

Clause 14 in Report No. 8 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on May 25, 2017.

14

2017-2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy  
Celebrating Diversity. Strengthening Community.

Committee of the Whole recommends:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships Branch, Community and Health Services.
2. Adoption of the following recommendations, as amended, contained in the report dated April 21, 2017 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services:
  1. Council endorse the 2017–2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy as set out in Attachment 1 to this report.
  2. This report and attachment be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the local municipalities, local Members of Parliament, local Members of Provincial Parliament, the Community Partnership Council, the Human Services Planning Board and the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group.
  3. *Regional Chair Emmerson and Mayor Scarpitti, in his capacity as Co-Chair of the Community Partnership Council, send letters to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship requesting more funding for the Local Immigration Partnerships program and the Welcome Centre Immigration Services system in order to continue the good work being done in York Region.*

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Report dated April 21, 2017 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services now follows:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the 2017–2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy as set out in Attachment 1 to this report.
2. This report and attachment be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the local municipalities, local Members of Parliament, local Members of Provincial

Parliament, the Community Partnership Council, the Human Services Planning Board and the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group.

## 2. Purpose

This report provides information about the 2017–2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy (Attachment 1) and highlights actions the York Region Community Partnership Council will take to support the economic and social integration of newcomers to York Region.

## 3. Background and Previous Council Direction

York Region’s Local Immigration Partnership and its Community Partnership Council have contributed to creating a welcoming community for all newcomers

With a population of almost 1.2 million, York Region has been a destination of choice to almost 560,000 immigrants. It is estimated that by 2031, 55 per cent of York Region’s population will be immigrants and 62 per cent will be members of a visible minority group.

Given this significant immigrant population, in 2009 York Region was selected by the federal government to lead the Local Immigration Partnership initiative to establish multi-sectoral partnerships and develop a local settlement strategy to create a welcoming and inclusive community.

In 2010, Council appointed the Community Partnership Council to develop the York Region Immigrant Settlement Strategy which was endorsed by Council in 2011. The [Local Immigration Partnership Initiative: York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy](#) outlined ten collective actions for implementation and more than 115 individual actions for its members to work on. All actions focused on helping newcomers integrate either economically, socially, culturally or civically. By the end of the Community Partnership Council’s first term, all actions had been achieved as noted in the [Immigration Settlement Strategy Update](#) in April 2016.

Specific mention of York Region’s implementation of “an Immigration Settlement Strategy to enhance the integration and success of new Canadians” was made in the Globe and Mail article on Canada’s Best Diversity Employers on March 28, 2017.

It was this strategy that led to York Region’s creation of the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group with a mandate to develop a Diversity and Inclusion Charter.

[The York Region Draft Diversity and Inclusion Charter](#) was considered by Council in January 2017. Council directed the report be circulated, for information, to the local municipalities, York Region Police Services Board, Community Partnership Council, local Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade and the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group.

The Community Partnership Council has created an updated Newcomer Strategy

As a result of York Region's appointment by the federal government to lead the Local Immigration Partnership, the Community Partnership Council was formed in 2010. As mandated by the federal government, the Community Partnership Council is responsible to work collaboratively with the Region to develop and support the implementation of a local strategy and action plan to address the needs of newcomers in York Region.

A new term of the Community Partnership Council began in April 2016. Membership includes representatives from settlement services, language and skills training, economic development, education and health services, (including mental health), police services, local municipalities, the Region and the provincial and federal governments. The Community Partnership Council is co-chaired by Mayor Frank Scarpitti, City of Markham and Nella Iasci, Executive Director of Job Skills.

The Community Partnership Council has worked over the past year to update the strategy by reviewing the community results and indicators of the original strategy. The 2017–2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy is the result of this work. It ensures alignment with new federal and provincial expectations builds on the results, actions and indicators of the previous strategy and focusses on the economic and social integration of newcomers to York Region.

#### 4. Analysis and Implications

Immigration is a priority of the federal government, the provinces and many municipalities across Canada

Because of world events, political change to the federal government and the recent Syrian Refugee Resettlement Initiative, immigration is receiving an increased profile within the media and all levels of government. Although immigration is a federal responsibility, it is at the municipal level where its effects, challenges and benefits are experienced.

In February of 2017, Laura Albanese, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, met with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and select municipal

representatives to discuss how to improve immigrant social and economic integration. Mayor Frank Scarpitti, City of Markham, and staff from York Region participated in this meeting.

The meeting outlined the following items for consideration by the Minister:

- Reinstatement of the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement which could include a formal role for municipalities to provide input on immigration settlement planning
- Strengthen Local Immigration Partnerships to coordinate local services and work to achieve better outcomes for newcomers

Immigration provides an opportunity to address anticipated labour shortages

Municipalities will attempt to increase diversity within their populations to make more global connections, increase local prosperity and fill expected labour shortages. It is in the interest of municipal governments to develop welcoming communities to ensure newcomers integrate within their communities.

Recent research by the federal government estimates labour market shortages are projected from 2015–2024 across Canada in both highly skilled and management occupations (Government of Canada Occupational Projection System 2015 Imbalance Scenario Projection Estimates). This is significant as more than 50 per cent of newcomers to York Region arrive with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. The York Region Economic Development Action Plan indicates that elevating the Region's profile is required to ensure it remains as a significant economic entity in the Ontario, Canadian and global context. Successful integration of these well-educated and skilled newcomers will assist in achieving this plan. If competition continues to increase amongst provinces and municipalities to attract and retain newcomers, York Region will need to continue to position itself as a destination of choice for immigrants to Canada.

The Local Immigration Partnership and its Community Partnership Council remain a strong mechanism to respond to newcomer needs in York Region

The Community Partnership Council receives strong leadership through its co-chairs and on-going partnerships with external institutions and agencies, including the Welcome Centres. Its collaboration with other York Region strategies and initiatives (the Human Services Planning Board, the Municipal Diversity and Inclusion Group, and Public Health) will help promote social determinants of health and successful integration of newcomers.

The 2017–2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy will assist in strengthening linkages between employers and newcomers and create a more inclusive community for newcomers to settle and succeed

The 2017–2021 Newcomer Strategy focuses on community results that align with two key federal and provincial expectations – economic and social integration.

Figure 1 highlights the specific actions that will be implemented over the next five years to support newcomer integration in York Region. They are organized under the following five themes:

- Strengthen newcomer employability
- Promote inclusive workspaces
- Address information needs
- Increase local service planning
- Strengthen social cohesion

**Figure 1**  
**Economic and Social Integration Collective Actions 2017–2021**

<b>Economic Integration</b>	
<b>Strengthen Newcomer Employability</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host 3<sup>rd</sup> Internationally Educated Professionals conference</li> </ul>	<p>The next Internationally Educated Professionals Conference is planned for the fall of 2017. Its objectives are to provide participants with a better understanding of York Region’s employment landscape with workshops to improve skills in finding employment and understanding of the Canadian employment culture. There will also be a focus on employers helping them to understand the benefits of diversity and inclusion.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a business case to Enhance Newcomer Employability</li> </ul>	<p>Some newcomers still struggle to find employment despite good education and skills. The Community Partnership Council will develop a case management model to address this gap within the employment system. Newcomers within the program will be able to gain specific employment skills, such as language programs or preparing for the Canadian workplace. This approach will also provide coaching and follow-up once the individual is employed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for additional bridging programs, language training and accreditation opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>When the business case for the model is complete, working with our partners, we will identify sources of funding for implementation and advocate for additional resources to support training.</p>
<b>Promote Inclusive Workplaces</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a communications campaign to promote and disseminate Diversity and Inclusion Tools for employers</li> </ul>	<p>A key feature of the 2017 Internationally Educated Professionals Conference will be focus on employers to help them understand the benefits of diversity and inclusion and the tools that are available to assist them. Tools and resources will be distributed to employers beyond the conference.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Charter</li> </ul>	<p>The Community Partnership Council will commit to actions developed under the Charter.</p>

<b>Social Integration</b>	
<b>Address Information Needs</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update yorkwelcome.ca</li> </ul>	<p>Newcomers do not always have the information required during their settlement journey as service systems can be challenging to navigate. To address this, the yorkwelcome.ca portal will be refreshed to better meet the needs of newcomers and service providers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop resource of services to be available to newcomers</li> </ul>	<p>Working with community partners, a one-stop resource will be developed for newcomer services.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map community assets including formal and informal services</li> </ul>	<p>York Region and other stakeholders are currently mapping community assets, which include service providers, community associations, public institutions such as schools, faith groups, libraries, etc. Coordinating efforts could lead to a comprehensive resource map and easier access to services.</p>
<b>Increase local service planning</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for Welcome Centre community hub model</li> </ul>	<p>Welcome Centres are unique hubs for services for newcomer settlement, language and employment. Advocating for Welcome Centres to expand and sustain services offered within their locations will assist newcomers to access a greater range of services.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop local capacity to respond to newcomers needs</li> </ul>	<p>York Region's local municipalities have knowledge and experience in planning and programming for newcomers, as do Welcome Centres and other local service providers. Creating an opportunity with these partners to support local planning will assist with community engagement and capacity building.</p> <p>York Region is a partner with York University on a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council project grant to better understand and complement the newcomer settlement process.</p> <p>Data will be updated using 2016 Census information and other sources to better understand the profile of immigrants arriving in York Region.</p>

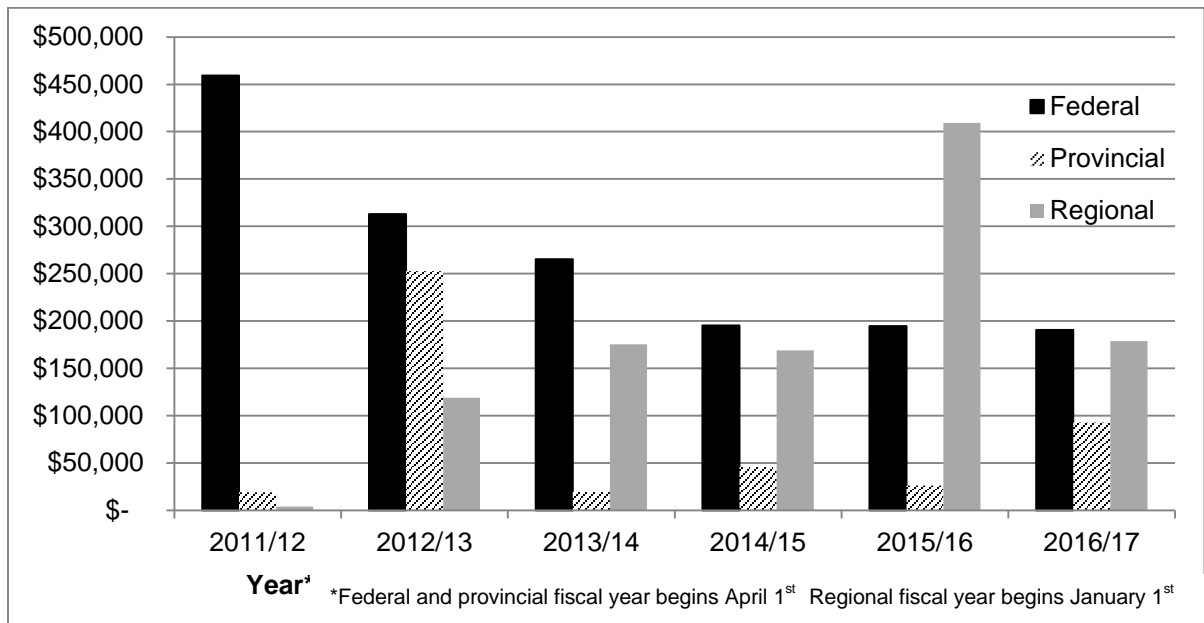
<b>Strengthen social cohesion</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and support local opportunities to strengthen social cohesion within communities</li> </ul>	<p>The goal of social cohesion is to positively engage all residents within a community. This is accomplished by promoting welcoming and inclusive communities to all residents.</p> <p>The Community Partnership Council will continue to work on their original mandate to build social inclusion by securing funds to support community groups in developing or promoting projects that help build welcoming and inclusive communities.</p> <p>Municipalities already support social inclusion by hosting and supporting festivals and cultural events. Working with municipalities, we will develop a project to further promote welcoming and inclusive communities.</p>

## 5. Financial Considerations

The 2017 annual budget allocated for the Local Immigration Partnership is \$563,764. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada will provide \$190,787 for fiscal 2017/2018 with the York Region providing \$372,977. Initially, in 2011/2012, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada funded the Local Immigration Partnership for \$459,178. As shown in Figure 2, federal funding has decreased every year. Despite this, the Region considers the program to be a worthy investment.



**Figure 2**  
**Funding Allocated to Local Immigration Partnership and**  
**Newcomer Strategies 2011–2017**



All amounts are actuals with the exception of the federal funding for 2016/2017 which is the budgeted amount for that year.

Federal and provincial funding primarily support the Local Immigration Partnership program and actions such as Internationally Educated Professionals conferences, the Immigration Portal maintenance, and the International Student mobile application development and launch.

The Region will leverage opportunities from the federal and provincial governments as in the past to support the actions within the 2017-2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy. Funding to support any new initiatives will be within the Community and Health Services budget and subject to annual budget approvals.

## 6. Local Municipal Impact

Local municipalities' knowledge and expertise about immigrant and cultural issues are expected to play a key role to help support and implement the revised strategy. The local municipalities will be engaged to understand how best to

implement and support the Diversity and Inclusion Charter and in the identification of actions designed to create welcoming and inclusive communities.

## 7. Conclusion

The past and recent accomplishments of the Immigrant Settlement Strategy result from the effective collaborations by members of the Community Partnership Council, other York Region supported groups and within the community.

Over the past year, the Community Partnership Council and the Region leveraged expertise and knowledge to refresh and refocus the strategy. This work resulted in rededicated energy and newly planned activities to improve economic and social integration for all newcomers. The on-going goal of York Region remains the same: creating an inclusive and welcoming community where all residents can thrive.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, Director, Strategies and Partnerships at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 72090.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

April 21, 2017

Attachment (1)

#7590057

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

# 2017-2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy

*Celebrating diversity. Strengthening community.*



May 2017



Mayor  
Frank Scarpitti  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Jack Heath  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Jim Jones  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Joe Li  
City of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Nirmala Armstrong  
City of Markham



Mayor  
David Barrow  
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor  
Maurizio Bevilacqua  
City of Vaughan



Chairman & CEO  
Wayne Emmerson



Regional Councillor  
Vito Spatafora  
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor  
Michael Di Biase  
City of Vaughan

York Region is home to nearly 1.2 million residents, representing all ages, backgrounds and interests. As one of Canada's fastest growing communities welcoming many newcomers each year, York Region's diversity is a source of our pride and strength.

Immigration enriches our community on many fronts, and is an important contributor to the growth of our robust local economy. Since 2010, the York Region Local Immigration Partnership and the Community Partnership Council have been working to increase awareness of newcomer challenges, and identify opportunities to adapt and improve services to support our newest community members.



Regional Councillor  
Brenda Hogg  
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor  
Mario Ferri  
City of Vaughan

The 2017-2021 Newcomer Strategy builds on the work already achieved through the Immigration Settlement Strategy and moves us forward in developing a welcoming and inclusive home for all. The success of our efforts relies on the strength of collaboration and partnership, where everyone – individuals, communities, businesses and municipalities – plays a role in creating a culture of inclusion.

York Regional Council commends all who helped develop the 2017-2021 Newcomer Strategy for their commitment to leading change and building community.



Mayor  
Tony Van Bynen  
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor  
Gino Rosati  
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor  
John Taylor  
Town of Newmarket



Mayor  
Margaret Quirk  
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor  
Naomi Davison  
Town of Georgina



Mayor  
Geoffrey Dawe  
Town of Aurora



Mayor  
Virginia Hackson  
Town of East Gwillimbury



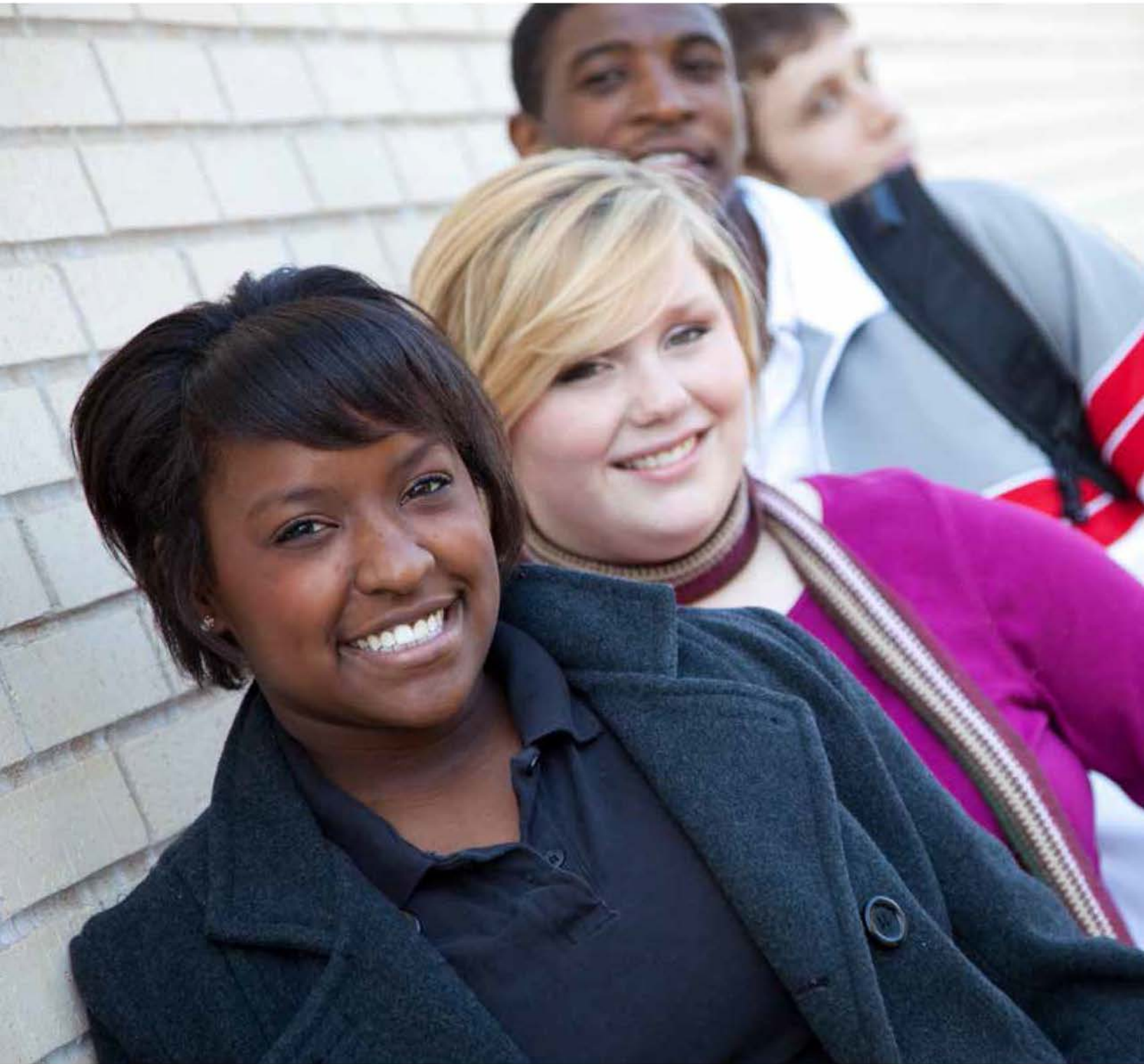
Mayor  
Steve Pellegrini  
Township of King



Mayor  
Justin Altmann  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

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## Message from the Community Partnership Council Co-Chairs

### **Message from the Community Partnership Council Co-Chairs City of Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti and Job Skills Executive Director Nella Iasci**

The Community Partnership Council is pleased to present this Newcomer Strategy, which supports our ongoing vision for the settlement and integration of newcomers in York Region.

We take pride in the work completed to date and feel confident our renewed focus and actions will help create a welcoming community that fully supports newcomers. Our efforts continue to focus on setting newcomers and their families up to succeed, encouraging diversity and addressing local challenges through awareness and action.

Strong partnerships play an important role in completing actions in the Newcomer Strategy, and we will continue to strengthen relationships with our communities and government partners. Working together, we can ensure York Region is a place that everyone is proud to call home.



Frank Scarpitti  
Mayor, City of Markham



Nella Iasci  
Executive Director, Job Skills



## Community Partnership Council Members

**Wayne Emmerson** Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, York Region

**Mayor Frank Scarpitti** Co-Chair, the Community Partnership Council, Mayor, City of Markham

**Mayor Tony Van Bynen** Mayor, Town of Newmarket

**Lina Bigioni** Chief of Staff, York Region

**Katherine Chislett** Commissioner, Community and Health Services, York Region

**Angela Palermo** Manager of Cultural Services, City of Vaughan

**Sandra Tam** Senior Business Development Officer, City of Markham

**Tricia Myatt** Manager Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs, Town Of Richmond Hill

**Nella Iasci** Co-Chair, the Community Partnership Council, Executive Director, Job Skills

**Robert Hickey** Executive Director, Catholic Community Services of York Region

**Moy Wong-Tam** Executive Director, Centre for Immigrant and Community Services of Ontario

**Robert Cazzola** Director, Education and Information Systems, COSTI Immigrant Services

**Patricia Cousins** Chief Executive Officer, Social Enterprise for Canada

**Karen McNeil** Director, Language Services, York Region, Centre for Education and Training

**Joanne Jeffrey** Senior Manager Education, Training and Outreach Division, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

**Kim Coulter** Chief Executive Officer, Jewish Vocational Services

**Al Wilson** Executive Director, Workforce Planning Board of York Region and Bradford, West Gwillimbury





**Beth Clarke** Director, Employer Programs, Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council

**Denis Gravelle** Chair, Faculty of Continuing Education and Training, Seneca College

**Valerie Preston** Professor, York University

**Ricky Veerappan** Inspector, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Bureau, York Regional Police

**Stav D'Andrea** Chief Human Resources Officer, Mackenzie Health

**Rebecca Shields** Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Mental Health Association, York and South Simcoe

**Cecil Roach** Superintendent, Equity and Engagement, York Regional District School Board

**Frances Bagley** Associated Director, York Region Catholic District School Board Accessibility/Strategic Planning/Policy/Board Leadership

**Suzanne Harding** Community Liaison Officer, Conseil scolaire de district du Centre-Sud-Ouest Centre de formation

**Pedro Barata** Senior Vice-President, Strategic Initiatives and Public Affairs, United Way of Toronto and York Region

**Ian Nyman** General Manager, York Region Employment YMCA of Greater Toronto

**Caitlin Andrews** Regional Advisor, Midhurst Office, Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and International Trade

**Baljit Bardai** Service Delivery Manager, Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development  
Employment and Training Division, Central Region

**Jackie Smith** Acting Operations Manager, Settlement, IGA and Multiculturalism, Ontario Region, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

**Lindsay Fung** Manager, Citizen Services and Program Development, Service Canada York/Durham Region

**Sandra Cella** Director, Central LHIN, Health System Planning and Design



## Working Together

### Local Immigration Partnership Initiative

In 2009, the Government of Canada selected York Region to lead their Local Immigration Partnership initiative. Local Immigration Partnerships are required to establish multi-sectoral Community Partnership Councils to develop and implement local settlement strategies. York Region was one of the first communities to be selected to lead a Local Immigration Partnership and the initiative has since spread across the country.

Objectives of a Local Immigration Partnership:

- Improve access to, and coordination of, immigrant immigration services
- Improve labour market outcomes for newcomers
- Improve social outcomes for newcomers
- Strengthen regional awareness and capacity to successfully integrate immigrants
- Build and support partnerships at the community level

### The Community Partnership Council

No one organization can make the necessary changes to make a community more welcoming to newcomers. It takes collective action by many to make a difference.

In 2010, York Region Council appointed a Community Partnership Council to lead the region's Immigration Settlement Strategy. As a result of the initial settlement strategy work and its collective actions, the York Region Community Partnership Council has grown to become a strong collaborative body with a common agenda.

Its members are the ambassadors of the strategy in their own organizations, with their partners and in their communities. The strategy's continued success depends on this type of community leadership and effort.

Members of the Community Partnership Council represent the following sectors:

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| • Welcome Centres                | • Health Services  |
| • Language Training              | • Education  |
| • Employment Skills and Training | • Francophone communities  |
| • Labour Market Development      | • Social Services  |
| • Academic                       | • Municipalities, York Region, the Governments of Ontario and Canada |
| • Police Services                |  |



**Benefits of the Welcome Centres:**

- Reduced barriers for newcomers
- Decreased operating overhead in the provision of services,
- Increased professional knowledge sharing
- Expected increased earnings for all recent immigrants resulting in less reliance on social services

# Supporting Newcomers

## Coordinated Service System

The federal, provincial and municipal governments work together to provide various types of immigration services for newcomers to Canada.

Municipal governments do not have a constitutional responsibility for settlement and integration, yet they still play an important role as new immigrants connect with local services upon arrival in their new homes.

It is everyone's responsibility to be part of a welcoming system so that newcomers are able to support themselves, contribute to the local economy and their new communities.

Throughout the region, newcomers can access a range of social supports and programs to help them reach their goals; for example, there are non-profit agencies that offer varied services, such as help finding employment or housing. Post secondary institutions provide educational and retraining opportunities through bridging and alternate career pathway programs and accreditation services.

## Welcome Centres

York Region has five strategically located Welcome Centres that have specific responsibilities to welcome and settle all newcomers to the region.

Using a hub service delivery model funded by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, they are the main access point to the newcomer service system in York Region. They provide comprehensive settlement services and help all newcomers, including refugees, access resources, such as language training, skills evaluation, citizenship awareness. Through this work they help build social networks for all newcomers.

A 2015 evaluation of the Welcome Centre model indicated that for every \$1.00 spent, Welcome Centres create \$3.50 in social value.<sup>1</sup>

## York Welcome.ca

In addition to the Welcome Centres, the York Region immigration portal, [yorkwelcome.ca](http://yorkwelcome.ca) provides comprehensive newcomer information and links to additional resources for newcomers, international students and service providers.

From 2006 to 2011, the majority of new immigrants to York Region came from **China, Iran, India, and Philippines.**<sup>9</sup>



The top five languages spoken by newcomers in York Region are: **Mandarin, Farsi, Chinese, English and Tagalog.**<sup>8</sup>



In 2014, immigrants accounted for all net labour force growth in Canada.<sup>12</sup>



.....  
In 2012, over 50% of those who landed in York Region had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education.<sup>11</sup>

York Region's population is diverse and belongs to more than **200 distinct ethnic origins.**<sup>5</sup> In 2016, an estimated 48% of the York Region population considered themselves as belonging to a visible minority group.

By 2031, it is projected to be **62%.**<sup>6</sup>



York Region's employment target is expected to grow from **565,000** in 2014 to **900,000** by 2041.<sup>4</sup>

**10,000**



.....  
On average, about 10,000 new immigrants landed in York Region annually between 2010 to 2015.<sup>7</sup>

York Region's population in 2016 was almost 1.2 million<sup>2</sup> and is expected to grow to **1.8 million**<sup>3</sup> in 2041.



**61%**

.....  
In 2012, 61% of those who landed in York Region were of working age between 24 and 65 years old.<sup>10</sup>

See page 32 for source information.

## Opportunities for Newcomers in York Region

York Region's strategic priorities include creating and maintaining economic vitality and healthy communities.

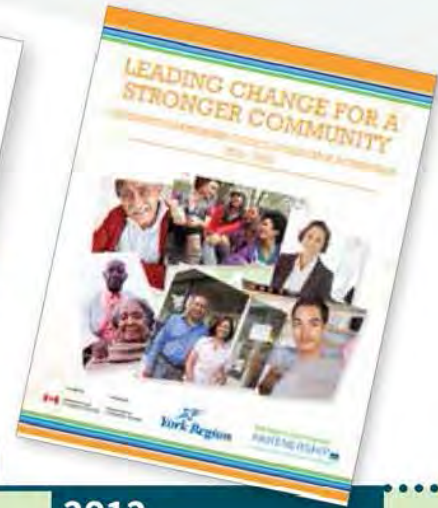
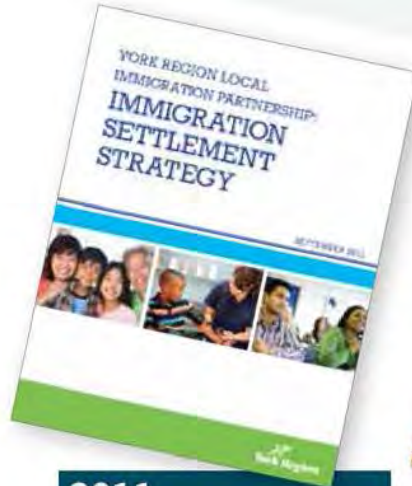
York Region has a diverse population and a fast-growing workforce.

- In 2016, almost 570,000 immigrants were estimated to live in York Region – more than the total populations of moderately sized cities like Halifax, Nova Scotia and London, Ontario.<sup>13</sup>
- Its general population grew 7.5% between 2011 and 2016, the second highest in the GTA after Halton at 9.3%.<sup>14</sup>
- Employment has outpaced the national, provincial and GTA rates, growing at an average of 3.1 per cent over the last five years.<sup>15</sup>

York Region's Economic Development Action Plan 2016 encourages economic growth and prosperity for the entire region. Additionally, the Human Services Planning Board of York Region engages partners to advocate for affordable housing and employment opportunities for low- and moderate-income families.

A healthy community is both welcoming and inclusive. The Region is developing a Diversity and Inclusion Charter to promote understanding and respect for all the differences people experience.

# Milestones



## 2009

- York Region appointed to lead Local Immigration Partnership

## 2010

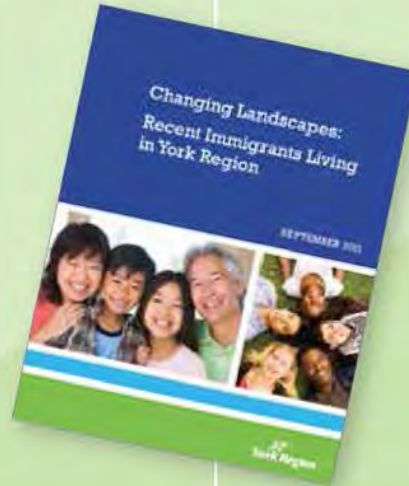
- Community Partnership Council members appointed
- Research and public consultation on strategy development

## 2011

- First Immigrant Settlement Strategy developed

## 2012

- 2012 – 2015 Immigrant Settlement Strategy Collective Action plan begins
- First Gateway Conference for Internationally Educated Professionals







**2015**

- Immigrant Settlement Strategy Action plan completed in full, Community Partnership Term ends
- Second Gateway Conference for Internationally Educated Professionals



**2016**

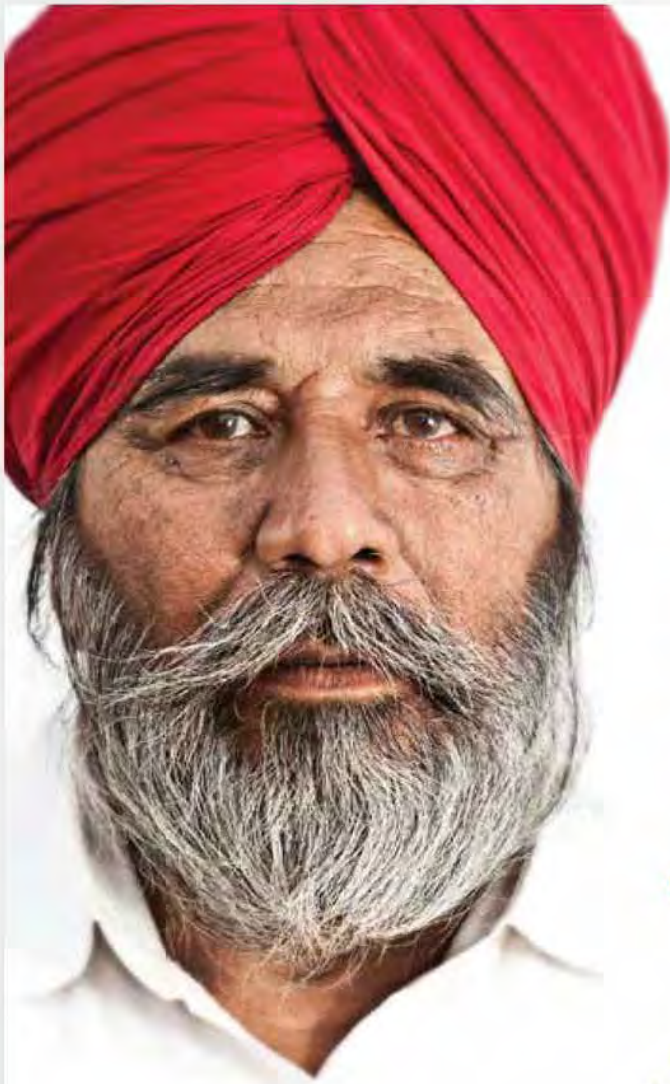
- New term and new members of the Community Partnership Council
- Strategy refresh begins



**2017**

- Development of refreshed Newcomer Strategy
- Promotion of Diversity and Inclusion Charter through community dialogues
- Third Gateway Conference for Internationally Educated Professionals





**York Region**

*diversity*

IS NOT ALWAYS WHAT YOU BELIEVE

**BRING YOUR STORY INTO FOCUS.**

How can we make York Region more inclusive? Visit MyPortal to register for a dialogue session from May 25 to June 9, 2016. If you require any accommodation due to disability contact us at [inclusion@york.ca](mailto:inclusion@york.ca)

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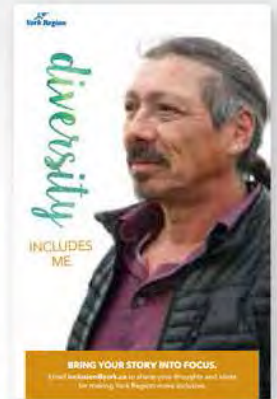


**York Region**

*diversity*  
INCLUDES ME

**BRING YOUR STORY INTO FOCUS.**

At least one of the York Region Inclusion Dialogue sessions is yours. The more voices heard, the better. Your story will get shared with the community by connecting with @york.ca



**York Region**

*diversity*  
INCLUDES ME

**BRING YOUR STORY INTO FOCUS.**

Send [inclusion@york.ca](mailto:inclusion@york.ca) for shared your thoughts and ideas for making York Region more inclusive.




**York Region**

*diversity*  
IS NOT ALWAYS WHO YOU LOVE

**BRING YOUR STORY INTO FOCUS.**

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**York Region**

*diversity*  
INCLUDES ME

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**York Region**

Accessibility

**Diversity and Inclusion**

*diversity*  
AND INCLUSION

Bring your story into focus

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*diversity*  
AND INCLUSION

**BRING YOUR STORY INTO FOCUS.**

*diversity*  
AND INCLUSION

**BRING YOUR STORY INTO FOCUS.**

*diversity*  
AND INCLUSION

**BRING YOUR STORY INTO FOCUS.**

## Continuing the Strategy

### **Creating a Welcoming and Inclusive Community**

In April 2016, York Regional Council confirmed a new term of the Community Partnership Council. Members met in May and June of that year to discuss past efforts and successes. Using a process called Results Based Accountability, they identified gaps and opportunities to build on previous work and move the strategy forward to greater success.

The Community Partnership Council decided that efforts should focus on two broad community results: economic and social integration for newcomers to York Region.

Using the Results Based Accountability method helped them to define social and economic integration, measure results and identify new actions and determine the resources needed to put an action plan into place.

The decision to target two results commits the Community Partnership Council's energy to deal with the main issues for newcomers - finding good jobs to support their families, feeling at home in York Region and connecting to their community.

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

One of the key recommendations of the first term of the Community Partnership Council was the development of a charter to promote diversity and inclusion. This commitment to promote understanding among different cultures and faiths is a necessary action for the Region to nurture its reputation as a welcoming and inclusive community.

In 2017, the Community Partnership Council restated its commitment to assist in the development of the Charter as the basis of its work.



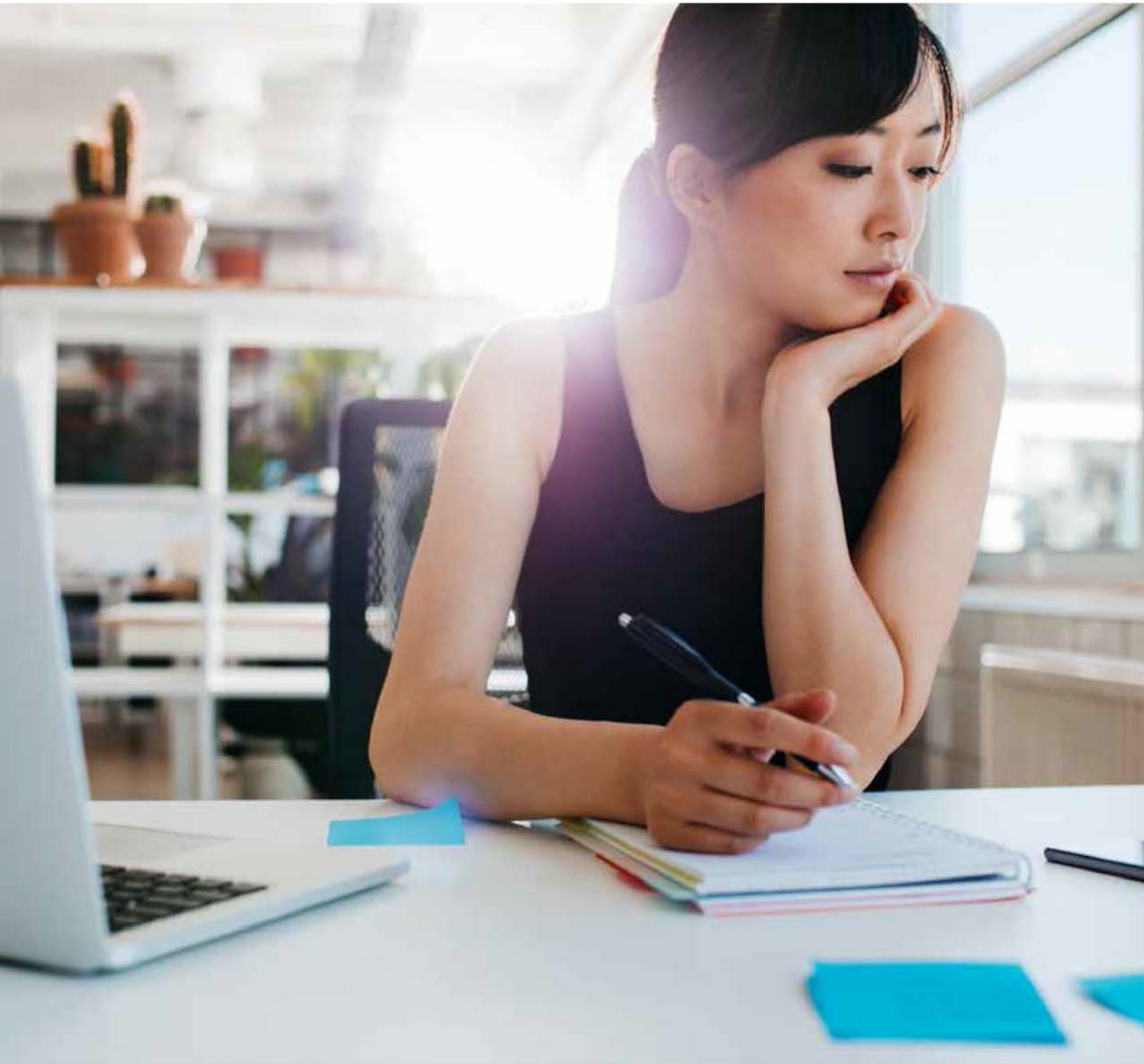
## Continuing the Strategy

### **The Ongoing Vision for York Region**

York Region is welcoming and inclusive – a cohesive community that openly receives newcomers and promotes social equity. It is a community that understands the needs of newcomers and facilitates their full participation in all aspects of community life, the economy and Canadian society.

### **Founding Priorities to Guide the York Region Newcomer Strategy**

- Build community capacity to support adequate resources, partnerships, promotion of community awareness and acceptance of newcomers
- Continue to improve collaboration and knowledge across sectors and all levels of government
- Support the continued development of the Welcome Centre model and the York Region Immigration Portal
- Improve access for newcomers to York Region's labour market
- Help address issues of social isolation
- Consider language barriers and their impact on all areas of integration



## Economic Integration

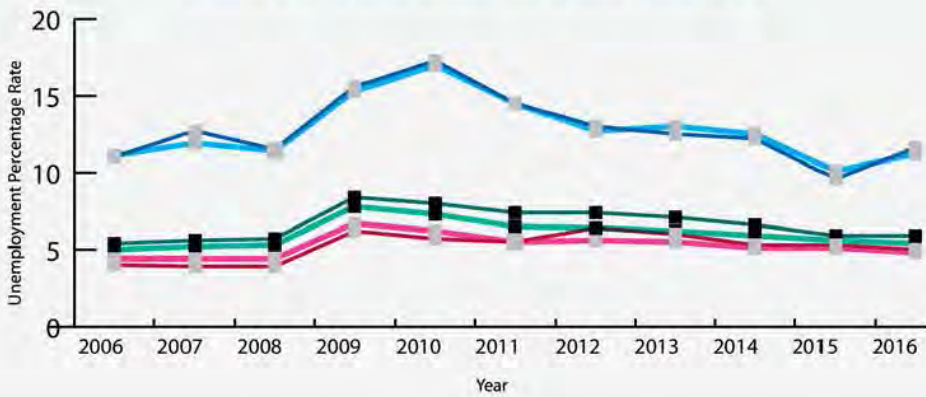
Newcomers experience economic integration when they feel:

- Valued for their contribution to the economic growth of the community
- Appropriately employed, considering their skills and education
- Engaged in economic activities to achieve a livable household income

After arriving in Canada, newcomers find it can take years before their incomes catch up to the rest of the population, despite their skills and education. The unemployment rate of newcomers is likely to be twice as high as the unemployment rate of the general population.<sup>16</sup> Low-income rates are almost three times the rate of the rest of the population.<sup>17</sup>

Many arrive without English language skills to practice their profession. Sometimes newcomers find it difficult to have their credentials or university education recognized by Canadian employers. Learning new systems, finding adequate housing and childcare can make it more difficult to obtain suitable employment and as a result, newcomers often take the first job that they can get. While this is not the case for every person coming to Canada, it is a common hurdle and one that the strategy will address.

Unemployment Rate for Adults 25-54 by Immigrant Status:  
Ontario and Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)



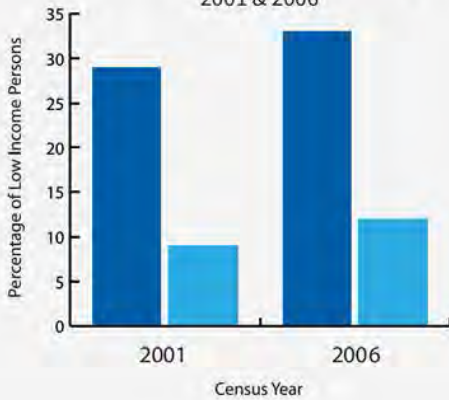
- Recent immigrants - Toronto CMA
- Recent immigrants - Ontario
- Total population - Toronto CMA
- Total population - Ontario
- Canadian born - Toronto CMA
- Canadian born - Ontario

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2006 to 2016.

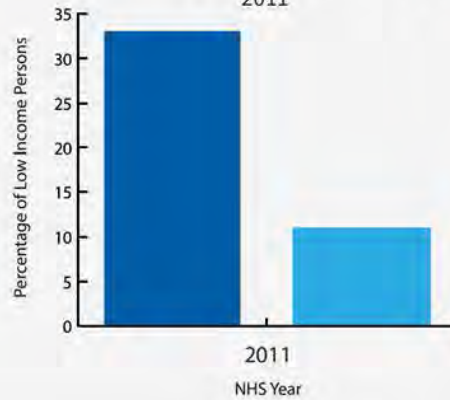
- Notes: 1. "Recent Immigrants" refers to immigrants who landed within 5 years prior to the survey.  
 2. Toronto CMA includes Toronto, York, Peel, Halton and Durham.

Comparison of Low Income Rates of Newcomers

Low Income Rates by Immigration Status for  
Population Aged 25 to 64 in York Region,  
2001 & 2006



Low Income Rates by Immigration Status for  
Population Aged 25 to 64 in York Region,  
2011



- Newcomers
- Overall Population

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2001 and 2006 Censuses and 2011 National Household Survey.

- Notes: 1. 2001 Census reports income data for year of 2000; 2006 Census reports that of 2005, 2011 NHS reports that of 2010.  
 2. Low Income Cut-Offs Before-Tax (LICO-BT) is used as measure.  
 3. Due the different methodologies, Census data should not be compared with NHS data.



## Economic Integration

**If so many newcomers are well educated and experienced, then why are more newcomers underemployed or unemployed or have lower incomes than the general population?** The reasons vary but could include:

- Language skills are lacking
- Accreditation of previous education may not be recognized
- Newcomers may work two jobs making it difficult to get ahead and losing skills they arrived with
- Discrimination

### **Why do the rates vary from year to year?**

Census data from Statistics Canada has shown that newcomers fared better economically in some years than others. There are reasons for this. In some years, the general economy was stronger so more newcomers were employed. The number of immigrants allowed into Canada and under what category (e.g., economic immigrant, family reunification, refugees) is set by the federal government each year. This may impact the job readiness of newcomers in a particular year. Changes to federal policies and funding for programs may also determine the economic success of newcomers at a particular point in time.



## Economic Integration Collective Actions 2017-2021

### Strengthen Newcomer Employability

- **Host 3rd Internationally Educated Professionals Conference**
- **Develop a business case to Enhance Newcomer Employability**
- **Advocate for additional bridging programs, language training and accreditation opportunities**

The next Internationally Educated Professionals Conference is planned for the fall of 2017. Its purpose is to provide Internationally Educated Professionals with a better understanding of York Region’s employment landscape with workshops to improve skills in finding employment and understanding of the Canadian employment culture. There will also be a focus on employers helping them to understand the benefits of diversity and inclusion.

Some newcomers still struggle to find employment despite having good education and skills. The Community Partnership Council will develop a case management model to address this gap within the employment system. Newcomers within the program will be able to gain specific skills and training needed to secure employment. This approach will also provide coaching and follow-up once the individual is employed.

When the business case for the model is complete, working with our partners, we will identify sources of funding for implementation and advocate for additional resources to support training.

### Promote Inclusive Workplaces

- **Develop communications campaign to promote and disseminate Diversity and Inclusion Tools for employers**
- **Support the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Charter**

A key feature of the 2017 Internationally Educated Professionals Conference will be a focus on employers to help them understand the benefits of diversity and inclusion and the tools that are available to assist them.

The Community Partnership Council will commit to actions developed under the Charter.

## Economic Integration

This strategy aims to help newcomers achieve economic integration. To succeed, the strategy will address the issue of newcomers not just finding employment, but finding employment that is more in keeping with their skills and education. The strategy aims to help employers understand the value of a diverse workforce, particularly in the new global market.

It will not be easy nor will it be completed quickly, but significant changes can be made when everyone works together.

All members of the Community Partnership Council will contribute in some way to make things better. A detailed work plan will be developed in 2017 to explain how these actions will be put in place.

### **How will York Region demonstrate that improvements have been made?**

Employment income and unemployment rates are the core indicators to show economic integration.

On an ongoing basis, York Region will track low income and unemployment rate for newcomers compared to the general population. Research will also be done to determine the percentage of newcomers considered to be underemployed compared to the general population. Underemployment refers to employed people who are in jobs that do not match their skills and education.

The strategy's measurement of success will be smaller differences in low income and underemployment rates newcomers and the general population.



## Social Integration

Newcomers who truly experience social integration:

- Feel at home in York Region
- Connect and engage with their communities
- Access required services when and where they need them

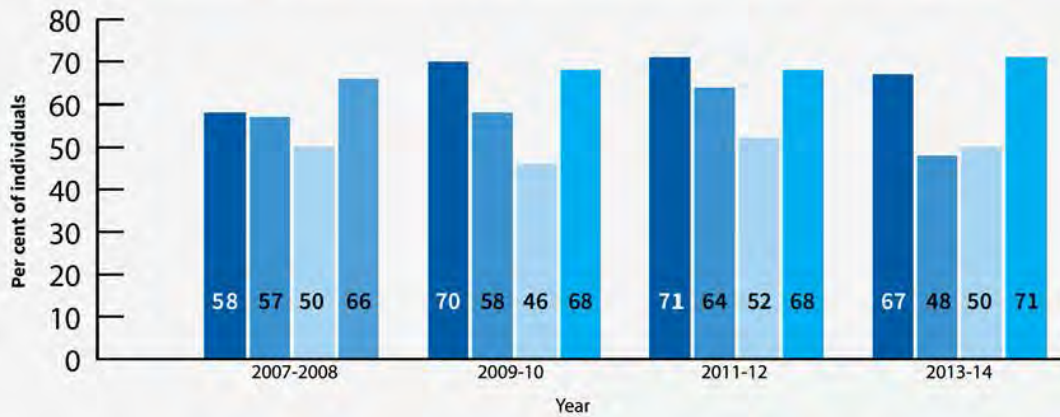
Newcomers to Canada arrive with great optimism for their own and their children's futures. They have chosen to be here and are excited about the new lives they will build. The first few months however, can be overwhelming. Over time, the hope is that newcomers will feel comfortable and be a part of the York Region community. Finding a job, going to school, feeling good about living here, making friends and using available services are all elements of social integration.

Canadian research has shown that social belonging is an important part of a newcomer's settlement.<sup>19</sup> In York Region, it is mostly a good news story, but there is still work to be done.

Per cent of individuals (age 12+) reporting a "very strong" or "somewhat strong" sense of belonging to their local community, York Region 2007-2008 to 2013-2014, newcomers and non-immigrants



Per cent of individuals (age 12+) who perceive their health as "excellent" or "very good", York Region 2007-2008 to 2013-2014, newcomers and non-immigrants



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2007-2014, Statistics Canada, Ontario Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

- Immigration within past 10 years
- Immigration between past 11-15 years
- Immigration more than 15 years
- Non-immigrants

## Social Integration

York Region residents have been surveyed about their perception of the impact immigration has in this community for several years. Does it have a positive or negative effect on York Region?

When comparing survey results from 2015 to 2016, there were increases in the belief that immigration had a positive impact in the labour market, community engagement, the local economy, heritage, leisure and culture. This is an encouraging increase and one that the Community Partnership Council through its support for social inclusion will continue to work on.

As shown in the charts on the previous page, the Canadian Community Health Survey captured recent newcomers' feelings of belonging in two different ways: by asking newcomers about their 'sense of belonging' to their local community and by asking how they rated their health. In this case, health means not only an absence of disease, but also physical, mental and social well-being.

The rate of newcomers and non-immigrants reporting their overall sense of belonging as "very good" or "excellent" is similar. While the perception of sense of belonging remains high over the years and very comparable to the general population, immigrants' perception of their health declines over time.

In any particular year, changes to the economy, attitudes of other residents, availability of additional support services such as language training, mental health services or childcare may determine if newcomers feel they belong.



## Social Integration Collective Actions 2017-2021

### Address Information Needs

- Update [yorkwelcome.ca](http://yorkwelcome.ca)
- Develop resource of services available to newcomers
- Map community assets including formal and informal services

Service systems can be challenging to navigate. To address this, the [yorkwelcome.ca](http://yorkwelcome.ca) portal will be refreshed to better meet the needs of newcomers and service providers.

Working with community partners, a one-stop resource will be developed for newcomer services.

York Region and other stakeholders are currently mapping community assets, which include service providers, community associations, and public institutions such as schools, faith groups, and libraries. Coordinating efforts could lead to a comprehensive resource map and easier access to services.

### Increase Local Service Planning

- Advocate for Welcome Centre community hub model
- Develop local capacity to respond to newcomers needs

Welcome Centres are unique hubs for newcomer settlement, language and employment services. Advocating for Welcome Centres to expand and sustain the services offered within their locations will allow newcomers to access a greater range of services.

York Region's local municipalities have knowledge and experience in planning and programming for newcomers, as do Welcome Centres and other local service providers. Creating an opportunity with these partners to support local planning will assist with community engagement and capacity building.

York Region is a partner with York University on a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council project grant to better understand and complement the newcomer settlement process.

Data will be updated using 2016 Census information and other sources to better understand the profile of immigrants arriving in York Region.

### Strengthen Social Cohesion

- Identify and support local opportunities to strengthen social cohesion within communities

The goal of social cohesion is to positively engage all residents within a community. This is accomplished by promoting welcoming and inclusive communities to all residents.

The Community Partnership Council will continue to work on their original mandate to build social inclusion by securing funds to support community groups in developing or promoting projects that help build welcoming and inclusive communities. Municipalities already support this work by hosting and supporting festivals and cultural events. Working with municipalities, we will develop a project to further promote welcoming and inclusive communities.



## Social Integration

This strategy aims to help newcomers and all residents feel like they belong. Isolation and a lack of ability to connect with the resources they need impacts the social integration of immigrants. It is important that newcomers or immigrants who need health and other services know how, when and where to access them. To succeed, this strategy must help newcomers remain optimistic about living in Canada and York Region.

The chart to the left shows the collective actions the Community Partnership Council and York Region will take to help newcomers not just settle but socially integrate into the community and feel comfortable calling York Region home. In particular, the strategy will focus on advocating for diversity and inclusion by engaging with the community in different ways and helping York Region and its partners adopt the Diversity and Inclusion Charter. A detailed work plan will be developed in 2017 to explain how these actions will come about and how the Community Partnership Council will follow-up to see what kind of impact was made.

### **How will York Region demonstrate that improvements have been made?**

Social integration is different for everyone, and there are many different ways to show how newcomers perceive how comfortable they feel in York Region. Continuing to track the perception of social belonging and overall health will be the best way to demonstrate improvements for those who live in York Region.

Measuring diversity and inclusion or social cohesion to ensure York Region continues to be recognized as a welcoming community is more complex and will require additional research and analysis in the years ahead.

The strategy's measurement of success will be to show that newcomers report a high level of social belonging and overall health over time when compared to the general population.



## Going Forward

Canada is a nation of immigrants and has been for over 500 years. With the exception of the indigenous peoples of Canada, everyone came here from somewhere else and built lives for themselves where they could feel at home and connect with others. It can be difficult for some Canadians to recognize that others who came afterwards will need to find their way as residents and citizens of Canada. Opportunities to build respect and acceptance by others to strengthen social cohesion will need to be encouraged.

In developing this strategy, York Region hopes to demonstrate its continued and sincere commitment to leadership on settlement and integration issues for newcomers so all residents can thrive. Each member of the Community Partnership Council is determined to move this strategy forward.

In the coming months, the Community Partnership Council will set up working groups to accomplish the goals and vision set out in this document. A detailed work plan will be developed to show how the actions will be put into place. The plan will be reported upon. During the course of implementing the strategy, advocacy activities to support stakeholders, partners and newcomers will continue.

Integration issues are complex and, undoubtedly, additional research will be needed as the plan moves forward. Community feedback will also be sought.

These collaborative actions to support economic and social integration will take shape over time. York Region will demonstrate the successful changes and the impact that its partnerships have made.

For more information, please visit [YorkWelcome.ca](http://YorkWelcome.ca)

## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> A. & Peck, C. (2015). Analysis of the York Region Welcome Centre Model. Calgary, AB: Constellation Consulting Group Ltd.
- <sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census.
- <sup>3</sup> The Regional Municipality of York, Clause 6 in Report No. 7 of Committee of the Whole – Planning and Economic Development held on April 23, 2015.
- <sup>4</sup> The Regional Municipality of York, Economic Development Action Plan 2016 – 2021.
- <sup>5</sup> York Regional Local Immigration Partnership, Leading Change. Building Community. York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy Final Report, 2015.
- <sup>6</sup> The Regional Municipality of York, Corporate Services Long Range Planning, Population Cultural Forecast, 2016 to 2031.
- <sup>7</sup> Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Admissions of Permanent Residents by Province/Territory and Census Division of Intended Destination, 2010 to 2015.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey.
- <sup>10</sup> Citizenship and Immigration Canada, RDM, Permanent Residents Data Cube, 2012.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Departmental Overview, 2016.
- <sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> The Regional Municipality of York, Planning and Economic Development Branch and Statistic's Canada Labour Force Survey, 3-month moving average, unaadjusted for seasonality.
- <sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2006 - 20016
- <sup>17</sup> Statistics Canada 2001 and 2006 Censuses and 2011 National Household Survey
- <sup>18</sup> Employment Rate of Immigrants – An Update since the Recession Ray D. Bollman, FACTSHEET P2P October 2015.
- <sup>19</sup> Increasing Newcomers' Sense of Belonging, K. Neufeld et al October 2016, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada



The Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1  
1-877-464-9675 | york.ca



# 2017-2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy

Presentation to Committee of the Whole

**Lisa Gonsalves**

May 11, 2017

(Refer to Item F.2.1)

# Working Together



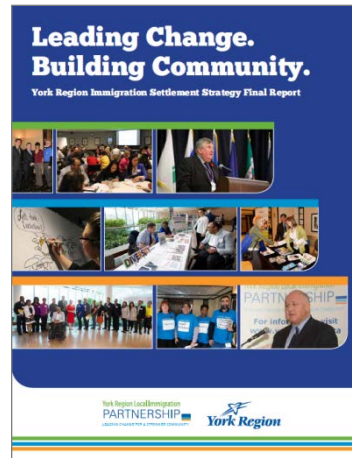
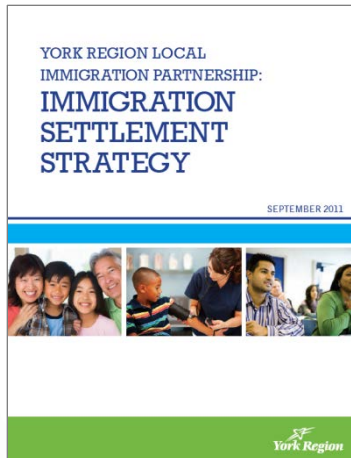
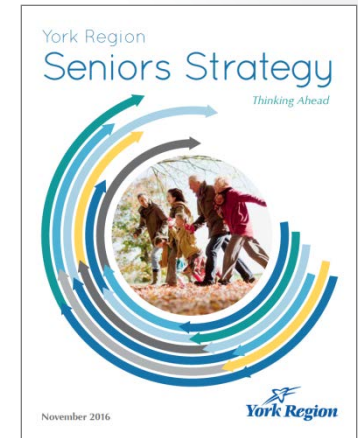
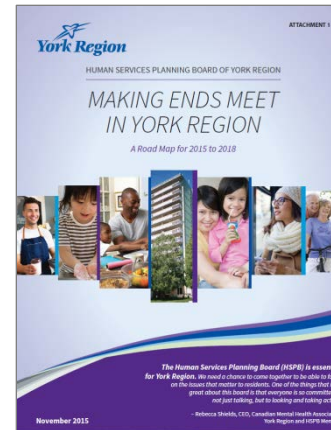
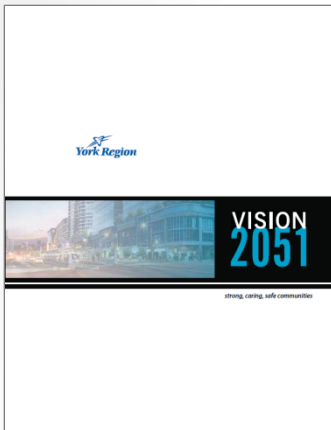
# Local Services



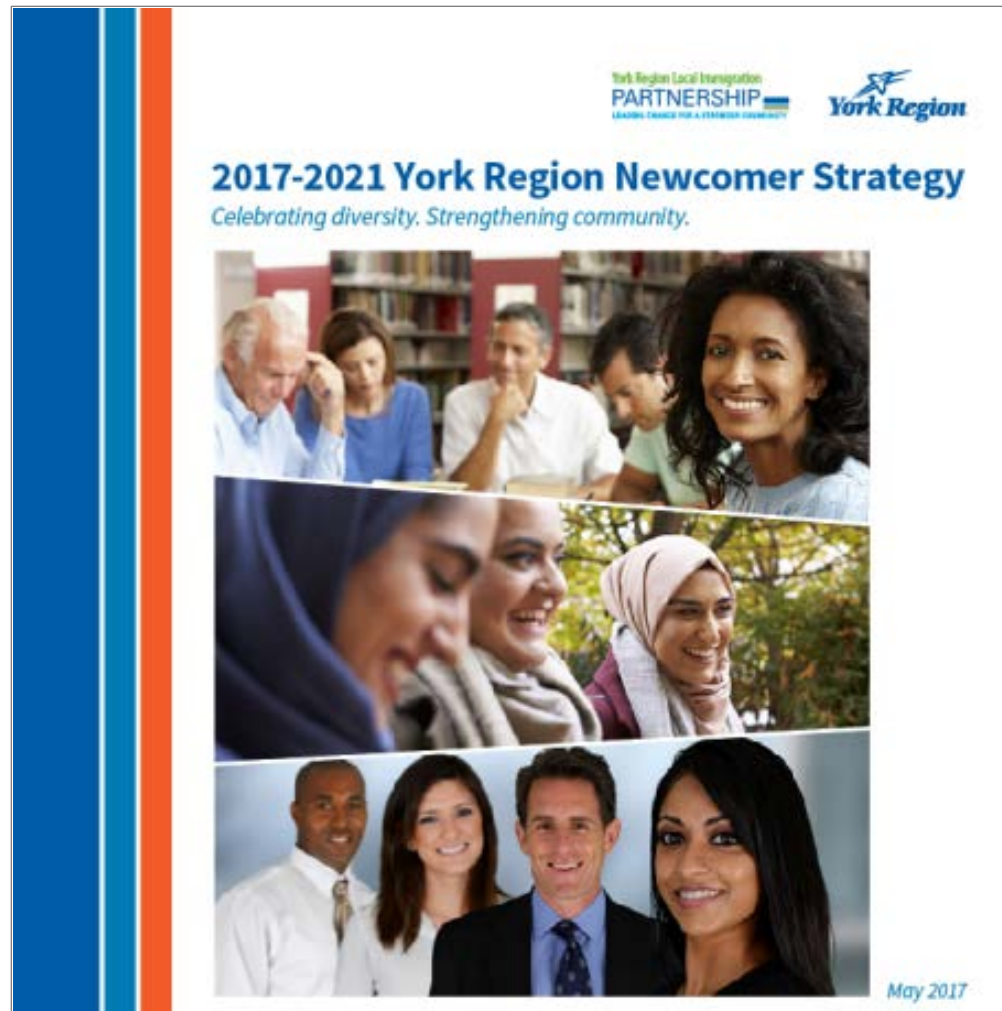
Welcome  
Centre  
Immigrant  
Services



# Alignment with Other Strategies



# 2017-2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy



# Economic Integration



## Economic Integration Collective Actions 2017-2021

### **Strengthen Newcomer Employability**

- Host 3rd Internationally Educated Professionals (IEP) Conference
- Develop a business case to Enhance Newcomer Employability
- Advocate for additional bridging programs, language training and accreditation opportunities

### **Promote Inclusive Workplaces**

- Develop communications campaign to promote and disseminate Diversity and Inclusion Tools for employers
- Support the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Charter

# Social Integration



## Social Integration Collective Actions 2017-2021

### **Address Information Needs**

- Update [yorkwelcome.ca](http://yorkwelcome.ca)
- Develop resource of services available to newcomers
- Map community assets including formal and informal services

### **Increase Local Service Planning**

- Advocate for Welcome Centre community hub model
- Develop local capacity to respond to newcomers needs

### **Strengthen Social Cohesion**

- Identify and support local opportunities to strengthen social cohesion within communities

# Next Steps

- Approval of the 2017-2021 York Region Newcomer Strategy
- Create a detailed work plan
- Implement
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> IEP Conference
  - Engage municipalities on local solutions that create social connections

