

# INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES

## CONVERSATION STARTER



The purpose of this “conversation starter” is to provide VIP stakeholders with some key facts on the topic of newcomers’ workforce participation. The information, from current databases and research studies and serves as starting point for further conversations

### Key Facts

#### Labour Force Participation

- In 2013/2014, 63,679 clients used settlement information and orientation services and 21,284 clients used English language training services available across British Columbia (BC report, 2014).
- Under the new criteria for receiving settlement services determined by CIC, Canadian citizens and non-permanent residents are not eligible. Only permanent residents are eligible to receive settlement services funded by CIC (Funding Guidelines: British Columbia, CIC 2013).
- Federal funding for settlement services in B.C. has increased from \$39.5 million in 2005 to \$95.4 million in 2013. (CIC Summit Presentation: Settlement Programs in British Columbia and the Yukon.)

#### Income Wage Gaps

- In 2010, immigrant men earned an average annual income of \$60,330 in comparison to \$70,210 for Canadian-born men. Immigrant women’s average salaries were more comparable to that of Canadian-born women at \$46,450 and \$49,870, respectively (Twenty Years in the Careers of Immigrant and Native-born Workers, Morrisette and Sultan, 2013).
- The 2011 National Household Survey estimated that 34 percent of recent immigrants in Vancouver have incomes below the low-income threshold.

#### Education

- In 2013, 44 percent of permanent resident immigrants to BC between the ages of 25 and 54 had university degrees and 16 percent had a post-secondary certificate or diploma (CIC Research Data Mart PR Q4 2013 Extracts, CIC landing data; BC Stats).
- An estimated 18 percent of established immigrants in Van-

cover older than 15 do not hold a certificate, diploma or degree, compared to 14 percent of recent immigrants and 17 percent of non-immigrants (National Household Survey, 2011).

#### Immigrant Class

- In January 2015, applications from skilled workers began to be processed through Canada’s Express Entry System. Under this system, processing time for applicants has been reduced to six months or less. Express Entry pre-assesses workers’ qualifications and allows them to find jobs through a Job Bank that matches them with Canadian employers prior to their arrival in Canada. (Express Entry, CIC website).

#### Economic Immigrants

- In 2011, 1,021 permanent immigrants were admitted to British Columbia under the Canadian Experience Class, 4,306 through the Provincial Nominee Program, and 10,031 through the Federal Skilled Workers Program (AMSSA Info Sheet. Issue 5. 2012).

#### Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP)

- In 2013, there were 79,568 foreign workers working in British Columbia (BC Stats 2014 and CIC research data).
- In 2014, the top five source countries for temporary foreign workers entering BC in 2013 were Mexico, Philippines, United States of America, India and the United Kingdom (BC Stats 2014 and CIC research data).

#### Gaps and Challenges

- A 2011 study, Immigrants and Low-Paid Work Persistent Problems, Enduring Consequences, revealed that educated and skilled newcomers often experience difficulty finding employment in their field. Among the study’s other findings were:
  - Lack of Canadian work experience and employers who

do not recognize foreign credentials are significant barriers to newcomers finding suitable employment.

- Many newcomers are forced to work in low-skilled and low-paid jobs.
- Working in low paying jobs immigrants struggle financially and find it difficult to provide for their children. These people are also more likely to experience health problems, suffer from lower self-esteem and face discrimination.
- There is a gap between immigrants' perception of the work they expect to find in the Canadian labour market and the employment they find after they arrive.
- Newcomers expressed the need to make job-related settlement services more accessible and more practical for immigrants to gain Canadian experience.
- Refugees, family class and business immigrants are worse off economically compared to economic immigrants who entered Canada as skilled workers (Javdani, Jacks and Pendakur, 2012).
- Employers face a number of information barriers when hiring newcomers, including difficulty assessing the experience and education of immigrants (LMI for Employers

and Economic Immigrants in Canada, Rai, 2013; Knocking Down Barriers Faced By New Immigrants To Canada, Alexander, Burleton and Fong, 2012).

- Many regulatory organizations experience difficulty in evaluation of foreign credentials and experience due to a lack of resources and capacity to conduct research on foreign credentials or lack of information about educational institutions in some source countries (Solutions for Access: A Report on the Access to Licensure in Regulated Professions for Internationally Trained Professionals in British Columbia, MOSAIC. 2006).
- The 2012 BC Review of Foreign Qualifications Recognition found four key barriers faced by immigrants in gaining foreign credential recognition. The barriers the review identified were lack of information about licensure processes; lower English skills impact certification; requirement of Canadian work experience to achieve licensure; and gaps in technical knowledge make it harder to find work (Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training 2014 BC Yukon Presentation Integration Summit).
- Studies have also proven that newcomers with non-English sounding names and international experience are more likely to be discriminated against during the hiring process. (Oreopoulous studies, 2001 and 2009.)

2011 NHS Labour Market Outcomes Statistics				
Immigration Status	Total Labour Force Status	Participation Rate	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate
Total Labour Force Status	518,970	67.3	62.5	7.1
Participation Rate	247,420	74.3	69.1	7.1
Immigrants	249,585	60.9	56.6	7.1
Before 1971	33,350	32.4	31.0	4.3
1971 to 1980	37,665	59.4	56.5	4.8
1981 to 1990	41,970	67.0	62.6	6.5
1991 to 2000	70,085	66.6	61.7	7.4
2001 to 2011	66,520	66.2	60.2	9.0
2001 to 2005	29,780	66.8	61.2	8.4
2006 to 2011	36,735	65.7	59.4	9.5
Non-Permanent Residents	21,965	60.1	56.4	6.2