of whether immigrants indicated that their expectations had been met in Canada, and whether they would make the decision to come to Canada again” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 66).
Benchmark 4: Social engagement opportunities	“Social engagement opportunities are closely linked to social networking because they represent connections with community members. In the absence of family or friends, two types of connections serve as primary sources of assistance – social engagement and networking – providing informal access to information and social support” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 69).
Benchmark 5: Opportunities for the use of public space and recreational facilities	“Public spaces and facilities – such as parks, town squares, public libraries, and public community/recreation facilities – are areas that, by definition, are open and accessible to all community members. Use of public space and participation in community/recreation centres are important because they provide opportunities for newcomers to become integrated into the community” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 86).
Benchmark 6: Favourable media coverage and representation	“‘Media’ is best described as a medium where information is shared and communicated, and includes radio, television, newspapers, and internet sources. The media is also used for the purpose of disseminating (and not just exchanging) information. The power of mass media rests in its ability to (1) influence recipients’ perceptions of newcomers and immigration, and (2) act as a tool that immigrants and refugees can use to gain information and to gauge society’s perceptions of newcomers” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 90)

FINDINGS

The following section outlines the major findings of our research. We organize the findings according to the specified benchmarks that guided this study. After presenting the major themes that emerged from our research, recommendations are provided. Please note that pseudonyms were used for all quotations provided in this section.

Benchmark 1: Positive community attitudes toward immigrants, cultural diversity, and the presence of newcomers in the community

“Positive attitudes can be seen in feelings, opinions, and/or behaviours toward newcomers. They are important to consider because attitudes can determine the public’s reactions toward newcomers” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 34).

Mainstream

Multiculturalism and Diversity

- Majority of participants supported multiculturalism, viewed diversity as a positive feature of Canadian society, recognized the cultural diversity of Windsor-Essex, and identified diversity as a positive feature of the region.
- However, a small number of participants perceived multiculturalism as a superficial commitment to diversity. They expressed that a commitment to multiculturalism required addressing systemic forms of inequality such as poverty, sexism, and racism.
- Among those in the business sector ‘diversity of skill’ more so than cultural diversity was seen as an important attribute for business success.
- The Carousel of Nations festival was highlighted as an important event celebrating the cultural diversity of Windsor-Essex. However, some felt that such a festival ‘tokenized’ or exoticized minority cultures.

Perceptions of the Welcoming Nature of Windsor Essex

- Most who self-identified as ‘Windsorites’ felt that the City of Windsor and Essex County towns were very welcoming places. Windsor Essex was described as a place where everyone knows everyone and where you meet people you know on a daily or weekly basis.
- Most who were not born in Windsor – who either came as immigrants or from elsewhere in Canada – felt that Windsor Essex was less welcoming. For example, they described the City of Windsor as a ‘hard town to break into’ and that it took many years to feel a part of Windsor.
 - Of this group, several identified that after many years of residence they NOW felt very connected and, hence, viewed Windsor Essex as a very welcoming place.

Immigrants, Immigration and Immigrant Integration

- Knowledge about immigrants and newcomers was quite limited. However, a minority of participants **were** quite knowledgeable about newcomer issues and challenges. Some participants themselves were immigrants and drew on their own experiences of settlement when discussing issues of immigration and settlement.
- Many saw attracting and retaining professional and skilled immigrants as

an important means of creating global economic connections and revitalizing the city.

- While the 'business model' approach towards immigrants was largely favoured, several participants pointed out that it was not mutually exclusive of a social, humanitarian approach towards immigrants. They pointed out that a business approach should not undercut our attention to the social and cultural context of immigrant experiences and the social and cultural resources that immigrants bring to the region.
- Many participants supported the idea that the integration of immigrants was a "two-way street" that required efforts from both mainstream actors and newcomers themselves.
- However, most saw 'immigrant integration', including the actual work of integration, to be primarily the responsibility of immigrants and immigrant-serving agencies.
- The social exclusion of and persistent negative community attitudes toward migrant workers in the county were highlighted by some as a major ongoing concern.

Recognition in Cultural Life

- While most had positive community attitudes towards multiculturalism and diversity, there was significant ambivalence and differing views about diversity as a key feature of Windsor as a city.
 - Several respondents, particularly those who viewed themselves as 'visible minorities' or were immigrants themselves, indicated that they did not feel recognized as part of the cultural fabric of Windsor. For example, they commented on the absence of diversity in mainstream workplaces or feeling like an outsider during casual walks along the riverfront.
 - Many recognized that ethno-cultural diversity or immigrants were not represented or visibly present in their neighbourhoods, workplaces or social networks.
 - Some mainstream actors expressed feeling uncomfortable when migrant farm workers congregated in public spaces, while others recognized the contributions migrant workers make to the local community.

Newcomers and Immigrants Perceptions and Experiences of Multiculturalism and Cultural Diversity

- Many conveyed that multiculturalism was a key feature of Canadian society that made them feel positive towards their decision to settle in

Canada.

- Some newcomers expressed enjoyment in meeting people from other cultures and nations. Many also expressed learning 'how to act' in multicultural settings. Others came from countries that were culturally diverse and were already accustomed to living in diverse settings.

Perceptions of the Welcoming Nature of Windsor Essex

- Immigrants expressed a range of perceptions on the welcoming nature of Windsor Essex.
 - Some expressed feeling welcomed in Windsor and commented on the friendly nature of Windsor's residents. However, many viewed this friendliness as somewhat superficial.
 - Others relayed stories of street-level discrimination through name calling, funny-looks, and being told to "go back home."
 - Some highlighted experiences of employment discrimination or difficulties in finding employment as contributing to feelings of being unwelcomed.
- Many immigrants felt excluded from the cultural life, while others lauded Windsor's inclusiveness.
 - Immigrant youth expressed ambivalence about their future in the region. Some saw Windsor as a welcoming place in which they saw themselves building a future, while others did not.
 - Lack of job opportunities and discrimination (or a combination of the two) were most often cited by immigrant youth as the reasons for not wanting to stay in Windsor.
 - For some discrimination was not unique to Windsor Essex but a general feature of Canadian society.
- The availability of immigrant and newcomer services was identified as a key feature in feeling welcomed. Overall, immigrants and newcomers were very complimentary of settlement services.

Immigrants, Immigration and Immigrant Integration

- Most respondents understood, and many emphasized, the importance of integrating into Canadian and local social and cultural life. Yet, many held conflicting views on what integration means in practice.
- They recognized tensions and conveyed the importance of balancing key cultural values and ways of living with Canadian social and cultural life.

- A minority expressed the more dynamic view that integration is a two-way street that requires the engagement of long-time residents and stakeholders.
- Very few were critical of the imperative to integrate.
- Securing employment was seen by most as **the key pathway** to integration.

Recognition in Cultural Life

- Many conveyed a strong sense of responsibility for depicting or representing themselves in positive ways to the community.
- The presence of diverse cultural groups made some immigrants feel that they were represented in the cultural life of Windsor.
- Some felt that they were not fully included in the cultural life of Windsor Essex. These participants described Windsor as a particularly white space, where Canadian-born residents represented the center of community life and visible minorities and immigrants represented the outside or periphery.
- Several immigrants felt very comfortable living in smaller communities in Essex County. However, discussion of immigration in the county was often overshadowed by the presence of seasonal agricultural workers.
- Some newcomers who lived in the county reported not wanting to be perceived as migrant workers

What Immigrants Said:

The community can help you: The YMCA community, Five (W5) community, language community, library community. Everyplace that I can go is community. The community helps you and I am very proud [of] Windsor.... Because I was not treated badly. (Hussein, Somalia)

Even here people are so busy with their own . . . You do your thing and they are not harassing you . . . [I]t's not like you're not welcome or something like that. It's just individuals doing your own thing. It takes time for me to really understand whether we are welcome or not welcome. When you are in close contact you come to know these things, whether you're accepted in the group or not. There is assimilation at different levels. They say something like 'inner circle/ outer.' When it comes to just accepting as friends and all, [that] is a different issue all together. When you have to be a part of their distinct group, an inner group, then it becomes tough. That acceptance is not there. So there are different levels. It's not a simple question and

an answer. It goes into many aspects. (Jessica, India)

Concluding Themes

- There is a positive perception towards immigrants and multiculturalism but this is somewhat thin. These views are not well connected to knowledge of immigrants, immigrant issues or how immigrants contribute to the positive characterization of Windsor Essex as a welcoming region.
- There is a general support for an inclusive community in principle but very little in terms of an overall sense of responsibility or commitment to welcoming immigrants.

Recommendations

- Stakeholders can take up the mantle of promoting in their own spheres of life (beyond the settlement sector) a greater awareness of the importance of a welcoming community and the value of diversity.
- Positive attitudes should be deepened and strengthened through targeted, tailored initiatives that acknowledge and address systemic issues of racism, and the invisibility of immigrants and cultural diversity, build greater knowledge and understanding of immigrants and newcomers and advance the contribution of immigrants to the cultural, social and economic fabric of Windsor Essex.

Benchmark 2: Links between main actors working toward welcoming communities

“Links refer to connections that involve cooperation, information, and resource sharing. Main actors who can shape a welcoming community include community members, service providing organizations, regional governments (e.g., municipalities), and provincial and federal governments. Because services are generally organized in a ‘vertical’ manner while integration is holistic, creating and maintaining links between these actors should facilitate the settlement of newcomers and increase the likelihood of successful integration within the community” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 44).

Mainstream

Sector sensitivity to newcomers and immigrants

- Sectors demonstrated some sensitivity to newcomer/immigrant issues, but more so within the community or client-based arm of the sectors:
 - **Legal sector representatives** demonstrated a significant awareness of legal and bureaucratic challenges immigrants face in their efforts to legitimate their status and claim entitlements.
 - **Health sector representatives** were keenly sensitive to various barriers newcomers faced with respect to accessing health services. Many identified strategic efforts being taken to improve health care access issues for newcomers. There were several examples of awareness regarding specific culture practices and norms regarding illness, wellness and familial norms in caretaking.
 - **Recent initiatives within the municipality** show that increased sensitivity is on the radar screen particularly through income maintenance officers for specialized immigrant caseloads in the Social Services Department. But these could be more greatly integrated into a wider range of services and practices.
- Some mainstream actors who themselves were immigrants, whose personal history was somehow connected to an immigration experience, or who had experiences working with immigrants often advocated for increasing their organization’s sensitivity to immigrant issues. But this advocacy was done within the limited scope of the organization’s mandate.

Knowledge of immigrant issues and settlement sector

- **Knowledge of immigrant issues was very uneven.**
 - Those in closer contact with the issues or with immigrants as clients were more likely to be knowledgeable than those who were not.
 - Overall however, mainstream actors demonstrated partial or limited understanding of immigrant and newcomer issues.
- **The client relationship was the most dominant lens** through which mainstream actors understood immigrants. Many demonstrated a partial understanding of the lives on newcomers, and that newcomers were often associated with ‘problems’

that needed to be addressed.

- There is limited knowledge among mainstream actors regarding what the settlement sector does or how the rules and practices that govern settlement agencies limit their services to newcomers and immigrants.
- There is a gap in understanding of what newcomers are eligible for, what settlement provides to newcomers, and what happens to newcomers once they are no longer eligible for settlement services.

Collaborations with settlement sector

- Collaboration between mainstream organizations and settlement sector most often took the form of one-to-one partnerships with specific settlement organizations centered on specific initiatives.
- WELIP was mentioned as an important forum for knowledge-exchange, network development, and collaborations.
 - An integrated approach to collaboration was hampered by a rotation of participants from the mainstream sector, and the absence of decision-makers at the WELIP table.
 - Stakeholders outside of settlement were not as active in WELIP as the main settlement agencies.
 - Some workers assumed that the needs of immigrants and their specific concerns are taken care of by the organizational arm or a specific person hired to tend to immigrant issues.
- Areas of overlap between settlement and mainstream organizations did not appear to be clearly detailed or worked through.
 - Who is responsible for outreach, agenda-setting, specific initiatives, and practices regarding newcomers and immigrants?
 - How is responsibility to newcomers and immigrants built into the agendas of mainstream organizations?

How newcomers/immigrants interface with mainstream organizations

- Newcomers interfaced with mainstream organizations primarily as service users or clients.
- Few organizations tracked newcomer/immigrant representation of employees. However, many described their workplace as 'diverse'.
- Some recognized that newcomers and immigrants were under-represented on their boards, committees, or working groups.

- Many organizations participated in cultural competency or sensitivity trainings.

Newcomers and immigrants

Perception of settlement services

- Newcomers were generally positive and complimentary about settlement services.
 - Some commented on receiving contradictory information from different settlement services.

Links to Employment and Education

- **Overwhelming Response:** Newcomers expressed wanting more help with linking to employment opportunities, internships that promised future employment, professionally-oriented trainings, and/or educational opportunities.
 - Some newcomers reported ‘lack of Canadian Experience’ as a major reason for their unemployment. Some saw Canadian experience requirements as discriminatory.
 - Some newcomers reported that lack of connections mainstream networks and cultural insider knowledge as a major reason for their unemployment.
 - Newcomers are willing to volunteer in order to obtain the necessary know-how, networks, or Canadian Experience to access employment.

What Immigrants Said

The services for newcomers are wonderful. Yes, they are the best. Because these people work for the newcomers. They help newcomers, they make many things for newcomers. If you have a problem they help you. The people here are wonderful, the best. But when you go outside the school to other place you have the barrier. It’s not the same. (Andres, Columbia)

I am here since first of September 2000. I started working as a volunteer with Multicultural Council, Children’s Aid Society, Windsor Library, YMCA, New Canadian Centre of Excellence, one thing was left, Windsor fire department, now I am working with the Windsor fire department as well, as a volunteer. And I want to work, I was working with United Way as well. I was in Windsor WEST [settlement organization]. (Mohammed, Pakistan)

Good community over here but main thing you have to have the job, proper job . . . You have to get into a workplace or some kind of involvement in the city, somewhere so you get to know people, you feel that you know. That sense of belonging. So when you are not active in this kind of thing you still feel you are newcomer... Welcoming environment for me? I look at it this way. People come for opportunity, those opportunities should be given to them . . . Then integration becomes easier . . . Can I say I am a true Canadian, right now? No. Maybe in the future. It all belongs down to the front level, then you are proud of saying it, I am a Canadian and I am doing so well.

(Mohammed, Pakistan)

They should, or I think, they should organize some programs, technical programs with where they [newcomers] can enroll. (Bishal, Nepal)

Concluding Themes

- There is a significant disparity between mainstream and immigrant participants' assessment of the linkages and interactions between mainstream and newcomers.
- Mainstream actors mostly believe that they are sensitive to newcomers, and attempt to collaborate with settlement organizations in order to enhance welcoming.
- Immigrants, despite the relatively low level of expectations from mainstream services, see gaps in communication, collaboration and resource sharing that limit their access to, for example, employment networks.

Recommendations

- Increase community capacity of sharing information and resources through greater knowledge and appreciation of immigrant contributions, not just their needs.
- Promote awareness of immigrants and newcomers as full members of the society in all spheres of life, not just as clients.
- Build capacity within the mainstream organizations to integrate diverse immigrant perspectives, needs, and representation through the creation of social planning bodies and more wide-ranging Community-based Advisory Committees to support the WELIP.
- Encourage municipalities to play supportive and the appropriate leadership role in this process. Promote internship trainings that have direct links to future employment.

Benchmark 3: Presence of diverse religious and cultural organizations

“More than ever, the presence of religious organizations should be considered when describing the characteristics of a welcoming community. In fact . . . participation in religious services was found to be an important predictor of whether immigrants indicated that their expectations had been met in Canada, and whether they would make the decision to come to Canada again” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 66). The research team however added the presence of ethno-cultural organizations to this benchmark.

Mainstream

Presence of religious organizations

- Many recognized that geographical visibility of places of worship is a symbol of Windsor’s diversity.
- Many cited the presence of cultural organizations as evidence of the area’s diversity and tolerance.
- Muslims were most often cited in the discussion of religious communities.
- Some religious groups, particularly Muslims, were perceived by some as more demanding and in need of more accommodation. For example, prayer space and ‘religious’ attire were often cited examples of how multiculturalism over-accommodates some groups.

Ethno-cultural organizations

- Ethno-cultural organizations were inconsistent in their connection and sensitivity to newcomer issues.
- While it needs more study, so far, ethno-cultural organizations do not appear to be well connected to settlement or mainstream organizations.
 - Links between immigrant/mainstream organizations and ethno-cultural organizations was thin, ad hoc or based on personal ties.
 - These links were not reflected in the more structured connections that mainstream organizations have with other agencies or population groups.

Newcomers and immigrants

- Religious institutions play an important role in the lives of many newcomers for different reasons.
 - Some newcomers interact with these institutions because they provide important social supports that help with mediating the stresses of migration and settlement.
 - For others, these institutions are important places to express their faith.
 - There were also newcomers for whom religious institutions are

not important and therefore they do not interact with them.

- Newcomers demonstrated various attitudes about the role of religion in their lives. Some immigrants are very proud about their religious affiliation even when they recognize that it is devalued by wider public opinion.
- Religious institutions provide social services informally and sometimes more formally.

What Immigrants Said

[Church] keeps me sane. I mean, you miss them you know you miss them, and the people there have food, they help me. [If] they don't see me, for a while they call finding out what's, are you okay. Christmas time they give us stuff, give voucher. They have so many activities. I think they do for single mothers, bringing your car for oil change and things. (Natalia, Nigeria)

Sometimes we are going in church, on a big holiday like Christmas or Easter. Like this. (Jelena, Serbia)

I have noticed that you have friends but they are busy with their own lives, they had a job. They are friends, they are nice but they have their own life to live. If they know that I am in need of something they come. For example, the other day I had to pay to fix --28--- and they came with food. They said if you have to pay for that you are not going to have enough for food . . . One is Canadian and the other one is from Greece. They both live here . . . They are from church . . . It has people from many nationalities. When I was in the States I used to go to the Pentecost church, but when I moved here I couldn't find one, I had to go to different ones. (Jacqueline, Haiti)

I am Muslim. [My wife], Christian. We are share together life. We are liking each other. It's no problem. If she go the church I just say why you go church. If I go to mosque she usually at school . Everyone is free the way he can do things. (Hussein, Somalia)

Concluding Themes

- Religious institutions are seen as both a sign of multiculturalism and diversity but also a potential for problems
 - For example, the presence of a vibrant Islamic community was a source of pride for both mainstream and immigrant actors. However, many also raised the idea of 'too much diversity' where Muslims are concerned.
- Ethno-cultural organizations vary in their engagement with newcomers and there are indications that they do not necessarily view newcomers as central to their agenda. This insight begs further study.

Recommendations

- Foster and increase knowledge of the importance of religious organizations, especially Islamic ones, in supporting respective communities and enhancing integration and citizenship.
- Create more robust linkages between newcomers, ethno-cultural associations, religious organizations, settlement organizations and mainstream organizations.

Benchmark 4: Social engagement opportunities

“Social engagement opportunities are closely linked to social networking because they represent connections with community members. In the absence of family or friends, two types of connections serve as primary sources of assistance – social engagement and networking – providing informal access to information and social support. While agencies can provide settlement services, they may not be able to address the isolation that newcomers may feel in the absence of social ties and connections within the community” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 69).

Mainstream

Participation and engagement in community life

- Work is an important site for social engagement for mainstream actors; nevertheless, their social engagement opportunities are much more varied than newcomers’.
- Mainstream actors’ engagement with newcomers and immigrants was very limited unless tied to work. For example, mainstream actors with well-established career opportunities also find themselves with fewer social networking opportunities outside of work, but their ‘Canadian’ status is sufficient social capital to carve out their career and status in the city.
- ‘Windsorites’ in particular have strong social and familial ties that reflect their deep connection to Windsor. Their social networks are often overlapping which permits them access to multiple social worlds and the opportunities, feedback, connections that accrue from this.

Mainstream neighbours and neighbourhoods

- Most lived in neighbourhoods that were described as not very diverse or had very few immigrant households.
- Those who came from outside Windsor or were immigrants themselves indicated they formed friendships with other immigrants and outsiders who were more open to connecting, in particular as parents and through their children and their children’s activities.

Newcomers and Immigrants

Participation and engagement in community life

- There were significant differences among immigrants with respect to their personal contacts, friendship ties, and access to mainstream actors and organizations.
- Newcomer participation in society was influenced by various factors, including personal dispositions, unique migration pathways, employment, cohesiveness and size of the ethnic community, and language skills.
- Newcomers and immigrants highlighted the stresses of settlement and the inability to find employment as significant factors limiting participation and engagement in community life.

- Newcomers and immigrants also identified racism and discrimination as a key reasons for limited participation.
- Many newcomers reported wanting to have more connection with “real Canadians” and expressed different reasons for wanting these connections.
- Many if not most newcomers were transnationally connected, and held ties with kin or friends all over the world.

Employment

- Newcomers and immigrants viewed employment as **the most important pathway** to participation in society.
- They cited various system barriers to gaining employment, including, deskilling, discrimination, lack of social connection, less than proficient English, and lack of Canadian experience requirements.
- They recognized and advanced the idea that social connections are crucial to obtaining employment and feel marginalized from these types of connections.
- University and colleges could provide greater information and access to newcomers. At this point their focus is directed towards international students. Many international students however arrive with families or spouses which somewhat blurs the distinction between these two immigrant groups.
- Several newcomers showed a limited understanding of educational barriers and employment opportunities particular to Windsor.
 - In some cases, this was due to limited research on their part. In other cases, it was due to overly generalized information on Canada available to them before they immigrated.
- In some cases, newcomers felt that Canadian opportunities were misrepresented or the barriers were not reasonably represented. This was particularly the case for immigrants who came to Canada through the professional or skilled workers programs.

Civic participation and volunteerism

- Despite employment limitations many of the newcomers were very involved in Canadian society through different avenues, especially through volunteering. However, many expressed feeling that these contributions were not recognized by the larger community.

- Newcomers often participated in volunteer work, but do not think of it as such. To many, volunteering was understood as an ethic of ‘helping out’ rather than a formal practice.
- Some indicated that volunteer opportunities were limited and that it was unclear how to access them.

Importance of settlement services in facilitating participation

- Newcomers applauded settlement services for their ability to help them participate in wider society. Coming to settlement service centers lessened feelings of isolation and allowed newcomers to engage in activities beyond their own families.
- For some, settlement organizations provided the key means of social connection in their early years of settlement.
- Newcomers saw settlement programs as providing important social supports and friendship opportunities. These settlement services provided important opportunities for inter-cultural friendship building.
- Outside of settlement services, however, many newcomers’ close friends were from their own ethno-cultural or religious communities.
- Although it requires more research, immigrants are somewhat ‘cut-off’ once they are no longer eligible for settlement services.

Newcomers’ Neighbors and Neighbourhoods

- Although many newcomers lived in diverse neighborhoods with Canadian born residents, most neighbourhood friendships were described as “hi/bye” relationships. Many newcomers commented on how these superficial neighbourhood connections differed from their home countries.
- Some newcomers reported having developed strong relationships with their Canadian neighbors. These neighbors often provided knowledge and advice to newcomers. In these cases newcomers were extremely grateful when Windsor residents reached out to them, in some cases through their children or demands of schooling and related activities.

What Immigrants Said

In general, Canada’s not a place for me in the future. You want me to be honest? First, Canada’s too cold. Second, people are way too racist. So even though you finish high school and get diploma, five, eight, 20 years in university, take your degree, you look for job, but because you black, I’m sorry. (Abdul, Ethiopia)

Somebody told me he was not giving me a job because I have an accent. I passed the first round, went to the second interview and you know what the

company told me: "You have an accent. I'm sorry." I was shocked. I'm beginning to feel I am being discriminated against . . . They say Windsor is a multicultural city but I am going through all these experiences . . . I know it's multicultural, but you are not acting like it. (Natalia, Nigeria)

Where I live, on the right is Canadian, she's pretty much like family now. I mean she's like my eldest sister. And the other side both neighbours, I am really gifted with neighbours, even the new house. It's one month and I have great friendship already. The other neighbour is actually African origin. I think he's from Detroit. I'm not sure, probably born in Detroit or whatever. His wife is local Canadian, so they are from somewhere else. They're in Windsor now. Their kids are, you can see both features . . . I mean I have Filipinos I have Vietnamese. I have Indian. I have Indian, this side is Middle Eastern from Iraq, beside that I think Syria. (Dan, India)

My friend Paula, who is Canadian helped me with driving. When I came I didn't have any friends. One day on my way to church I spoke to one of the ladies. I said I don't have any Canadian friends; most of my friends were getting a Canadian friend. Then she talked to Paula and asked her if she wanted to be my friend. She said sure and she called me, then she picked me up, we had conversations in the car. She pushed me to speak English by calling people inquiring who was coming to church and Canadians picked them up. In that way I also improved my English. (Aye, Burma)

They [neighbours] don't speak with anybody. Everyone is separate. (Sabah, Lebanon)

Concluding Themes

- Immigrants – particularly newcomers -- and mainstream actors have separate spheres of engagement.
- Mainstream participants who are themselves immigrants are however very connected and engaged and demonstrate clear pathways, strategies and insights into how they were able to feel a sense of belonging.
- Immigrants' opportunities are more limited so that they have less access to knowledge and support necessary for establishing themselves.
- Social networking is limited for all residents who come from elsewhere.
- Settlement sector and some stakeholder organizations mediate social networking and encounters.
- An increase in social networking opportunities requires investment from mainstream and immigrant actors.

Recommendations

- Enhance social networking opportunities through promoting better

understanding of newcomers as citizens in all aspects of life in their city and neighbourhood, and not just as needy newcomers.

- Realizing these opportunities require investment from both mainstream and immigrant actors.
- Targeted initiatives directed towards building immigrant/newcomers/mainstream interface, such as Dialogue , Connection or Social Network cafes where newcomers connect with 'Canadians' and/or long-time Windsor Essex residents.
- Profile established immigrants to map out how they made connections in order to illustrate the opportunities and challenges they faced.

Benchmark 5: Opportunities for the use of public space and recreational facilities

“Public spaces and facilities – such as parks, town squares, public libraries, and public community/recreation facilities – are areas that, by definition, are open and accessible to all community members. Use of public space and participation in community/recreation centres are important because they provide opportunities for newcomers to become integrated into the community” (Esses et al, 2010, p. 86).

Mainstream

Accessibility

- Mainstream actors see efforts being made to ensure that all community members (not just immigrants) are able to access public spaces and services. Many mainstream represented said that if there is an area of need, it usually is an issue of fiscal and logistical constraints more than the desire to improve accessibility.
- Mainstream actors see the visibility of newcomers in public spaces (Riverside, downtown, libraries) as indicators immigrants are welcomed in our public spaces.

Migrant workers and the county

- Some mainstream actors expressed feeling uncomfortable when migrant farm workers congregated in public spaces, while others recognized the contributions migrant workers make to the local community.

Newcomers and immigrants

Neighbourhood location matters

- Newcomers demonstrated varying socio-spatial connections to the city and region.
 - Newcomers who lived near the downtown area reported ease in accessing various leisure facilities, municipal and/or settlement services.
 - Newcomers living in the east of the city, particularly near Forest Glade area, expressed feeling isolated from various social services, leisure facilities, and amenities of the city, particularly those offered in the downtown core.
 - Newcomers in the county pointed to value of smaller towns in supporting leisure activities, but also that these services were uneven and in some cases costly.

Leisure activities are expensive

- Newcomers expressed that the high cost of leisure-activities limited their ability and their family’s ability to participate.

Use and knowledge of public space is limited

- Immigrants and newcomers like the fact that Windsor has a lot of parks and public spaces.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contradictorily, some of those who we spoke with had very limited knowledge of and/or opportunity to use public spaces. • Public libraries and the Riverfront area were highlighted by many newcomers as the two most important, and sometimes the only, public space available for recreation and family time. • Some immigrants said they did not always feel comfortable in these spaces in terms of the way they were looked at as if they did not belong. <p>Public transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrants and newcomers felt public transportation was good but expensive. • Those living outside the downtown core expressed dissatisfaction with the available routes. • Newcomers and immigrants in both the City of Windsor and the county reported that lack of adequate transportation prevented them from securing available employment, education, and leisure opportunities.
<p>What Immigrants Said</p>	<p>For enjoyment we don't have that many place to goes. When you go to any place you need to pay – always to pay. The only we go to park, to enjoy park. To walk. To go to the Riverside. Is very beautiful. Sometime we go to dinner with our son. (Andres, Columbia)</p> <p>If the weather is good going to walk in the Riverside. We don't go in the street or something because everything expensive. Don't have a lot of money. It is not so interest for us because we like it but we don't have the money. Sometime we don't have free time. Sunday we go into church. (Fareeha, Iraq)</p> <p>We have anything to do here in Windsor for fun, for my age. No, no. I think no. Only the river. (Sabah, Lebanon)</p>
<p>Concluding Themes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrants and newcomers have more to say about their public spaces than mainstream actors as these are the socially and economically affordable sites where they can begin to engage meaningfully. Perhaps these spaces are more crucial to them than mainstream actors because of some of the difficulties they experience and that they are more bound to these public places than others. • Many newcomers felt that lack of adequate transportation throughout the region prevented access employment, education, and leisure opportunities.
<p>Recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More research needs to be done in mapping out public spaces and

immigrant concentration, and exploring immigrant personal and geographical spaces in relation to the activities immigrant engage in.

- Engage immigrants in planning and decision-making process associated with public space, transportation, and leisure activities

Benchmark 6: Favourable media coverage and representations

“‘Media’ is best described as a medium where information is shared and communicated, and includes radio, television, newspapers, and internet sources. The media is also used for the purpose of disseminating (and not just exchanging) information. The power of mass media rests in its ability to (1) influence recipients’ perceptions of newcomers and immigration, and (2) act as a tool that immigrants and refugees can use to gain information and to gauge society’s perceptions of newcomers” (Esses et al., 2010, p. 90).

Mainstream

- Some saw the local media as generally positive towards visible minorities and immigrants, while others felt local media negatively portrayed immigrants and newcomers.
- Some claimed that the media did not devote time, space or people to understanding immigrants issues and they were contacted for sound bites only, not for deeper understanding of an immigrant issue.
- Some of these reservations include the portrayal of immigrants either as problematic or celebratory, but not as everyday people.
- Media outlets are also seen as business enterprises and therefore may not always be socially responsible, but are not deliberate in their portrayal of immigrants.

Newcomers and immigrants

- Many newcomers, especially those with limited language skills did not pay attention to local media and were unable to comment.
- Several commented on how they felt that immigrants were either absent or negatively portrayed in local media coverage.
 - Some participants expressed particular concern over the negative portrayal of immigrants as “lazy” or “system abusers.”
 - Newcomers also expressed concern over the coverage of their home countries and population since this affects how they themselves are perceived in Windsor.
- Ethno-cultural organizations do not necessarily have the resources – including the time and personnel to contribute to media through lobbying, advocating and educating mainstream media reporters and editors. Furthermore, they do not necessarily view engaging the media as an important feature of their work.
 - Ethno-cultural organizations could consider, where possible, how they might foster relations with media.
- Reading newspapers is an activity encouraged in settlement and

employment organizations. Thus, many see the media as an important source of information and resource in their paths towards citizenship.

**Key Findings from
Local Media Analyses**

Representation of multiculturalism

- Issues of multiculturalism, diversity, and immigration did not figure predominantly in our sample of local section newspaper articles (as discussed above).
- Most editorials, columns, opinion pieces and letters discussed multiculturalism at a national and international level. Few editorials, columns, and letters made explicit reference to local issues of diversity, immigration, or multiculturalism.
- Positive discourses argued that multiculturalism was a central aspect of Canada's and Windsor's heritage and identity.
- Criticism of Canadian multiculturalism took the form of three distinct yet interrelated discourses. These include:
 - Multiculturalism leads to disunity
 - Canadians accommodate cultural difference too much
 - Particular groups, namely Muslims, hold and promote values that are antithetical to 'Canadian values'
- Editorial and letters that did specifically discussed local multiculturalism, however, tended to present multiculturalism in Windsor in a positive light:
 - Cultural diversity was listed as a major reason to live in Windsor
 - Windsor was presented as tolerant city
 - The Carousal of Nations was used to illustrate the city's commitment to embracing cultural diversity
 - Windsor was also referenced as historically multicultural, as a meeting place of French, British, and Native groups
 - Diversity can lead to potential conflict.

Representations of immigration and refugees

- Dominant discourses in the *Windsor Star* painted immigrants and refugees in a negative light.

- Refugees were primarily framed as criminals, queue-jumpers, fraudulent claimants, and ultimately, as economic burdens to legitimate tax-payers.
- Being compassionate to immigrants and refugees was framed as a primary marker of Canadian identity.
- Canada's immigration system was portrayed as both too bureaucratic and too lenient.
- Distinctions between 'old' and 'new' immigrants emerged as salient categories in describing immigration to Windsor.
 - Old immigrants were framed as hard working and willing to integrate.
 - New immigrants, on the other hand, were pictured as lazy, economic drains, and abusive of Canada's generosity.
- Very few positive depictions of how immigrants and newcomers contribute to life in Windsor were present.

Concluding Themes

- Relationships with and evaluations of media are subjective, but there is a general acknowledgement that media is a powerful tool of representation with cited examples of misrepresentations of immigrants and visible minorities.
- Both positive portrayals and negative portrayals of immigrants, refugees, and cultural diversity were present in local media. However, negative portrayals of immigrants and refugees seem to outweigh positive portrayals.
- The lack of depictions of immigrants, particularly the more recent ones, in everyday life does not allow for a greater depth to the positive evaluations of immigrants.
- Media outlets are potentially open to engaging with immigrants and newcomers issues and this would require outreach and connection from media, newcomers, immigrants and ethno-cultural organizations. However, settlement sector and ethno-cultural organizations suggest they have attempted to engage with local media with few positive results.

Recommendations

- Relationships between stakeholders, immigrants and media outlets should be nurtured to ensure that media outlets have more direct routes to immigrants and thus understanding of their issues and experiences. Dialogue between media outlets and concerned parties should occur within an ongoing, continuous relationship.
- Promote immigrant media workshops, talk-backs and letters to editors and incorporate into wider communication strategy

Survey Highlights

Respondent Profile

- 72 organizations responded to the survey request.
- More than 30 per cent of our respondents represented organizations in the field of human services (health, settlement, education, and legal services).
- The next two largest fields represented in our sample were labour unions and businesses (12%) and ethno-racial and cultural organizations (7%).
- 60% of the organizations who responded to the survey provide services in both the City of Windsor and the county. 22.2% of our sample included organizations that provided services only in the county, while 20.8% provided services only in the City of Windsor
- More than half of the agencies that responded to the survey have less than 25 employees while 30 % have more than 60 employees.

Highlights

Immigrant use of services

- 80% of our respondents reported that newcomer immigrants used their services 'often' or 'always'.

Newcomer Immigrants and Workplace Diversity

- 63.9% of our sample reported that 10% or less of their full-time employees was newcomer immigrants.
- Interestingly, 77.1% believed that their workplace consisted of people from diverse cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds.

Canadian work experience

- 64.8% of our respondents reported that Canadian work experiences was 'not important' (18.3%) or 'somewhat important' (46.5%) criterion for their organization when hiring a new employee.
- On the other hand, 35.23% reported that Canadian work experience was important or very important to their organization when hiring a new employee.

Languages

- 39.4% of respondents reported that their organization offers services in English, French, and other additional languages. 15.2% offered services in both English and French. 18.2% offered services in English and an additional non-official language. 27.3% of respondents reported that they offer services only in English.

- 60% of organizations reported publishing information such as brochures in multiple languages. 40% of organizations only published materials in English.
- Organizations used multiple methods to provide activities and services in non-official languages, including translations performed 'directly by staff members', through volunteers, through the use of online services, or some combination of all three.

Cultural Diversity/Cultural Competency Training

- Nearly 60% of respondents reported that their organization offers cultural diversity/ training to their staff. 33.8% do not. 7% of respondents were unaware of whether their organization offers cultural diversity training.
- 43.1% of respondents reported their organization had participated in cultural diversity training either once or twice in the last year. 37.5% of respondents reported that their organization had not participated in cultural diversity or cultural competency training within the past year. 4.2% of the organizations participated in three or more cultural diversity/competency trainings in the last year. 15.3% did not know the answer to the question.
- Cultural diversity/competency training was mandatory for 30.6% of the organizations surveyed.

Policies and Decision Making

- Nearly half (47.2%) of the organizations surveyed had some type of cultural diversity policy, while 34.7% did not. 18.1% of those responding to the survey did not know if their organization had an official cultural diversity policy.
- Over half (54.2%) of all organizations surveyed have sought the representation of immigrants on decision-making committees. Over half (52.1%) of all organizations surveyed have sought the representation of visible minorities on decision-making committees.
- About 60% of our sample (42/72 organization) had Boards of Directors. Of those organizations with board of directors, 63% expressed a commitment to achieving culturally diverse representation among board members, while 62% stated this commitment in a formal policy.

Key Themes

- Survey respondents saw their workplaces as diverse, but this diversity did not necessarily include the presence of newcomer immigrants.
- Survey respondent attitudes to 'Canadian experience' as an important criteria for employment seems to contradict in some ways our interview participants, who cited their lack of Canadian experience as a major barrier to their employment. This dynamic warrants further examination
- The majority of organizations surveyed demonstrated commitment to offer services in multiple languages. This was done in both formal and informal ways.

Tension Points and Models for Action

In the following section we highlight 'tension points' emerging from our research study. We define 'tension points' as the gaps between stated goals, desires, or commitments and actual practices. Tension points provide excellent opportunities for members of a community to plan and engage in meaningful action.

For each tension point, we identify possible avenues of action and practical examples of projects from other municipalities throughout Canada and the world that have sought to address similar issues. Please note that many initiatives from other places highlighted below center on the participation of many sectors and often the leadership of municipalities.

Tension Point #1: *Mainstream actors are generally supportive of multiculturalism and immigration but demonstrate limited knowledge of the complex challenges newcomers face. Newcomers and immigrants continue to report experiences of discrimination despite claims of openness, tolerance, and acceptance.*

Avenues for Action

- Deepen and strengthen positive attitudes through targeted initiatives that address systemic issues of racism, and the invisibility of immigrants and cultural diversity. This could include:
 - Building greater knowledge and understanding of immigrants and newcomers and their contributions to the cultural, social and economic fabric of Windsor Essex.
 - Expanding on existing initiatives that publically recognize the contributions of newcomers and immigrants to the region.
- Distinguish among different categories of immigrants and newcomers in how we ourselves as service providers and stakeholders talk about the relevant issues. Make a concerted point of seeing specificities among different groups (ethno-racial, gender, immigration categories, migration experiences, and contexts).
- Encourage mainstream organizations to identify and launch specific **outreach** strategies to move beyond a client-based relationship with immigrants and newcomers, so that immigrant perceptions, experiences and resources inform specific initiatives.
- Develop a communication plan to foster relations with media outlets and cultivate a more diverse depiction of the city and county.

Models for Action

- **Anti-Rumour Campaign, Barcelona City Council.** Barcelona's city council created an anti-rumour network of over 80 organizations with specially trained 'anti-rumour agents'. They also created public service videos and a comic book series directed at intercepting stereotypes about immigrants and newcomers.
- **Racism Free Edmonton, City of Edmonton.** This campaign sought to open up public dialogue about racism, discrimination, and inclusion in the city.
- **Jean Foster Prize as Emerging Best Practice.** Initiated by the City of Windsor and WELIP last year, this award recognizes individuals who exemplify the spirit of the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership through their efforts to foster a sense of belonging and welcoming among newcomers. Consider expanding on existing community awards, such as the YMCA Peace Awards or the Rotary Peace School Prize, to include recognition of immigrant and newcomer contributions.

Tension Point #2: *There is a general support for inclusive community in principle, but very little in terms of responsibility or commitment to welcoming immigrants.*

Avenues for Action

- Municipalities play a key role in communities where there appears to be a strong commitment to welcoming. We suggest following avenues of action:
 - Explore different ways to enhance involvement of all municipalities in Windsor Essex.
 - Develop strategic community-based social planning that includes immigrants in all fields of service delivery and institutional practices for all municipalities.
 - Enhance and strengthen the City of Windsor Diversity Committee to include these features. Encourage the development of similar committees or welcoming strategies in Essex County municipalities.
 - Develop a flexible and multi-pronged approach to integration that incorporates immigrant and newcomers issues into community-based initiatives and mainstream service provision and mandates.
 - Foster deeper connections and values for welcoming through community-wide and cross-sector initiatives (media, schools, mainstream services) led by municipal leaders and vehicles such as WELIP. Such an effort would promote

the permanent residence of immigrants and reinforce their important contribution to the socio-economic development of Windsor Essex.

Models for Action

- **Stuttgart Pact for Integration, Stuttgart, Germany.** The City of Stuttgart created the Office of Integration Policy. This office has the official responsibility of coordinating cross-sector strategic action.
- **Inter-culturality plan, Barcelona, Spain.** Barcelona's interculturality plan encourages attention to newcomer and migrant issues as part of city practice across all departments and agencies.
- **Community Planning Strategy, Peel Region.** This planning strategy places immigrant integration and settlement central to its overall development and planning.

Tension Point #3: *Newcomers desire social engagement opportunities but report a general lack of opportunity to meet long-term residents,*

Avenues for Action

- Enhance social networking opportunities through promoting better understanding of newcomers as citizens in all aspects of life in their city, town, and neighbourhood, and not just as needy newcomers.
- Foster more interaction opportunities among newcomers and long-time residents.
- Create targeted initiatives where newcomers connect with long-time Windsor Essex residents.
- Profile established immigrants to map out how they made connections in order to illustrate the opportunities and challenges they faced.

Models for Action

- **Social Connection Cafes, or Immigrant Cafes, Guelph, Ontario.** These multi-participant, issue, neighbourhood or topical-based forums bring newcomers, immigrants, mainstream organizations, and long term residents together.
- **International Garden Gottingen, Gottingen, Germany.** This program uses community gardens to bring long-term residents and newcomers together for the purposes of building cross-cultural understanding and connections.

- **Welcoming Diverse Leadership, Richmond Hill, Ontario.** This program connected public institutions to visible minority and immigrant professionals. Also see **Matchmaker, Matchmaker** program from **Amsterdam, Netherlands**, a board matchmaking service that recruits and trains professionals of immigrant background to sit on civic boards.
- **Making Integration Work, Ghent, Belgium.** This mentorship program pairs newcomers with local coaches as a way of extending social connections and facilitating integration.

Tension Point #4: *Public spaces are crucial to newcomers as sources of leisure and are important settings for cultural and inter-cultural recognition. However, many newcomers and immigrants express not feeling well-represented in the cultural life of the region.*

Avenues for Action

- More research needs to be done on immigrant use of public spaces and recreational facilities.
- Engage immigrants in planning and decision-making process associated with public space, transportation, and leisure activities.
- Strategically use public art or public spaces to promote inclusion, intercultural dialogue, cosmopolitanism, and diversity in a way that reflects the diverse populations of Windsor Essex.
- Provide greater financial support for low income residents (which include many newcomers) to access transportation to public spaces and community programs.

Models for Action

- **The City of New York** is currently looking at how to use city parks as important sites for immigrant integration. The city is now implementing strategies to include immigrant input into the construction and use of public parks.
- **The City of Madrid** uses public spaces to encourage inter-cultural dialogue and community engagement. Outreach workers design and promote activities in public spaces that aim to promote neighbourly co-existence.
- **Naan in the Park, Thorncliff Park Women's Committee, Toronto.** This initiative supports and advances the use of public spaces through sporadic events that can include particular ethno-cultural celebrations, foods, and displays.

- **Making Space for Sikh Parade, Badelona, Spain**, is an example of how ethno-cultural events are incorporated into public space for particular celebrations.

Tension Point #5: *Newcomers and immigrants express frustration with their portrayal in local media. On the other hand, media outlets are open to immigrant input but seem to lack the necessary connections and relationships with immigrant groups.*

Avenues for Action

- Create and promote a campaign to highlight the social, economic and cultural benefits of immigrants to Windsor Essex.
- Nurture the relationships between stakeholders, immigrants and media outlets to ensure that media outlets have more direct routes to immigrants and, thus, understanding of their issues and experience. Address this disconnect by ensuring an ongoing, continuous relationships among concerned parties.
- Promote immigrant media talk-backs and letters to editors.
- Create a sector-wide committee to outreach and bridge gaps between media representation and immigrant communities, initiate stories, and respond to misrepresentations.

Models for Action

- **A media or diversity committee** focusing on fostering relationships between immigrants and media outlets so to influence media representation to incorporate newcomer perspectives.
- **Media workshops** with targeted groups such as youth.
- **MIRA, Greater Toronto Area.** This initiative **was** part of a wider communication plan that informed a media advocacy approach. Representatives were identified in a variety of sectors to respond to media representations, build outreach, and foster ongoing dialogue.

Final Conclusions and Overall Recommendations

Immigrants and newcomers have specific needs and experiences that are related to their relative different status as new residents to Windsor Essex and their wide ranging skills, connections, and experiences. However, many immigrants and newcomers share with other residents a sense of exclusion due to poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and lack of transportation. A range of factors, thus, combine to influence how newcomers and immigrants experience welcoming. With this mind, we may ask how welcoming is Windsor Essex to immigrants and newcomers?

Our research revealed a complex picture of Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity. In some cases the perceptions and experiences reported seem contradictory. This is because immigrants are a very diverse group and do not experience settlement in the same way. It is also because many residents of Windsor Essex (of which mainstream organizations are largely comprised) have contradictory views about multiculturalism, diversity, and immigration. We found that there are examples of sector specific sensitivity and awareness of immigrant and newcomer issues, and that the settlement sector provides an important and valued contribution to meeting newcomer needs. However, an integrated approach to welcoming immigrants and newcomers does not yet characterize the region, especially from immigrant perspectives. Our research also revealed the problems associated with marginalizing immigrant integration to the settlement sector and limiting our 'integration' efforts to the first few years of arrival.

Given the parameters of our research project, it was not possible to conduct an in-depth study of all service delivery organizations and sector agencies. More in-depth studies of sector-specific sensitivity to the diversity of immigrants in Windsor Essex are necessary. Also, more sector-wide evaluations of services and access are needed in order to explore the connections, coordination, and planning of a welcoming community. Although certain patterns were identified regarding the differing settlement experiences and challenges between the City of Windsor and county municipalities, more research needs to be conducted on immigrant experiences in the county. Such a study would include the experiences of migrant farm workers, who although not immigrants or newcomers and largely excluded from settlement services, make important contributions to local life and whose treatment tests the parameters of the Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity. Additional research into how particular immigrant categories, such as youth, refugees, and/or women experience settlement and belonging in Windsor Essex is also necessary. Finally, greater attention could focus on understanding how newcomers fare once they are no longer eligible for settlement services.

Belonging is enhanced when residents have **multiple social inter-connections** that provide different avenues for participating in cultural, social and economic life. Importantly, employment and related education and training needs are crucial to enhancing belonging for immigrants and newcomers and cuts across all benchmarks. As such, a **multi-pronged approach to enhancing Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity requires taking into consideration the multiple and complex experiences of**

newcomers and the contradictions between multiculturalism and immigration. A welcoming community is one that **takes responsibility for and plans to build** its welcoming community in ways that benefit all residents.

The recommendations below are directed towards mainstream organizations, service providers, and long term residents. Individuals and organizations interested in creating a more robust welcoming community must:

- Promote the creation and implementation of a **community based strategy** towards welcoming immigrants that:
 - Reflects a commitment to advance welcoming
 - Acknowledges and includes immigrant issues into all civic and public sector institutions and issues
 - Is flexible, sensitive, and appropriate to specific sectors
 - Includes immigrant participation in the design and implementation of the strategy
 - Is flexible to adapt to changing immigrant patterns
 - Includes or supports a communications plan to foster relations with media that cultivates a more diverse depiction of the city and county
 - Supports the work of the WELIP
 - Encourages diverse stakeholders to recognize and acknowledge their own stake and leadership in welcoming immigrants and bringing together diverse stakeholders
 - Promotes social networking and engagement opportunities that integrate newcomers and long term residents
 - Provides opportunities for decision-making and representation among newcomers and long term residents
 - Encourages the city and municipalities to take a greater leadership role in advancing welcoming and belonging and the social planning it requires

References

- Andrew, C; Biles, J., Burstein, M., Esses, V. & Tolley, E. (2012). *Immigration, Integration, and Inclusion in Ontario Cities*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Abu-Laban, Y. & Nieguth, T. (2000). 'Reconsidering the constitution, minorities and politics in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*. 33(3), 465-497.
- Basok, T. (2004). Post-national citizenship, social exclusion, and migrant rights: Mexican seasonal workers in Canada. *Citizenship Studies*, 8(1), 47-64.
- Das Gupta, T. (1999). The politics of multiculturalism: 'Immigrant women' and the Canadian state. In E. Dua & A. Robertson (eds.), *Scratching the surface* (pp. 187-205). Toronto: Women's Press.
- Dua, E. (1999). Racializing imperial Canada: Indian women and the making of ethnic community. In A. Burton (ed.), *Gender, sexuality and colonial modernities* (pp. 119-133). N.Y.: Routledge.
- Esses, V. M., Hamilton, L. K., Bennet-AbuAyyash, C., & Burstein, M. (2010). Characteristics of a welcoming community. Retrieved August 5, 2013 from <http://p2pcanada.ca/library/characteristics-of-a-welcoming-community-report/>
- George, G. & Ku, J. (2012). Windsor. In C. Andrew, J. Biles, M. Burstein, V. Esses & E. Tolley (Eds) *Immigration, Integration & Inclusion in Ontario Cities* (pp. 205-224). Montreal & Kingston: Queen's Policy Studies Series, McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Gilbert, L. & Wood, P.K. (2005). Multiculturalism in Canada: Accident discourse, alternative vision, urban practice. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 29(3), 679-691.
- Isin, E. & Siemiatycki, M. (1999). *Fate and faith: claiming urban citizenship in immigrant Toronto*. Toronto: Joint Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement. Working Paper #8.
- May, V. (2011). Self, belonging and social change. *Sociology*, 45(3), 363-78.
- Newspapers Canada. (N.D.). Retrieved from <http://www.newspaperscanada.ca/daily-newspaper-circulation-data>

- Reitz, J. & Banerjee, R. (2007). Racial inequality, social cohesion, and policy issues in Canada. In K. Banting, T. Courchene, and F. Lesli Seidle (Eds), *Belonging? Recognition and shared citizenship*. Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy.
- Roland, S. & Wong, L. (2010). Citizenship and belonging to Canada: Religious and generational differentiation. *Canadian Journal of Social Research*, 3(1), 3-14.
- Statistics Canada. (2011). Census Profile: Windsor.
- Tossutti, L. & Esses, V. (n.d.) *Local perspectives on immigration and diversity in 15 Ontario municipalities*. Ottawa: Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Retrieved from <http://p2pcanada.ca/library/opinion-leaders/>
- Vatz Laarousii, M. & Walton-Roberts, M. (2005). Introduction: thinking about immigration beyond the Metropolis. *Special Issue of Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 37(3), 1-5.
- Veronis, L. (2006). The Canadian Hispanic Day Parade, or how Latin American immigrants practice (sub)urban citizenship in Toronto. *Environment and Planning A*, 38(9), 1653-71.
- Walton-Roberts, M. (2005). 'Immigrant settlement and retention in second-tier and small Urban Regions: A case study of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada' . <http://ceris.metropolis.net/Virtual%20Library/RFPReports/WaltonRoberts2005.pdf>
- Wiginton, L. (2012). *Canada's decentralized policy through a localized lens*. McGill University: MA Thesis.
- Windsor-Essex County Health Unit. (2009). Population report, Windsor-Essex county. Retrieved from http://www.wehealthunit.org/about-us/reports/2009_WEC_populationreport.pdf
- Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership. (2010). A community plan to promote the settlement and integration of immigrants in Windsor and Essex County. Retrieved from <http://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/socialservices-/Social-Services-Overview/Documents/A%20Community%20Plan%20-%20English.pdf>
- Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership. (2013). 2013-2014 Action Plan. Retrieved from <http://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/socialservices-/Social-Services-Overview/Documents/2013-2014%20Proposed%20LIP%20Action%20Plan%20-%20final1.pdf>
- Wulff, M., Carter, T., Vineberd, R., and Ward, S. (2008). Special issue: Attracting new arrivals to smaller cities and rural communities: Findings from Australia, Canada and New Zealand. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 9(2), 119-124.

Addendum

Enhancing the Welcoming Capacity of Windsor Essex Community Plan

[Based May 13, 2014 Community Forum]

Background

In the last decade Windsor Essex has undergone significant changes that render the region a place in transition. An economic downturn and larger global economic changes have challenged the extent to which Windsor Essex can support its current population. Currently, social and economic development initiatives are underway that are attempting to refashion the region so that it can thrive and prosper in the context of 21st century globalization.

Many understand that newcomers and immigrants play an important role in the overall development and future of the region. With this in mind, Windsor-Essex is one of more than 16 regional areas where federal initiatives have directed their attention in the effort to build immigrant capacity and support the welcoming of immigrant newcomers. All recognize that the settlement, integration, and welcoming of immigrant newcomers requires considerable investment, as well as the recognition that immigrants have much to offer this region.

This community plan is the end result of research project between the University of Windsor, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology, the Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County and the South Essex Community Council and was funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). The project emerged from the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership's strategic objective 3—"Strengthen Local Awareness and Capacity to Integrate Immigrants" (Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership, "Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership 2013- 2104 Action Plan, 2013). The project seeks to enhance the newcomer and immigrant welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex by investigating and promoting the engagement of newcomers and immigrants with mainstream society.

Introduction

Specifically, this project assessed the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex by examining several important benchmarks as outlined by Esses et al (2010) in their report entitled "Characteristics of a Welcoming Community." These benchmarks include:

- Positive community attitudes toward immigrants, cultural diversity, and the presence of newcomers in the community;
- Links between main actors working toward welcoming communities;
- Presence of diverse religious and cultural organizations;
- Social engagement opportunities;
- Opportunities for the use of public space and recreational facilities; and
- Favourable media coverage and representation

Refer to Appendix A "Defining the Six Benchmarks" for a detailed explanation of each benchmark.

Using a mixed-method research design that utilized in-depth interviews, focus groups, a survey, analyses of local media, and document review, the research team explored the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex by examining several important benchmarks identified by Esses et al (2010) as outlined above.

The use of these various methods allowed for a research approach that could capture the dynamic relationship between systemic issues influencing welcoming and belonging and the subjective experiences of newcomers and immigrants themselves. The goals of the study were to highlight the range and complexity of experiences of welcoming among newcomers and immigrants living in Windsor Essex; initiate further dialogue about the state of Windsor Essex's welcoming capacity; and provide useful direction for enhancing the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex to newcomers and immigrants.

Research results

The primary conclusion from the research is that Windsor Essex demonstrates **some capacity** for fostering immigrant and newcomer belonging in all benchmarks, but the capacities **are uneven** and there are considerable gaps. Hence, we highlight points of tension that need to be dealt with in order to enhance the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex:

- There is a positive perception towards immigrants and multiculturalism, and support for an inclusive community, but this is somewhat thin, and with a lack of deep commitment or sense of responsibility towards welcoming immigrants.
- There was also a lack of congruence between what mainstream actors and newcomers saw in terms of how well services were coordinated to support a welcoming community.
- The presence of religious and cultural organizations is a source of multicultural pride and provides community support but they are not necessarily the sites for welcoming newcomers or well connected to mainstream service providers and organizations.
- Social engagement among newcomers was relatively narrow and limited as are the opportunities to use public space and recreational facilities. Much work is required to ensure a more realistic coverage and representation of newcomers and visible minorities.
- There is a lack of knowledge in our society about newcomers and immigrants.
- Public spaces are well used by immigrants but continue to present barriers, financially, socially and in terms of how they are represented and seen as rightful occupiers of public spaces.
- Finally, immigrant frustration with media representations can be harnessed to work in line with media outlets expressed desire to include immigrant perspectives.

The results of the research were presented at a Community Forum on May 13, 2014. Ninety community members gathered to hear the findings of the research and to discuss potential initiatives that organizations in the community could lead or support. The following community plan is being proposed for consideration.

Community Plan

A Welcoming Community is one that takes responsibility for and plans to build its welcoming community in ways that benefit all residents. The creation and implementation of a community based plan will have the following elements:

- Reflects a commitment to advance welcoming;

- Acknowledges and includes immigrant issues into all civic and public sector institutions and issues;
- Is flexible, sensitive and appropriate to specific sectors;
- Includes immigrant participation in the design and implementation of the strategy;
- Is flexible to adapt to changing immigrant patterns;
- Includes or supports a communications plan to foster relations with media, cultivate a more diverse depiction of the city and county;
- Supports the work of the WELIP;
- Encourages diverse stakeholders to recognize and acknowledge their own stake and leadership in welcoming immigrants and bringing together diverse stakeholders;
- Promotes social networking and engagement opportunities that integrate newcomers and long term residents;
- Provides opportunities for decision making and representation among newcomers and long term residents;
- Encourages the city and municipalities to take a greater leadership role in advancing welcoming and belonging and the social planning it requires.

This community plan will pursue initiatives that emerged from the discussion at the May 13, 2014 Community Forum “Enhancing the welcoming capacity of Windsor Essex”. These pilot initiatives are intended to promote the welcoming character of the area by drawing out the voluntary and self-sustaining capacity of the community.

The project, led by Multicultural Council (MCC) with the South Essex Community Council (SECC) was designed on a collaborative model to encourage engagement and mobilize the resources that are available through the Windsor Essex Community, including new and emerging immigrant communities, businesses, non-profit organizations and the broader community.

The following initiatives were proposed and supported by participants at the May 13, 2014 Community Forum.

Benchmark	Proposed Initiative	Lead/support	Timing
Benchmark 1: Positive Community Attitudes Toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community	Café - invite community clients to attend and get to know one another	Unemployed Help Centre (June Muir)	
	“People” program, youth and parents Parent Council - more involvement, engage parents “multi-lingual” (administer survey to get data to identify gaps)	Conseil Scolaire Providence (Jeannine Pellerin)	
	Expand diversity committee Customer services program to respond to all cultures Pilot cancer program - broad services will include cultural awareness	Windsor Regional Hospital (Cathy Mombourquette)	
Benchmark 2: Links between Main Actors working toward Welcoming Communities	Training and awareness around issues of human trafficking	WE Fight	
	Accessibility for services - “Finding your Way” - resources in different languages Individual care - person centered service delivery	Alzheimer’s Society (Rose Sheilds)	
	Work at making clients of diverse backgrounds feel welcome at the organization (working with other clients)	House of Sophrosyne (Karen Waddell)	
	Business friendly and aftercare protocol	Windsor Essex Economic Development Corporation (Marion Fantetti)	

	Cultural diversity/sensitivity training to targeted staff	Town of Tecumseh (Gary McNamara)	
	Cultural competence, incorporate newcomers into the process (system approach)	LHIN (Sarah May Garcia)	
	Include newcomer information and perspective into existing education/training/presentations and workshops.	AIDS Committee (Stephanie Green)	

Benchmark	Proposed Initiative	Lead/support	Timing
Benchmark 3: Presence of diverse religious and cultural organizations	Diversity Committee taking an active role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advocacy • use established festivals to help integrate cultural and religious groups (beyond carousel) • invite cultural groups to participate in parades 	City of Windsor Diversity Committee (Ed Sleiman)	
	Supporting mainstream events and integrate newcomers	Jewish Community Centre (Harvey Kessler)	
	Celebration of Nations	University of Windsor (Mike Houston?)	
Benchmark 4: Social Engagement Opportunities	Support future community events Support information regarding family events taking place in Windsor Essex	Place Concorde (Didier Marott)	
Benchmark 5: Opportunities for the use of Public Space and Recreational Facilities	Utilizing community gardens – make connections to the community	Campus Community Garden – Chris Reid, Garden Coordinator	
	Outreach to ethno-cultural communities with facility tours, invitations to events	Life After Fifty – Colleen Mitchell,	
	Community Welcome BBQ	Alzheimer’s Society – Lydia Kowal	
	Specific Karen comm gardening??	AIDS Committee – Stephanie Green ??	
Benchmark 6: Favourable Media coverage and representation	Concerted Media outreach campaign that would involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on media outreach for interested ethno-cultural organizations • Establishment of a committee (as a wing of the city’s diversity committee) that would 	United Way of Windsor Essex County – Lorraine Goddard, CEO Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (Alicia	

	<p>act as an outreach, monitor and responder to community representations of immigration/immigrants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerted media awareness campaign that followed a model similar to Anti-Rumour Campaign identified in the report.	Summerfield) bullet point 2	
--	--	-----------------------------	--

Next Steps

The proposed community plan is intended to explore potential action steps for each benchmark. The involvement of multiple actors, sectors and diversity of services in welcoming immigrants, and immigrant responses, actions and experiences is needed to build further capacity in regards to welcoming new comers and immigrants. Additional funding through the Ontario Trillium Foundation will be pursued to support initiatives, however, funding is not guaranteed therefore organizations are encouraged to work within existing frameworks and use the research to inform planning and decision making.

The proposed community plan will be reviewed by the partners and brought forward at the next WELIP meeting for discussion. The municipalities, mainstream service providers and organizations that have offered to assume a leadership role in this process will be contacted and asked to provide progress reports in six months.

[Page intentionally left blank]