



***The Policy Roundtable Mobilizing  
Professions and Trades***

# **Towards A Comprehensive Labour Market Strategy for Immigrants:**

***Part 1: A Vision for Immigrant Labour Market Participation***

***and***

***Part 2: Considerations for a New Approach to Funding and  
Implementing Immigrant Employment Initiatives***



***A Prompt Discussion Paper***

***March 2005***

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# **Towards A Comprehensive Labour Market Strategy for Immigrants:**

## ***Part 1***

### ***A Vision for Immigrant Labour Market Participation***

by Nikhat Rasheed

in collaboration with Gurmeet Bambrah and Faviola Fernandez

**and**

## ***Part 2***

### ***Considerations for a New Approach to Funding and Implementing Immigrant Employment Initiatives***

by Centre for Research in Education and Human Services

## **A PROMPT DISCUSSION PAPER**



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## Foreword

Over the years as more and more highly skilled professionals have come to Canada under the point system introduced in 1967, they have been increasingly faced with systemic barriers cutting off their access to the professions in Canada. It was as a consequence of these systemic barriers that a number of immigrant community, service delivery associations and informal groups came into existence.

When the Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades (PROMPT) was formed in 2003 by the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, it created a vehicle through which immigrant associations and community groups could engage collectively in the development of policy solutions to address and challenge the systemic barriers immigrants face in participating in the labour market.

Over twenty groups are now actively engaged in this initiative. For more information about PROMPT see our website at [www.promptinfo.ca](http://www.promptinfo.ca). Participants engaged in PROMPT include such diverse associations and groups as:

- The **Association for Access to the Professions of Planning and Architecture** – AAPPA hopes to connect, cooperate and collaborate with individuals and organizations for the utilization of the rich and varied experiences of Internationally trained professional planners, architects, designers and technologists for the purpose of empowering AAPPA members to gain a strong foothold in the Canadian professional work environment.
- The **Canadian Association of Latin American Professionals Tradespeople and Entrepreneurs** - CALAPTE assists, collaborates and empowers Latin American professionals, tradespeople and entrepreneurs
- The **Chinese Professionals Association of Canada** - CPAC is a national organization serving and advocating for the interests of its members and the Chinese community
- The **Council of Agencies Serving South Asians** - CASSA is an umbrella organization of agencies, groups, and individuals serving the South Asian Community; its goal is to empower the South Asian community
- MOHANDÉS - the **Canadian Society of Iranian Engineers and Architects** - is a non-political, non-religious and non-profit organization, which serves Iranian Engineers and Architects in Canada

This paper in two parts ‘A Vision for Immigrant Labour Market Participation’ and “Considerations for a New Approach to Funding and Implementing Immigrant Employment Initiatives” is one of a series of PROMPT papers offering policy recommendations towards improving the economic and social integration of immigrants to Canada who are professionals and tradespeople. The focus of this study is on the use of public funds in promoting access to professions and trades, and other employment for immigrants. PROMPT recognizes that other solutions beyond government funding are also needed—a number of these are addressed in our other policy papers, available on our website. This report should therefore be read as one of a number of recommended policy directions.

PROMPT undertook this research to explore and enhance the foundations for a comprehensive strategy for immigrant labour market participation, including principles and employment initiatives that are currently available to immigrants. This is important research, coming on the heels as it does of the various other research that support the view that the many highly-skilled immigrants of the last decade or two have not been well-served by existing strategies. Aside from invoking principles to form the foundation of a comprehensive strategy, this paper provides an overview of the present situation of employment initiatives, both their funding and implementation, and based on the research offers a new approach for future directions. PROMPT has provided its perspective on the findings related to future directions and offers additional recommendations. While the focus of the findings is on Ontario, the recommendations directly address the need for greater policy and program coordination and therefore have applicability to national, provincial and municipal levels of government.

Our intention through this research is to make recommendations to improve opportunities for immigrant employment. Part 1 identifies principles that must be introduced or enhanced in a vision for a labour market participation strategy for immigrants. The scope of Part 2 of this paper was limited to public funds invested in employment supports. We hope to promote reflection and immediate action for increased effectiveness in strategies for immigrant labour market participation and the funding and implementation of employment initiatives. However, this process highlighted the need for future research to explore the barriers that limit the entrepreneurial ability and spirit of immigrants, and to identify the leadership and regulatory change necessary to promote immigrant entrepreneurship.

## **Acknowledgements**

The production of a paper such as this is, of course, the work of many. We would like to thank all those who contributed to this research study, and in particular want to acknowledge:

- The roundtable participants of PROMPT who played a vital role in all stages of the research from its initial identification as a PROMPT priority back in early 2003. Throughout the process, PROMPT members contributed significantly to the shaping and critique of the paper.
- The working group members who showed dedication in guiding the entire research process and playing a lead role. A particular thank you to Josie Di Zio of OCASI for giving so generously of her time in promoting the on-line survey and in contributing extensively to the development of the Funding Summary Chart.
- The almost 400 internationally educated professionals (IEPs) who passionately added their voice to the research and foregrounded the urgency for needed change.
- The key informants and focus group participants who overcame busy schedules - particularly over the summer months - to share their insights and expertise.
- Survey respondents (immigrants, service providers, employers and civil servants) who graciously took the time to inform us of their opinions.
- Zheni Nasi, an internationally educated professional, who willingly took on the role of expert reader and provided rich feedback on the paper.
- The staff of CASSA, in particular Uzma Shakir for her leadership and passion, and to Valeria Vicco and Farrukh Saleem for their invaluable role and unshakeable commitment to supporting the work of PROMPT.
- Nikhat Rasheed, Gurmeet Bambrah and Faviola Fernandez for conceiving and writing Part 1 of the paper.
- The research team of the Centre for Research and Education in Human Services, under the leadership of Rich Janzen, for their skill, dedication and flexibility in navigating the research process and report that form Part 2 of the paper.

The collective input from everyone has helped to make this study a truly collaborative effort. Again, thank you.

And last, but certainly not least, a sincere thank you to Canadian Heritage and the Voluntary Sector Initiative through which PROMPT has been made possible. The progressive vision of Canadian Heritage and the Voluntary Sector Initiative has enabled PROMPT to give voice to thousands of internationally educated professionals who have come to Canada to contribute their skills, expertise, wisdom and passion. This type of government leadership - that entails risk and gives community the tools to organize - is innovative and vital. We would like to make a special mention of Marcelle Gibson our project officer; Marcelle has provided

constant leadership, vision and support to the work of PROMPT. Marcelle, you are truly a champion. Thank you.

## **Part 1: ‘A Vision for the Labour Market Participation of Immigrants’**

*By Nikhat Rasheed*

*Written in collaboration with Gurmeet Bambrah and Faviola Fernandez*

## **Introduction**

It is often acknowledged that Canada's history has been created by the varied nation-building efforts of its successive waves of immigrants. In the 21st century, Canada faces a new reality in immigration – the change to a point system for immigration to Canada in the 1960's and 1970's has brought in new immigrants from non-Western sources. Statistics Canada reports of the 2001 census show that the majority of immigrants today come from Asia (58%), Carribean/South/Central America(11%), Eastern Europe(18%) and Africa(8%). In addition, the shift in weightage of points to skills, qualifications, and related work experience has opened the door to the largest number of highly-skilled and highly-educated immigrants ever seen in Canada before, with the underlying assumption that they will continue the tradition of immigrant contribution to nation-building, through the exercise of their skills.

Today's immigrants are keen to be partners in nation-building, which includes both meeting personal and community economic aspirations, as well as strengthening social institutions. Immigrants today bring global know-how, skills, ideas, cultural knowledge, experience and aspirations with them. They hope to be part of an inclusive Canada that celebrates them and allows them the opportunities to fulfil their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to nation-building.

Canada's legislation and policies have acknowledged many of the fundamental rights of its newcomers. Considering the diversity of backgrounds of today's immigrants to Canada, the policy of multiculturalism needs to be strengthened, so that immigrants can realize their true potential. This will involve the settled community's investment in learning about the rest of the world; it will also act to prevent and remedy the unfortunate situation that many recent newcomers have found themselves in – highly skilled and educated but underemployed or unemployed because of the mainstream community's disconnect with them. With many immigrants working in lower-skill level jobs than their potential merits, as well as in fields unrelated to their fields of expertise<sup>1</sup>, Canada is unwittingly creating a social underclass of the very people it assumes it has integrated.

Canada's ability and willingness to innovate and integrate immigrants to realize their full human potential need to be re-assessed; it risks the perception that even as it brings in immigrants, it subjects them to a system that infringes on some of their fundamental rights: their right to free choice of employment, equal opportunity and equitable treatment, to their aspirations and dreams and ultimately, their right to being equal citizens of Canada.

Immigrants have always been part of the driving force of social, economic and political innovation in this country; as new Canadians they will continue to participate and drive innovation as they always have and continue to become leaders of the future. But for their dreams to be realized, proactive planning needs to be in place.

PROMPT's <sup>2</sup> vision for Canada is for it to be an active leader - in facilitating this change and of being the leader of one of the most diverse nations in the world. It should proclaim its badge of multiculturalism proudly and set an example as a country where all citizens are

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<sup>1</sup> 47% are in jobs unrelated to their previous training – Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (2003): The Facts Are In: Newcomer Experiences in Accessing Regulated Professions in Ontario

<sup>2</sup> A list of PROMPT's members may be found at: <http://www.promptinfo.ca>

equal, regardless of whether they are Canadian-born, earlier or recently arrived immigrants, women, aboriginal or visible minorities.

In order to embrace this vision, Canada has to internalize some fundamental, universal principles and values that lie beneath the actions and thoughts of every individual, every community - internalization that has as its end goal the transformation of the normative frameworks of every institution.

## **Good Governance**

Essentially, all issues related to the changing reality of Canada, must relate back to the critical issue of governance. "Governance is the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and private sector. It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions— achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action. It is the rules, institutions and practices that set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organizations and firms. Governance, including its social, political and economic dimensions, operates at every level of human enterprise, be it the household, village, municipality, nation, region or globe."<sup>3</sup>

As the concepts of human rights, democratisation and democracy, the rule of law, civil society, decentralised power sharing, and sound public administration, gain importance and relevance as a society develops into a more sophisticated political system, governance evolves into good governance.<sup>4</sup> Good governance also includes efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, participation, accountability... pluralism... accessibility... and devolution.<sup>5</sup>

However, good in itself is a subjective value-laden term. The new definitions of governance that have emerged in recent years include not only institutions of national government, but also those of local and global governance. Governance is a more broad-based process which encompasses state-society interactions and partnerships. This is considered a process-based, rather than structure-based framework of governance. It includes a range of organisations, public and private, and the complex relationships between them. In this new governance there is plurality of participating actors like institutions of local governance, civil society organisations (non-governmental organizations, social movements, cooperatives and civic organisations), private corporations and other market institutions.<sup>6</sup>

It is this 'process-based' framework of governance within which universal principles and values must be adopted and internalized. An objective process must be created so that governance cannot be manipulated by fluctuating political concerns and allegiances. This process must result in the integration of immigrants and other vulnerable groups as equal partners in terms of employment and of settlement on an equitable basis. The internalization of universal principles and values into the process of governance will ensure that outcomes are equitable, and the various flows of funding and resource sharing across all levels of

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<sup>3</sup> UNDP Strategy Note on Governance for Human development, 2004

<sup>4</sup> The European Commission Communication on Governance, 2003

<sup>5</sup> Laporte, Robert (2002): "Governance – A Global Perspective," paper presented at South Asia Regional Conference, Kathmandu (Nepal), February 20

<sup>6</sup> Jessop (1998) cited in Jayal, N.G and Sudha Pai (2001): Democratic Governance in India – Challenges of Poverty, Development and Identity

government and between various players and stakeholders will all be evaluated through their resonance with these principles. A commitment to good governance is thus, the overarching guiding code.

## **Universal Principles and Values**

### ***I Equity***

Equity is a central principle in good governance. PROMPT's definition of equity is "a vigilant, on-going dynamic process that recognizes:

- Diversity of peoples, their common humanity, intrinsic worth and dignity, and;
- Differential relations of power and material circumstances between groups in society whether through historical, present or evolving circumstances that require interventions to rebalance."<sup>7</sup>

Existing governance structures do not lend themselves readily to equitable funding and employment. Equity is synergistic with democratic values. Democracy demands that all people be treated equally. The creation of an immigrant underclass would be an undemocratic phenomenon. Democracy demands that support to immigrants for equitable access to employment is made a priority as an act of rebalancing to restore equality.

It is only natural to assume that if funding structures are equitable, that the outcomes themselves will be equitable as well. For example, it may be postulated that funding on a per capita basis is the most equitable. Further weighting by systemic, social disadvantage, geographical concentration of disadvantaged communities or other considerations, would then create a funding stream that is independent of subjective biases. Over the years, this funding process would be fine-tuned to reflect the changing reality of the day. By creating a process, thus, governance in this case would be based on continued principles that would stand the test of time and fluctuating political allegiances.

The same would hold true for licensing and regulatory processes that would have to be restructured so as to become equitable, and provide the greatest access for immigrants. The word, 'access', in itself would be rendered irrelevant in the 'equitable ideal' because immigrants would no longer need access to regulated professions and trades. Equivalency - the notion that foreign education and experience are as equally recognized and valued as local education and experience - is a cornerstone of equity. By the very virtue of their equal and merit-evaluated experience and training, immigrants would be able to practise their professions as easily as Canadian-schooled professionals. Thus, discriminatory requirements such as the one year Canadian experience requirement for engineers in Ontario, for example, would be scrapped, if equity was incorporated into the governance process.

Equity has to be internalized as a universal value. But how does one do this? Even when equity has been legislated, it has not succeeded in realizing its full, transformative value on broader society. The legislation of equity can have a double-edged effect. While legislating equity has drawn attention to the importance of this principle in the process of mainstreaming disadvantaged groups, it may also have had the unfortunate effect of marginalizing the very population it seeks to serve. Risks exist. From a lack of understanding of the principle, employers may set mechanistic quotas to meet their diversity 'targets'. Negative perceptions

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<sup>7</sup> PROMPT policy paper (2004): Recasting Equity – A Conceptual Framework

of employees hired under this requirement may be created. In its simplistic implementation, it may also undermine immigrants because it draws attention away from their merit and potential, erode their confidence in their own abilities, and reduce acceptance among some in the Canadian-born population of immigrants as legitimate partners in the labour force. Tension may be created among employers, the Canadian-born population and immigrants.

Immigrants have reported the experience of being disconnected from the mainstream, where they would have had the possibility of equality of rights due to them tested and evolved into equitable employment outcomes enjoyed by others in the mainstream.<sup>8</sup> Skilled immigrants in regulated professions have found themselves drawn into a web of regulatory legislation designed for a 'ghost group' that did not have the same level of skills and experience as themselves. Employment equity legislation, or more likely its misapplication, may paradoxically have worked to marginalize skilled immigrants because the majority of the immigrants in question may have only been recognized by their status as visible minorities in the Canadian context and not on the basis of their skills. In a position of disconnect with the mainstream community and relegated to a presumed position of disadvantage, skilled immigrants have taken on an unwarranted aspect of risk for employers. It is not unsurprising then that many employers began to impose inaccessible and discriminatory conditions such as 'Canadian experience', through overt or subtle means, on an otherwise talented pool of labour.

In order to not repeat these consequences, equity needs to be an internalized norm of individuals and institutions – to bring this about is our collective challenge. If all individuals believe intrinsically that immigrants (amongst others) have legitimate access to employment based on their merits (because of foreign education, experience and training, which are also then considered equal to Canadian education, experience and training) then the principle of equity will have been demonstrably internalized and immigrants will have a level playing field. When there is respect for the attributes of peoples from all over the world, represented by Canada's immigrants, equity has a better chance of being realized.

The economic costs of the unrealized principle of equity are borne not only by immigrants. Canada, as a whole, is significantly affected. The economic impact of immigrant skill underutilization costs Canada about 2 billion dollars per year, due to the reduced value of the work done by immigrants whose qualifications are not recognized in the workplace.<sup>9</sup> Systemic barriers resulting in the underemployment of all disadvantaged groups (immigrants, women, visible minorities and aboriginals) costs the Canadian economy is around 50 billion dollars annually, or, almost 5% of Gross Domestic Product.<sup>10</sup>

In today's increasingly interconnected world, global experience and education should be highly valued. Corporations and communities that recognize the interdependent ties of Canada with the rest of the world, especially through its immigrants, and value global experience and education, will benefit from their diverse, educated workforces; those who discriminate against it, due to their own insecurities and fear of change, will, unfortunately, be left behind.

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<sup>8</sup> See Footnote 7

<sup>9</sup> Reitz, Jeffery (2005): Tapping Immigrants' Skills

<sup>10</sup> Harvey and Blakely cited in Dib, Kamal (2004): Diversity Works

As a principle, equity must be embraced by all. It dignifies all human beings, creating the opportunity for all to realize their full potential.

## ***II Diversity and Multiculturalism***

Diversity has become a cornerstone of Canadian society over the past few decades. The federal government hopes to continue its annual immigration targets of 1% of the population or about 300,000 people a year<sup>11</sup>. However, diversity has often been narrowly focused on ethno-racial differences, when in fact, diversity is about differences of all kinds including but not limited to race, religion, gender, sexuality, education, experience, skills, view points, sources of media programming<sup>12</sup>, and life experiences<sup>13</sup>. What also needs to be highlighted is that diversity of perspective is also informed by the different knowledges of people from all over the world, some of which may be culturally shaped. All citizens are equal, even if their education and experience are not identical. Recognition of this elaborated definition is vital.

Significantly, however, in not extending or recognizing the broader elaborations of diversity, immigrants, and other vulnerable groups, find themselves reflected more in their status as consumers of products and services but not in key institutions as providers of those services: as teachers or headmasters in schools<sup>14</sup>, as managers and directors' of larger businesses<sup>15</sup> or in government ministries<sup>16</sup>.

Diversity has to be elaborated on and moved from being an institutionalized 'category' to being a principle that is fundamental to Canadian values. Diversity is a reality that cannot be ignored. Its reflection is not only in thought or intention but in the equitable sharing of resources, in funding streams, and in the leveraging of multilingualism as a unique Canadian asset.

Immigrants, too, are knowledge creators and with over a hundred languages being spoken in Ontario alone<sup>17</sup>, Canada is in a unique position in the 21st century. In a global world, multilingual countries will allow the leveraging of economic, social and political ties with the home countries of their immigrant citizens. Multilingualism encourages true multiculturalism and the exchange of global knowledge. For that to happen, multiculturalism has to go beyond its current realization into a mainstream application. As part of this, there needs to be greater emphasis on multilingualism, beyond the emphasis on bilingualism.

Although there are costs associated with multilingualism (predominantly the costs are associated with translations of official discourse into many official languages as in the case of the European Union) it must be clarified that this is not a call for increasing the number of official languages of Canada. Rather, this is a call for encouraging the immersion of students

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<sup>11</sup> Citizenship and Immigration Canada: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/anrep02.html#plan>

<sup>12</sup> Canadian Heritage: [http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/ac-ca/progs/ri-bpi/pubs/lincoln/08\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/ac-ca/progs/ri-bpi/pubs/lincoln/08_e.cfm)

<sup>13</sup> Unity in Diversity (1999): Notes for an address by the Honourable Stéphane Dion President of the Privy Council and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, to the South Asia Council of the Canadian Asian Studies Association

<sup>14</sup> Toronto Star (2005): Educator calls for creation of black schools  
[http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article\\_Type1&call\\_pageid=971358637177&c=Article&cid=1107384610579](http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&call_pageid=971358637177&c=Article&cid=1107384610579)

<sup>15</sup> Canadian Business Magazine (2004) with OMNI TV: Minority Report 2004

<sup>16</sup> Visible minorities make up only 6.8% of Federal Public Service employees, Canadian Human Rights Commission (2002): <http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca/pdf/reports/2002EEen.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Finance (2001) Census: <http://www.gov.on.ca/FIN/english/demographics/cenhi4e.htm>

from primary school into third or fourth languages (the French-immersion system needs better implementation as well) and for the internalizing of multiculturalism. Federal jobs that require candidates to be bilingual must allow candidates the opportunity to learn the required language on the job, as they did until a few years ago. Government policy must recognize and optimize on multiculturalism – to do so is to affirm the worth and value of an important group in its electorate – the immigrant population.

We are brought back to the principle of equity – a diverse society which places emphasis on the equitable treatment of all its citizens is more likely to understand and implement diversity. Indeed, diversity in employment is indicative of the exercise of equity. This would mean, for example, that human resource personnel across Canada would spearhead the internalization of equity in their hiring practices to include newcomers and the internationally-educated, reflecting the diversity of the society of which they are all also a part.

A successful multiculturalism policy would support emerging multilingualism, in addition to the current support for bilingualism. In fact, institutions across Canadian society, all the way from local communities and schools to the federal government and private businesses, have to consider how best to create a process whereby diversity is internalized, including how diversity is reflected in all levels of employment.

### **III      *Coherence and Consistency***

It is essential that policies across governments both vertically and horizontally are coherent and consistent. Currently, the system of funding employment for immigrants is extremely fragmented and piecemeal, with little or no cohesion between different government departments. There is a lack of a centralized information source for immigrants, often leaving them bewildered and confused. Policies are inconsistent and dependent on the political will of governing parties and bureaucrats. Programs are created on an ad-hoc basis, some of which even undermine segments of the immigrant community.

Consistency and coherence in the allocation of funding, with the commitment that the eventual target is to create equal employment opportunities that are realized by immigrants themselves must be a commitment. From the time of pre-immigration until employment-of-choice has been realized, a process must be created that takes into account all of the various stages of an immigrant's move to Canada and his or her subsequent integration into mainstream Canadian society. This seamless continuum of initiatives must allow for flexible use of supports and opportunities by immigrants.

A process that incorporates the engagement of all the various stakeholders - including governments across jurisdictions, regulatory stakeholders, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations, credential assessment agencies, language and educational institutions, placement agencies and the professional and business communities – should work to provide an integrated and coherent network of opportunities that would allow immigrants to make use of them as per their choice in order to realize their potential.

What is critically needed as a component is the mainstreaming of immigrant employment opportunities within a coherent framework. In addition, a review of current initiatives to see if this goal is incorporated should be undertaken. Subsequent initiatives and policies must all be evaluated on frameworks designed to incorporate equity, diversity, consistency and

coherence across jurisdictions and must systematically lead to an immigrant's employment of choice.

#### ***IV Choice and Investment in Potential and Aspiration***

The “right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment” is everyone’s right, guarded by Article 23 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The immigrant’s right of access to employment is based on these same morally binding agreements of the codes on human rights.

Choice is a fundamental universal principle inscribed for all peoples, including immigrants. Given the current state of affairs in Canada, immigrants find their choices circumscribed as their economic participation is heavily compromised by systemic barriers, some of which have been outlined in PROMPT’s policy papers. Further, due to their inability to vote and have their voices heard for the first three years of their arrival in Canada, immigrants are unable to influence political will until significant time has elapsed. The concept of ‘belonging’ or ‘citizenship’, as rooted in human rights doctrine, has to include choice for permanent residents in all aspects of life. The concept of choice is underdeveloped for the immigrant community, compromising immigrants’ right to recognition and investment in their potential, without reference to their status.

Knowledge is both universal and culture-specific. Uniformity with Canadian education and training cannot be a strict requirement, because by definition, apart from the universalized knowledge that people all over the world share, immigrants bring value-added global knowledge. Because of this, complementarity has to be acknowledged as a leading indicator and evaluative criteria for employment and policy development. Complementarity refers to the additional skills that immigrants bring that are complementary to the skills required for a particular job. This notion stresses the need to recognize and invest in ability and potential of an immigrant rather than penalize for lack of access to specific knowledge. Complementarity looks at an immigrant in a holistic manner and searches for synergy between the immigrant and job requirements, rather than absolute specifics that render an application unsuccessful due to the lack of those pre-determined specifics. In addition as well, there needs to be a more explicit acknowledgment of the potential of all people to learn, given new circumstances and environments open to and supportive of learning. Recognition of complementarity, as a manifestation of diversity, is also a key indicator of equity, and if internalized, would result in changes in the hiring and orientation of immigrants and subsequently a move towards equitable employment outcomes.

Further, a human-centred model for good governance understands the relationship between individual choice and the need for investment in human aspirations. Investment in human aspirations can take many forms, one of which includes investment in entrepreneurship. The current system of governance at the business level precludes immigrants from access to the banking system and disadvantages immigrants in procuring credit lines, often despite excellent credit histories in their home countries. In addition, immigrants often face discriminatory requirements such as having to provide additional collateral to secure a mortgage for a home. As a result, fewer immigrants own their own homes today than in the

1980s.<sup>18</sup> The banking system perceives new immigrants especially, as representing a greater risk than native-born peoples, which automatically delineates their funding through credit as distinct from the mainstream, further disadvantaging them. Investing in human aspirations and allowing immigrants choice is an important principle that must be adopted by all stakeholders.

## **V        *Accountability***

The government must be able to demonstrate that frameworks developed to meet immigrant needs are implemented in the public interest. An ideological commitment to accountability provides a stronger guarantee of employment to individual immigrants through all initiatives.

The principle of accountability should be expanded to include the requirement that funding recipients demonstrate that funding received is producing positive outcomes for immigrants. It also means that immigrants should be consulted to ensure that programs designed are effectively meeting their needs.

The ideological basis for programs must not be protectionist or paternalistic; rather, programs must be based on recognition of potential, equitable outcomes for all and judged on merit. They must be regularly evaluated through civil society independent audits. Programs must exist to also eliminate systemic level barriers. Programs that are strengths-based, rather than as they are sometimes perceived to be at present, based on the diminution and inferiorization of immigrant skills, are likely to produce successful outcomes for immigrants and employers. 'Deficit'-based programs add to the culture of ignorance of and discrimination against immigrant skills. In addition, the public interest requires that there should be greater transparency and accountability for the success or failure of the licensing process for professionals.

When a system is accountable, diversity is reflected in the workplace through outcomes, reflected in the process of hiring, rather than in the design of programs. Accountability is a critical component, existing as a check in the system.

## **VI        *Consultation and Collaboration***

Immigrants have the right to be heard and their views represented in government. A consultative approach will reflect the aspirations of immigrants on all party platforms, government ministries and departments. Voices that represent immigrants, such as PROMPT, amongst others, can work in true participatory partnership with government to realize these principles. In any process implemented as part of a governance framework, indeed, to restructure governance to include the immigrant voice, it is essential that such bodies also be included in participatory capacities.

The success of a vision for Canada can only be ensured if all stakeholders collaborate and consult with each other, with a single goal in mind: the strengthening of Canada, which in the specific case of the policy discussion of this paper, is through the equitable outcome for employment for Canada's immigrants. In effect, this single goal encompasses many of the

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<sup>18</sup> Globe and Mail (2005) referencing Statistics Canada study:  
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20050203.w2immig0203/BNStory/National/>

policies that will benefit Canada in the long run as it moves to become a truly multicultural society.

### **Conclusion and Final Thoughts**

Through the internalizing of these universal principles and values, PROMPT envisions a Canada in the near future that supports and encourages the aspirations of all its citizens, and that is outward looking, prepared for the changes that the 21st century heralds. Indeed, this is the only way forward for Canada. Its economic and social reality requires that immigrants be treated no different from the Canadian-born population in the way they are allowed to contribute to Canadian society and acknowledged, more than just in lip-service, as nation-builders in partnership with the native-born population.

In fact, immigrants' global education and experience, their exposure to different societies and schools of thought are assets for Canada, in economic and social terms. What is needed is a commitment across the board to changing the current system to focus on reform of governance in the workplace and labour market rather than continuing the current practice of reforming the immigrant to fit the "system". This would require a commitment to better governance among leaders in Canada, and a commitment to excellence in governance, by including the universal principles and values of equity, diversity, multiculturalism, coherence, consistency, choice, investment in potential and aspirations, accountability, consultation and collaboration.

Further, in the long term, PROMPT envisions that Canada, acknowledging the international flows of ideas, authority, financial capital, and labour, will spearhead the development of a trans-Canadian, trans-national and international agreement of labour mobility ratified by the United Nations.

Canada is at a cross-road at the moment. It can create the tools to deal with an emerging global reality or face unfortunate economic and social consequences, with its immigrants bearing the worst impact of these. If it demonstrates the courage to face this challenge, especially through its management of multiculturalism, then it may well become a world leader in global governance.

## **Part 2: 'Towards a New Approach to Funding and Implementing Immigrant Employment Initiatives'**

***By  
Centre for Research and Education in Human Services***

## Summary of Main Findings

### ***The Present Situation***

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Finding #1	The present system of immigrant employment initiatives is poorly designed.
Finding #2	Immigrant employment is part of broader labour market integration issues.
Finding #3	Immigrant employment initiatives that are designed to support immigrants in finding work are outdated.
Finding #4	There are relatively few initiatives aimed at supporting employers and other stakeholder groups.
Finding #5	The immigrant voice advocating on behalf of IEPs has been fragmented.

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### ***Future Directions***

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Finding #1	A commitment is needed across and within levels of government to agree upon guiding principles for the funding of immigrant employment initiatives.
Finding #2	There needs to be a new coordinated and integrated funding strategy within and among existing government departments.
Finding #3	There needs to be a new implementation strategy that provides a continuum of employment-related interventions.
Finding #4	Government funders need to have a different understanding of the outcomes that immigrant employment initiatives are expected to reach.
Finding #5	The various levels of government need to fund and facilitate other stakeholder groups to support the participation of immigrants in the labour market.
Finding #6	Immigrants need to play an increased and on-going role in ensuring the effective implementation of these suggestions.

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## 1. Introduction

“The current under-utilization of human resources [held by highly skilled and educated immigrants] is at odds with the country’s immigration goals.”

– Report of the House of Commons Immigration Committee, 2003

Every year over 130,000 immigrants come to live in Ontario. Due to recent changes in Canadian immigration policy, they are increasingly coming with high skills, education and experience ready to make an immediate and positive contribution to their new home country. The reality is that Ontario gains when immigrants are able to meet these aspirations. Today the social and economic prosperity of Ontario is linked to ensuring that immigrants participate in the labour market, and participate in such a way that the range of their expertise and passions are utilized.<sup>i</sup>

Unfortunately this is not the present case. The barriers immigrants, particularly internationally educated professionals, face in finding work in their fields have been well documented.<sup>ii</sup> While their high level of skills facilitated entry into Canada, all too often these skills—in many cases the very skills that our country needs—are not used. Rather, they remain dormant to the detriment of immigrants themselves, their families and our communities.<sup>iii</sup> Regrettably, there is a disconnect between the aim of immigration policy and the reality of immigrant labour market participation. The skills and knowledges that underlie the employment readiness of many newly-landed immigrants go largely unacknowledged. The potential of these is often misunderstood or overlooked. As a result, attention to the systemic barriers facing employers and immigrants that prevent the direct and immediate access to the labour market participation of immigrants remain undeveloped.

“Right now we have different departments from different levels of [government] dealing with all the needs of immigrants. We see a lot of waste of resources without results.”

– Service provider survey respondent

Instead, there is a reliance on employment support programs, which though having a critical role in addressing barriers, especially at the individual level, are often the only supports in place. These are intended to help facilitate the participation of immigrants in the labour market once they arrive. Governmental and non-profit organizations in communities across Ontario offer immigrants a range of job support activities and resources. From resume writing and job interview preparation, to career counselling, language training and contacts with employers, these programs are intended to help immigrants be in a position to enter the competitive labour market as equals to other Canadians. Resourced primarily through public funds, there is an underlying assumption that government has a role in ensuring that immigrants are provided with the supports necessary to guarantee their integration both socially and economically into Canada as new citizens.

The current employment support system for immigrants, however, is not working. This is evidenced by the many research studies detailing immigrant unemployment, underemployment and lower earnings. The current dissatisfaction among employment support workers (people who help immigrants find work) with government funding frameworks is further evidence. And the many immigrant accounts of negative experiences in finding meaningful work is yet another indication that the time has come to take stock of how public funds are utilized to provide supports in facilitating the labour market participation of immigrants.

As the collective voice of internationally educated professionals across Ontario, the Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades (PROMPT) decided to take up this challenge from the perspective of those most central to the issue—immigrants themselves. Representing immigrant professional associations, ethno-racial social planning councils, umbrella groups and community initiatives, PROMPT was created to put forward credible policy recommendations based on the evidence of research and from the perspective of internationally educated professionals. PROMPT contracted the Centre for Research and Education in Human Services (an independent, non-profit social research organization located in Kitchener, Ontario) to carry out a research study under the guidance of a PROMPT working group (see appendix for research team and working group members). This report is a summary of that study.

“In our programs the number of professional workers is quite staggering. I do not believe policy makers recognize the [under-utilization] of these skills.”

– Service provider survey respondent

The stated purpose of the research study was as follows:

- To build the case for a new approach to funding and implementing employment initiatives that would better facilitate the participation of immigrants into Ontario’s labour market.

The goal, based on the research, was to be able to make credible policy recommendations for future directions in the funding and implementation of employment initiatives in Ontario.

How our province facilitates immigrant participation in the labour market is a broad issue. In order to capture the complexity of the issue and yet also manageably focus the research, the study’s working group set the following parameters:

- This part of the study centres on “immigrant employment initiatives”. By this we mean any publicly-funded strategy that helps to facilitate the participation of immigrants into Ontario’s labour market. The focus of these initiatives may be on supporting individual immigrants towards participation, or on supporting other stakeholder groups to facilitate the participation of immigrants. This term is used rather than the more traditional and narrowly defined “immigrant employment supports” – a term which has come to imply that immigrants are the ones in need of help (hence programs—or “supports”—are created to meet their needs). In the spirit of bi-directional adaptation which emphasizes that both immigrants and the host society need to adapt and change, other parts of our society also need help in responding to immigrant employment reality. Examples of the groups that require help include employers, educational institutions, credential assessors and regulatory bodies.
- The study focuses on the role of the various levels of government in providing policy direction and funds toward immigrant labour market participation. Government is therefore the primary audience of the research findings. PROMPT recognizes that the private sector and others may have a role to play on this issue. However this is not the focus of the present research.

“[Provide] qualitative data to politicians and general public. Not only statistics, but extensive information about the skills and successful stories of IEPs in their professional fields.”

– IEP survey respondent

- The study considers both the funding (how governments allocate resources to groups) and implementation (how government expects these funds be used) aspects of immigrant employment initiatives.
- Consistent with PROMPT's membership, the study primarily relates to Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs). However, recommendations have implications for all immigrants.
- This is a provincial study that considers regional differences across Ontario.
- The study assumes the need for immigrants in the workforce and does not try to build this argument. There is a growing body of research that has already strongly built this case.
- The study is not intended to be an evaluation of any individual employment support organization that serves immigrants.
- The study considers the perspectives of internationally educated professionals (IEPs) and other stakeholder groups, namely service-providers, employers and civil servants. The study's findings represent all these voices. The research findings will be shared widely across stakeholder groups.

Within the parameters mentioned above, the study sought to answer two main research questions:

- What is the existing environment for funding and implementing employment initiatives for immigrants in Ontario? (*The Present Situation*)
- What are the necessary elements of a new approach to funding and implementing employment initiatives that would better facilitate the participation of immigrants into Ontario's labour market? (*Future Directions*)

These questions result in findings that are the result of the research process. In the future directions section of the paper the findings reflect potential policy directions in the future funding and implementation of employment initiatives.

The report begins by outlining the research methodology. The study findings are organized by the two main research questions noted above: 1) the present situation and 2) future directions. Each section summarizes the findings across stakeholder perspectives. Additionally, in the section on future directions PROMPT responds to the opinion of others and adds its own perspectives. The intention of this paper and of the recommendations is to promote immediate action for increased effectiveness in the funding and implementation of employment initiatives.

“Until somebody solves this problem the problem will keep on compounding and the level of [frustration] will keep on increasing among immigrants.... there seems no end to all this.”

--IEP survey respondent

## 2. Methodology

The research methodology was designed in such a way as to maximize the likelihood of developing credible and feasible policy recommendations. It did this in three ways: 1) the use of triangulation, 2) the use of a multi-phase design, and 3) the use of a working group to guide the study.

### 2.1 Triangulation (Multiple Perspectives and Multiple Methods)

Within social research, the credibility of research findings are enhanced when information is gathered from people representing different viewpoints on the topic at hand (multiple perspectives) and by using different formats of information gathering (multiple methods).<sup>iv</sup> Hearing from multiple perspectives and using multiple methods is called “triangulation”. Implementing the principle of triangulation in this study helped to deepen the understanding of immigrant employment issues, while helping to develop recommendations that make sense within our pluralistic society.

This study considered four main perspectives. Central to the research was the *internationally educated professional (IEP)* perspective—the group attempting to participate in the labour market. The other three perspectives included *service providers* (those who assist immigrants to participate in the labour market), *employers* and business associations (those that ultimately provide employment opportunities), and government *civil servants* (those that set policy and provide funding for immigrant employment initiatives).

As for methods, a number of qualitative and quantitative methods were used including: document review, key informant interviews, web-based survey, focus groups, and a final feedback session with PROMPT. Taken together, these methods considered a combination of secondary data (understanding the research that others have done) and primary data (hearing new information).

### 2.2 Multi-phase Design

The research design involved three phases over a five month period. Each phase built on the learnings of the previous.

*Phase 1: Identifying the Main Issues:* During the first phase, information was collected that gave an overview of the main issues for both main research questions (the present situation and future directions). There were two simultaneous methods used 1) a *document review* of approximately 50 research reports, program documents and web pages related to immigrant employment issues, and 2) *11 key informant telephone interviews* with individuals knowledgeable about immigrant employment issues, including internationally educated professionals, service providers, employers/business association representatives, policy analysts and civil servants from a number of departments. See appendix for list of document references, key informants and key informant interview questions.

“Thank you for taking into consideration what we think, and for being interested in how we can give more to Canada our new home!”  
– IEP survey respondent

**Phase 2: Gaining a Breadth of Perspectives:** Based on the main issues discovered in the previous phase, a brief, easy-to-use web-based survey was developed and circulated widely to members of all four stakeholder groups. The survey included three sections: respondent profile, opinions about the current funding situation, and suggestions for the future. Respondents from each stakeholder group answered a total of approximately 20 questions. The majority of questions were closed-ended with limited response options, while a few questions were open-ended allowing respondents to type in their opinions. While the questions in the first section (i.e., profile of respondents) differed across stakeholder groups, questions from the remaining two sections remained relatively consistent.

Thank you for thinking about us. We are people who have too much to offer in this country. We need to be trusted!!!!”  
– IEP survey respondent

The web-link to the survey was circulated electronically across the province. This link was accompanied by an introductory email describing the survey’s purpose tailored to each stakeholder group. The survey was accessible for a period of one month. The distribution strategy by stakeholder group included:

**Internationally Educated Professionals:** The survey web-link was circulated through the various PROMPT members’ associations (representing up to 20,000 IEPs who may or may not have received employment support in Ontario). A selected number of immigrant organizations in high immigrant centres across the province encouraged program participants to complete the survey. Additionally the survey was posted on an existing Canadian-IEP Yahoo chatroom.

**Service providers:** The survey web-link was sent to non-profit organizations that provide immigrant employment services. This was done through the combined membership list-servs of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) and the Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects (ONESTEP). Cover letters from both umbrella associations accompanied the email. It is estimated that the survey was applicable to approximately 100 organizations from these combined lists.

“[This survey] is a good effort to give the WRETCHED IMMIGRANTS a forum for their CATHARSIS.”  
– IEP survey respondent

**Employers:** The survey web-link was distributed through the employer list-servs of selected immigrant employment services in high immigrant centres across the province. Additionally, the employers on the Maytree Foundation list-serv were also contacted. It is estimated that up to 1,500 employers were given the opportunity to participate in the survey. It should be noted that employers receiving the web-link were perhaps more likely to speak about immigrant employment issues than the average employer, given their relationship/familiarity with immigrant employment organizations.

**Civil Servants:** The survey web-link was circulated to civil servants from approximately 7 departments in federal, provincial and City of Toronto governments with jurisdiction over employment issues relating to immigrants. Contact names were identified from the combined list-servs of PROMPT and OCASI.

In total there were 937 “hits” to the survey with almost half of these (442) resulting in completed surveys. Response rates by stakeholder group were:

Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades (PROMPT)  
Centre for Research in Education and Human Services (CREHS)  
Nikhat Rasheed, Gurmeet Bambah and Faviola Fernandez

IEPs (361), service providers (43), employers (29), and civil servants (9). Two of the four stakeholder response rates were encouraging:

- At 361 responses, a relatively large number of IEPs completed the survey, although this number cannot be considered representative of the full IEP perspective.
- Nearly half of the eligible service providers across the province completed a survey.
- Although three of the federal, provincial and municipal government departments with jurisdiction over employment issues relating to immigrants completed the survey, one important federal ministry (Human Resource Skills Development Canada) was notably absent from survey respondents.
- The employer response rate was less encouraging. While the results do offer some insight into this stakeholder perspective, the 29 responses are a small fraction of the employers who received the survey, much less of all employers across Ontario.

*Phase 3: Verifying Feasibility:* During the final phase, the preliminary research findings were presented and feedback received through 2 focus groups. The first focus group was with the PROMPT membership, attended by 12 participants. The second group included 11 participants representing a mix of stakeholder perspectives. The bulk of the focus group discussion consisted of probing for the clarity and feasibility of suggested future directions. See appendix for list of focus group members and focus group questions.

A final meeting with the PROMPT membership was held after the final report was drafted. The purpose of this meeting was to provide general feedback on the final report. PROMPT's policy perspectives are distinct from the research, but build on the policy directions that are the result of the research process.

### **2.3 Guidance of Working Group**

This research study was guided by a working group comprised of PROMPT members, internationally-educated professionals not formally represented on PROMPT, selected immigrant employment service providers across the province, and a staff representative from TRIEC (the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council). The role of the working group was to give input into the study's purpose, parameters and methodology and the interpretation of the emerging research findings. Working group members were instrumental in ensuring that the web-based survey was distributed widely. They also reviewed all documents prior to their release. The group met by teleconference four times over the five month period. Facilitating such a group is typical practice for the Centre for Research and Education in Human Services as it carries out its participatory action research projects.<sup>v</sup>

## Summary of Methods

Phase	Method	Purpose	Stakeholder perspective	Major Research Questions Answered
Phase I Identify Main Issues	Document Review (n=80)	Give overview of present situation and highlight existing recommendations for future directions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immigrants</li> <li>▪ Service providers</li> <li>▪ Employers</li> <li>▪ Civil servants</li> </ul>	Present Situation Future Directions
	Key Informant Interviews (n=11)	Give overview of present situation and identify key strategic directions for the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immigrants</li> <li>▪ Service providers</li> <li>▪ Employers</li> <li>▪ Civil servants</li> </ul>	Present Situation Future Directions
Phase II Gaining Breadth of Perspectives	Web-Based Survey (n=442) IEP: n=361 Service Provider: n=43 Employers n=29 Civil Servants: n=9	Provide breadth of information noticing any stakeholder similarities or differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immigrants</li> <li>▪ Service providers</li> <li>▪ Employers</li> <li>▪ Civil servants</li> </ul>	Present Situation Future Directions
Phase III Verifying Feasibility	Focus Groups (2) -PROMPT membership (n=12) -Mixed stakeholder group (n=11)	Response to draft future directions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immigrants</li> <li>▪ Service providers</li> <li>▪ Employers</li> <li>▪ Civil servants</li> </ul>	Future Directions
	Final Feedback Session to PROMPT Membership (n=17)	Shape the report and finalize PROMPT position statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Immigrants</li> </ul>	Present Situation Future Directions

### 3. The Present Situation

We began our research by attempting to understand present immigrant employment initiatives. That is, we wanted to identify available public funding sources and their resulting programming aimed at facilitating immigrants into the labour market. These funding sources and programs are targeted to provide employment support directly to immigrants, or are designated to support other groups in encouraging immigrant employment. We went one step further and also explored, in general terms, how people assessed this present system of immigrant employment initiatives. Below we summarize the five main findings related to the present situation.

#### **Finding #1 - The present system of immigrant employment initiatives is poorly designed.**

A major theme arising from the research is that, taken together, present immigrant employment initiatives are seen to be poorly designed. Initiatives are ad hoc, and have emerged, rather than being designed in a coherent, integrated fashion. The absence of a holistic strategy in facilitating immigrants into the labour market is demonstrated by funding streams that are fragmented and inadequate, leaving a patchwork of initiatives that are confusing for immigrants and employers to access. The point was not that nothing exists. As we will see below, there are in fact numerous funding streams dealing with immigrant employment issues. But as an overall system, these initiatives fall short in collectively meeting the challenge of facilitating immigrants into employment. To begin, we briefly review the key funding sources before reporting on the assessment of the present system.

Sources of funding for service provider survey respondents:

- HRSDC (39 % of programs/projects)
- CIC (13%)
- MTCU (12%),
- Municipality (10%)
- United Way (10%)
- MCI (8%)

#### **Existing funding sources**

Funding streams related to immigrant employment span across various government levels, across various ministries and departments and include some non-governmental funding sources as well. Below is a list of the key funding players. A detailed overview of these sources and their associated funding streams can be found in Appendix G.

At the federal level primary funding sources include:

- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)

Smaller federal funding sources include:

- Canadian Heritage
- Industry Canada

At the provincial level the primary funding sources include:

- Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) – Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP)

Primary funding streams:

- HRSDC: Employment Insurance benefits (EI) and Support Measures (Employment Assistance Services)
- CIC: Immigrant Settlement & Adaptation Program (ISAP), Job Search Workshops (funded through ISAP), and Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC).
- MTCU: Bridging program, Job Connect service, and World Education Services
- MCI: Newcomer Settlement Program
- Ministry of Community & Social Services: Ontario Works (administered through local municipalities)
- Ministry of Education: ESL Classes

- Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU)
- MTCU – Access to Professions and Trades Unit (APT Unit)
- Ministry of Community & Social Services – Ontario Works (OW)

Smaller provincial funding sources include:

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Economic Development and Trade

At the local level the primary funding sources include:

- Local municipal governments (notably the City of Toronto)
- Local United Ways
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Other local community foundations

The following are some examples of generic employment programs/projects that result from the funding bodies and streams listed above:

#### *Support to Immigrants*

- Career planning workshops
- Employment counselling
- Employment resource centres
- Job finding clubs
- Job placements
- Job search preparation workshops
- Job search techniques workshops
- Resume writing workshops
- Labour market information sessions
- Language assessment/training
- Mentorship programs
- Bridging programs

#### *Support to Other Stakeholder Groups*

- Internship programs
- Credential assessment services
- Promoting access issues among Occupational Regulatory Bodies
- Employer information kits/hotline
- Employer subsidies to hire/train immigrants
- Improving access to educational institutions for immigrants
- Bridging programs

### **A fragmented system**

Effectiveness of current funding system (somewhat and very ineffective):

- IEPs (55% of survey respondents)
- Service providers (62%)
- Civil servants (88%)
- Employers (47%)

Regardless of stakeholder perspective, the assessment of the current system of funding is generally not favourable. At the core is a belief that present funding sources lack a cohesive vision, and lack the leadership and structures needed for collective planning and coordination. This is true both vertically within and horizontally across various government departments. The net result is a perception that the funding system is fragmented and produces a patchwork of services which in turn “results in a lack of policy and program co-ordination, some duplication, and gaps that go unfilled” (Alboim, 2003). One key informant told us that while some funding groups do talk to one another, there is no one putting all the pieces together. Little pockets of collaboration take place but lack co-ordination and an overarching strategy.

The present fragmentation has its roots in the past. Historically funding streams related to immigrant employment issues were developed in isolation from each other and in response to differing agendas. In fact the impetus of immigrant employment funding streams may or may not have been motivated by the desire to better facilitate immigrants into the labour market. For example, the Access to Professions and Trades Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities was established as a result of a provincial task force on access to professions and trades (Cumming & Lee, 1989). The funding streams that have subsequently been created within this Unit are therefore directly focused on addressing key barriers to employment faced by internationally educated professionals and tradespeople. Contrast this history with HRSDC's Employment Assistance Services (EAS). While this funding stream represents a major source of funds related to immigrant employment, supporting immigrants was not its original intent. It was and remains employment support for the general Canadian population (of which immigrants are a component). Consequently many of its eligibility criteria do not factor in the immigrant reality (see finding #3 below). While the EAS stream does fund some immigrant specific programs, these are done so at the discretion of local HRSDC offices and not as a policy of the department as a whole. According to a key informant from a federal funding body:

“I have always had problems with government talking to itself in making up policy and framework for a program. Because usually what that means is you get to talk about where you put the punctuation marks. ...get the other half of the equation to the table, including employers and service providers.”

-- Focus group participant

“The decision is made at the local level, as to ensure that it addresses the local labour market and real local issues. Some areas can do better. Generally, they have to take into account the make-up of the population: i.e., aboriginals, immigrants, seasonal work, etc. This might look like a lack of consistency, as when you look at the big picture, you don't see the same programs available everywhere in Canada or in Ontario ... In Toronto alone, HRSDC spends 6 million a year in employment services targeting immigrants.” [key informant]

The causes for fragmentation are also seen to lie in the exclusion of stakeholders in helping to develop and refine the various funding streams. Key stakeholder groups such as employers, municipal governments and immigrants themselves are identified as being largely shut out of funding policy development. The relatively limited consultation among civil servants across governments and departments adds to the fragmentation.

There are, however, two recent developments that hold promise for positive change. First the provincial Minister for the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (provincial) and her federal counterpart, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada have recently signed a letter of intent with respect to a Canada – Ontario immigration agreement on immigration. The significance of this letter of intent lies in its spirit of collaboration among levels of government related to immigration generally, including the provision for municipalities to have a voice in the negotiations of an immigration agreement. This is a welcome sign, as those in the immigration field have been calling for a municipal voice in the funding process in numerous documents (O'Conner, 2003; Toronto City Summit Alliance, 2003; Alboim, 2003).

“Nothing is ‘serious’ or long term, every good program is a pilot. Real employment programming is very expensive and needs to be seen as a long term investment.”  
– Service provider survey respondent

“Current funding structures limit our ability to be innovative and creative ... We don’t have control over seeking solutions.”  
– Service provider survey respondent

“Settlement agencies are so under-resourced and restrained to do all the work encountered. These agencies should be properly funded to be more effective in doing what they know and do best for immigrants.”  
– Service provider survey respondent

Through our mixed stakeholder focus group we also learned that another positive development is presently unfolding. A group of 13 federal departments are attempting to coordinate their efforts on immigrant labour market initiatives. Co-chaired by CIC and HRSDC this coordination “is occurring at the level of Deputy Minister”. Details about the mandate and scope of this initiative are, however, sketchy at this point.

### **Inadequate resources available**

Despite the many funding streams, funds are seen to be collectively inadequate to address the magnitude of immigrant employment issues. Present-day services, where needed, may not be tailored to the broad spectrum of needs of the many skilled immigrants of today. In part the inadequacy is tied to the level of existing funds. Service providers were particularly vocal about this issue and ranked limited funding levels as the largest barrier to enabling them to be effective in their work. Some pointed to a deterioration of service delivery caused by the reduction of funds within some funding envelopes (Lazar, 2002), and the capping of funds within others (O’Connor, 2003) — this despite an increased demand for these services given increasing numbers of immigrant arrivals to Canada. On a related point, service providers noted that funding “contributions” awarded by some funders seldom covered overhead and even direct costs associated with running the programs. Another key informant stated that “the challenge was to overcome the under commitment of funders and decision-makers, as well as the issue of jurisdiction between funders.” For example, funding from CIC’s Job Search Workshops was repeatedly identified as being well below the actual cost of running these programs. Organizations were therefore left to fundraise the remaining portion on their own, a task many found difficult to do given their organizational capacity.

But concerns with the inadequacy of resources went beyond the level of funding to also include the stability of funding. Again it was the service providers who were particularly concerned about the current environment which seems to emphasize seed funding (funding to develop new programs) and project funding (funding that is time-limited). Indeed, over half (59%) of service provider survey respondents stated that the funding they received was time-limited project funds. Service providers felt that such short term funding was not conducive to effective programming and planning, and did not allow innovative and successful pilot projects to become sustainable.

One key informant stated:

“There is a need for multi-year funding to give agencies possibility to plan and stabilize the programs. Also, allow for blending of services. Currently funders act as if they own the space contracted and you cannot bring in and deliver another program in that space: this is not a good use of money and resources. The relationship between funder and funded needs to change entirely.” [key informant]

Finally, the resources available are also seen to be inadequate in their range. The majority of the funding sources that we list above provide funds

Types of organizations providing immigrant employment supports:

- Generic employment--serving the general population (10% of survey respondents)
- Immigrant employment --serving only immigrants (17 %)
- Generic multi-service--serving the general population (17 %)
- Immigrant multi-service--serving all immigrants (33%)
- Ethno-specific multi-service--serving immigrants from a specific ethno-racial group (7 %)

“Employers need to be more aware of these programs, how they are funded and [incentives] that can help to [bring] these people on and [get] them trained in Canadian Industry Standards.”

– Employer survey respondent

“[What is needed is] a concerted government program designed to clarify and disseminate information to employers regarding immigrants and their availability.”

– Employer survey respondent

to support immigrants—either by direct payments to immigrants (e.g., EI premiums) or through the offering of employment support programs within governmental and non-profit organizations. There are very few funding streams that assist other stakeholder groups (e.g., employers, educational institutions, credential assessors and regulatory bodies) to create environments that facilitate the participation of immigrants in the labour market. This is a point that we highlight in more depth under Finding #4. For a comprehensive list of existing funding initiatives, refer to Appendix G.

### **Confusion among immigrants and employers about available initiatives**

Flowing from the two previously stated points, research findings also indicate confusion among immigrants and employers about what types of supports are available to them. Regarding immigrants, numerous key informants noted that the hodgepodge of programs available across the province is difficult to understand and represent a challenge to navigate. To begin, comprehensive and accurate employment related information is not readily available for immigrants. This is true both overseas (where misperceptions about the Ontario labour market reality and unrealistic expectations are seen to begin) and upon arrival in Ontario. Alboim (2002) notes that while many information sources do exist, none are comprehensive enough to provide logical links between services available to help immigrants make informed choices and integrate effectively and speedily into the Canadian labour market.

Collating comprehensive information of available immigrant employment initiatives is admittedly a difficult task. (It was, in fact, one of the challenges we experienced in this research project). For example, to our knowledge there exists no provincial list of immigrant employment support programs, much less a province-wide strategy to implement them. Rather, within each community across Ontario, immigrant employment supports have emerged to varying degrees and in a variety of configurations. The structure of organizations providing immigrant employment supports are themselves diverse (see side bar), each attempting to piece together what employment programs they can from the funding sources available to them (Kwan, CLC research paper, Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, 2004).

As mentioned earlier, one major contributing factor to this regional inconsistency rests with the fact that Employment Assistance Services (EAS) funding, responsible for a large portion of funding for employment supports in the province, is made available through local HRSDC centres. Each of these local centres may have different funding priorities and have different approaches to supporting immigrants (e.g., in some communities EAS funds have been used to establish organizations with an exclusive mandate for immigrant employment; however, in other communities this is not the case). For the immigrant, the net result is a confusing array of organizations with potentially overlapping or limited mandates that vary from one community to another.

Employers also found the present situation confusing. In fact of all stakeholder groups, employer survey respondents were the least clear about the current publicly funded system of immigrant employment initiatives. For example, employer survey respondents spoke of knowing about some initiatives (e.g., bridging programs), but had no information regarding current sources of funding or how the current system works. Employers tended to agree that more should be done to ensure that immigrant skills not be wasted. One employer we spoke with suggested the following, “Service providers should align their services with the needs of local companies. They need to understand the individuals and represent them well to the companies”.

“Cut the rhetoric and get on with it! Canada needs professionals and there is too much bureaucratic tape in the way. I have been involved with government on several occasions and got nothing but a runaround and frustration. Professional immigrants deserve to be treated with a much higher level of respect.”

– Employer survey respondent

Generally service providers and civil servants, understandably, are not confused about the present funding environment or about programs and initiatives currently available. As insiders of the existing system, they feel that they are equipped with adequate information. However this knowledge led to a critical assessment of the present situation as being fragmented and inadequate (described above).

## **Finding #2 –Immigrant employment is part of broader labour market integration issues**

A second main theme suggests that facilitating immigrants into the labour market is linked to society’s broader concerns about integrating all willing people into the labour market. Our research findings show that presently *intentions* for embedding immigrant employment issues into Canada’s broader labour market considerations exist. However, an actual labour market integration *strategy* is notably lacking.

### **There is a disconnect between immigration policy and how we facilitate immigrants into the labour market**

Canada takes pride in its multiculturalism policy and of being a nation built by immigrants. Historically, immigrants largely had to find their own way to succeed both economically and socially—this despite the nation’s dependence on immigration. Today the federal government continues to recognize that “immigration is key to Canada’s future” (Canadian Intergovernmental Conference Secretariat, 2004). Economically, the dependence on immigration to meet looming skill shortages anticipated in the next decade is well documented (Dulipovici, 2003; Statistics Canada, 2001). Despite this, existing settlement and active labour market measures are still not well-designed to facilitate the effective participation of newcomers into the labour market (O’Connor, 2003).

“The [majority of] people we’re choosing now are independent class immigrants - you bet they’ve got expectations. They should have expectations.”

– Mixed stakeholder focus group respondent

Lauziere (2003) likened the situation for newcomers’ economic integration into Canada’s labour market as “non-sensical” [because the government is] “inviting immigrants to help build our country and then denying them the means to succeed.” For today’s immigrant, the situation seems to be becoming worse considering that immigrants are starting off earning less

than those immigrants who came to Canada before them, and ten years later they are still well behind other Canadians and immigrants before them who had been in Canada the same length of time (Lauziere, 2003). Despite this phenomenon, “Canada’s spending on active general labour market measures has fallen in real terms since the 1980s” (O’Connor, 2003).

### **A comprehensive labour market integration policy is lacking**

Our research findings strongly point to the need for public policy to better understand immigrant employment within the broader context of how our society facilitates the entry of people into the labour market. At the heart of this notion is a call for a “master plan” or “integration policy” that outlines an overall strategy to facilitate immigrants into the labour market, identify key players and their roles to make this happen, and to coordinate their efforts. This master plan would be broader than the existing “retraining and re-skilling” focus of many present immigrant employment initiatives. It would consider how to effectively and efficiently tap into the experience and skills already brought by IEPs, including: provision of services overseas (job prospects, skills in demand, credential assessment, licensing, etc), as well as after arrival (addressing both social and economic factors). It would also broaden the range of stakeholders in society, responsible and accountable for the meaningful participation of immigrants in the labour market.

Most key informants agreed that the participation of IEPs in the labour market should be linked back to immigration. As immigration is a federal jurisdiction, a new labour market strategy needs to include federal government involvement. However, given provincial jurisdiction over the regulation of the professions, immigrant employment is also a provincial issue. Municipal level involvement is also critical given the responsibility of municipal governments in responding to the needs of their citizens, particularly in areas of high immigration, such as the Greater Toronto Area. A Labour Market Development Agreement between federal and provincial government – with a role for municipalities - therefore, becomes an important piece in this puzzle. Ontario is currently the only province that does not have such a Labour Market Development Agreement with the federal government. It also does not yet have an immigration agreement with the federal government despite receiving by far the highest percentage of immigrants (PROMPT, 2003). As mentioned previously, however, negotiations are presently underway (Leslie, 2004).

### **Existing immigrant skills are not adequately recognized in the broader labour market strategy**

Without such a multi-lateral labour market strategy, the status quo will continue to exist. As it stands, the longer an immigrant is out of her/his field of expertise the harder it is for them to return to their profession. This is of particular relevance to those in professions, particularly the health care professions, where recency of practice is a prime consideration for licensure/employment. Consider too the barriers that are created for

“While the emphasis on Canadian immigration has shifted and we now see an increasing number of skilled workers entering the country each year, many newcomers to Canada are still unable to obtain work that matches their education and past experience. In fact, an estimated 6 out of 10 immigrants take jobs outside their fields of specialization.”

-Canadian Council for Human Resources in the Environment Sector (2004)

Eliminating the current learning recognition gap in Canada would enable Canadians to earn an additional \$4.1 billion - \$5.9 billion in income annually. More than 540,000 individuals stand to gain an average of \$8,000 to \$12,000 each year from improved learning recognition.”

-Bloom & Grant, 2001, Conference Board of Canada

immigrants by public institutions such as the federal public service where citizenship (a process that can take up to three years) is a requirement for employment (Metropolis Conversation Series 8, 2003). Furthermore, key informants pointed out that even when skill shortages become a pressing societal issue the importance of immigrant skills is often minimized or dismissed. One example is that of hospitals spending millions of dollars trying to attract Canadian nurses employed south of the border to return, yet not considering providing support to internationally-educated nurses in Canada to go through the licensing system. Consider also the example of the fast track process to recruit information technology (IT) professionals, machinists, etc. before developing a process that would allow existing IEP skills to be used (Toronto Board of Trade, 2003, Biotechnology Human Resource Council, 1999).

### **Employment initiatives aimed at the general Canadian public do not sufficiently consider the immigrant reality**

“The system we work with is 50-60 years old and not designed for immigrants, but for Canadian-born... The policies, guidelines, structures, all need to be reflective of today’s realities and demographics.”

--Key informant

Immigrant skills represent an important part of the solution for present skill shortages. Yet existing employment initiatives that are intended to support the general Canadian public do not adequately support immigrants. IEPs in our study expressed significant frustration over eligibility requirements that make programs such as Ontario Works (OW) and Employment Insurance (EI) inaccessible to them. The current requirements were formed without considering the immigrant reality. For example, in order to qualify for EI, newcomers must have worked the required number of hours, in the required time limit and have been laid off. Very recent immigrants, almost by definition, obviously have no ‘Canadian’ work experience. In addition, many immigrants are under-employed and cannot qualify for services for unemployed workers that could help them move into work in their area of expertise (O’Connor, 2003). In addition, EI offers premiums to those with continuous labour force participation but immigrants working in seasonal, manufacturing or part-time/casual labour work may not be able to qualify for these benefits because of their non-standard hours of work (Kwan, CLC Research Paper #9). Combined with the absence of comprehensive immigrant-specific alternatives, many immigrants are hindered from reaching their employment goals, to their personal and professional detriment, as well as to their family’s and society’s.

“We need new funding programs that are not restrictive. For example HRSDC consolidated revenue funding instead of HRIF.”

– Service provider survey respondent

HRSDC does have special programs targeting those without continuous labour force participation such as youth and persons with disabilities, who face unique challenges in finding employment ([www.hrsdc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca)). However, immigrants do not have a similar dedicated funding stream. In addition, with the devolution of Canada Health and Social Transfer from the federal to provincial governments, some provinces or municipalities have decreased access to and benefits from social assistance based on immigration or refugee status (Kwan, CLC Research Paper #9). Immigrants who do qualify for existing public programs find it equally frustrating, as they are usually unable to find work in their chosen field, “often end up on OW and take low-paying jobs just to get off the system.”

Many comments were made by IEPs and some employers relating to employment equity standards that target a number of groups, but not immigrants as a whole (Kwan, CLC Research Paper #9). Immigrants with disabilities in particular face compounding challenges to finding employment in their area of expertise as they must overcome the discriminatory attitudes towards people with disabilities, as well as their immigration status (Sandys, 1998).

### **Finding #3 – Immigrant employment initiatives that are designed to support immigrants in finding work are outdated.**

“We end up providing the wrong services to the wrong people... We should define clearly the type of services that are appropriate to the skills and resources that immigrants bring to Canada.”

-- Key informant

A third main theme that emerged is a perception that current services designed to help immigrants find work are out-dated. “Today’s immigrant employment services are for yesterday’s immigrants,” was how one person put it. Service providers and IEPs in particular were critical of an employment support system that is not keeping pace with immigration policy that increasingly recruits higher skilled immigrants (culminating in the new Immigration Act of 2002 stressing the education, language and experience of skilled workers). It should be noted that this view was less a criticism of immigrant employment organizations as it was a comment on the expectations and restrictions of their funders, especially in terms of outcomes. Three main concerns were identified: 1) little flexibility and client responsiveness, 2) limited range of support available across the skill spectrum, and 3) services that do not adequately address employer needs.

#### **Little room for flexibility and client responsiveness**

“Initiatives are geared to a different immigrant population (refugees, dependents, family class) but not necessarily for the immigrant with high skills. The exception are the bridging programs. These are excellent but we need more of these to address the full range of immigrant needs.”

– Key informant

Key informants pointed out that the immigrant employment service delivery system was developed many years ago. The guidelines for how funds are to be used are therefore based on a client base of a previous era. Today organizations have increasing numbers of highly skilled immigrants coming through their doors. These individuals come with many resources: high levels of education, considerable experience, some even with substantial financial wealth. They also come with the expectation that Canada will welcome the investment of these resources and be eager to facilitate their contribution to the Canadian economy.

The unfortunate reality, however, is that these expectations are often unmet. The absence of a comprehensive strategy to address systemic barriers is at the heart of this failure. Our research findings (particularly the comments from IEP survey respondents) indicate considerable disillusionment with employment initiatives primarily because these supports do not factor in the level of expertise that immigrants already possess. In part this was attributed to restrictive funder expectations that do not give employment organizations the programming flexibility needed to adequately meet their evolving client needs and expectations. For example, one key informant noted that HRSDC programs are “very basic, targeted at those immigrants who are not professionally qualified; the professional group is lagging behind.” What is more, service providers are not supported in anticipating and planning for

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changing trends in their client base. In the words of one key informant, “counselors/facilitators have to catch-up with clients instead of being ahead of them in developing the tools”.

Key informants also observed that part of the problem lies in funders’ expectations of program outcomes. The primary outcome that most funders seemed to be concerned with is that a client “get a job, any job” as quickly as possible even if this means underemployment. Research participants observed how narrow and short-sighted this view of outcomes is—it does not acknowledge the many important intermediary steps leading to employment, or the fact that immigrants and our society as a whole gain when immigrants’ skills are fully utilized. Instead, service providers feel pressure to provide a speedy overview of the Canadian labour market without tailoring their services to the specific aspirations of their client. “The focus is still on immediate orientation to the system”, said one key informant, “not on meeting the goals of the IEP.”

“The government should improve the language training for immigrants because the courses have too many students and the English level of each student is not classified. That’s the first step for immigrants to get into jobs in Canada and the government should be stronger on this issue.”  
– IEP survey respondent

### **Limited range of supports available across the skill spectrum**

On a related topic, research participants noted that current immigrant employment programs reach only those immigrants at the very extreme ends of the skills spectrum: general skills and the high professional skills. The majority of programs fall into the first category (“lowest denominator skills”) and include such components as basic language skills, basic job search skills, basic job readiness programs. These types of programs treat immigrants as a homogenous group leaving IEPs without the appropriate support that may be of benefit.

There are some initiatives aimed at supporting highly skilled immigrants. Perhaps the most promising examples are the Bridging programs funded by the Access to Professions and Trades Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. These programs enable immigrants to gain work experience/training in their specific profession in Canada. However, presently Bridging programs are available for only a small number of professions and are only offered in selected locations across the province.

“Employers want people at level 9/10 English. Business skills become more important and the programs should focus on enhanced communication: business and social English.”  
-- Key informant

There are other programs that offer mentoring, co-op/internship placements and employer liaison and referral services. While these programs are seen to be helpful in matching immigrant qualifications with work settings, again there are also relatively few to be found and they are offered only in selected communities. As valuable as these initiatives are, the underlying assumption to them is that many, if not all, immigrants are not job-ready when they arrive or that the new skills they may need to learn may be difficult to obtain on the job. Whether these initiatives attempt to overcome employers’ perceptions and fears or address the real needs of immigrants is difficult to assess. That being said, there is little doubt that these ‘brokering’ initiatives, however small their numbers, do ease the difficulties faced by newcomer immigrants in accessing the labour market.

“Immigrants need the help and assistance of policy-makers to create public confidence about them as one would with the entry of new children into a family. I look to the [government] for this because the whole immigration policy to develop the country is ‘formulated’ by the [government] and the formula should ultimately work for the Canadian people, the immigrants and the country.”

– IEP survey respondent

There is something to be learned from the intense, focused and sustained advertising campaigns of pizza companies who can have pizza staring you in the face wherever you go and still make you feel like eating it. Confidence needs to be created in the job market that would make Canadian employers feel that ‘oh, our work place doesn’t have any immigrants....maybe we should employ some like everybody else has’.”

– IEP survey respondent

A final concern is with language training. On the one hand, the issue is with the limited range of supports available. Presently language training is focused on developing basic language skills (level 1-5). Key informants called for training to be available at much higher levels (e.g., 9-10) and to incorporate profession specific components. On the other hand, the issue is also with the generalized perception that all or most immigrants have language training needs. By not acknowledging that many who are fluent in either English or French also have trouble accessing meaningful jobs, attention is drawn away from the other barriers that prevent immigrant access to the labour market and the need for labour-market access strategies for this significant group. Furthermore, the value of the knowledge of languages that immigrants know can be leveraged in efforts to support their labour market participation – efforts that will also acknowledge and affirm their true strengths and abilities.

### **Current services are not aligned with employer needs**

Research participants highlighted that existing programs are often not linked with employer’s needs. As one key informant put it, in terms of the employer’s desire for immigrants to have previous workplace exposure: “We need more tools and maybe a range of tools to be incorporated in all the programs: co-op and mentorship should become an integral part”. The lack of consideration of the employer perspective was surprising considering that “no matter how well one is prepared, it is up to the employer to do the hiring.” Judging from the survey, some employers seem to recognize the benefit of hiring IEPs; however they expressed concern about the cost of training IEPs in areas such as industry/occupational specific standards, procedures and language in cases where IEPs have had no previous Canadian experience. Therefore, co-op and mentorship programs, funded at least in part by the government, as well as targeted programs to address specific gaps in knowledge, would assist employers in providing IEPs experience in the workplace.

IEP survey respondents also echoed this theme. They noted that current programs were not created with employers’ needs in mind, nor were employers invited to be part of this process, thus leaving immigrants and employers disconnected or mismatched, and without the opportunity to clear misperceptions. This lack of direction and involvement is a significant barrier to IEPs who experience difficulty finding work. For their part employers stressed the need for language training, with 79% of employer survey respondents stating that language barriers prevented them from hiring more immigrants.

### **Finding #4 – There are relatively few initiatives aimed at supporting employers and other stakeholder groups**

A fourth theme is the observation that the present funding framework lacks an across-the-board strategy to engage and support employers and other key stakeholder groups to do their share in facilitating immigrants into the

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“While all the immigrants are highly qualified they always have to start with a low paying job in order to survive. The Canadian government along with the Canadian employers should [acknowledge] the skills of the immigrants.

Immigration Canada should work with the Canadian employers to offer the immigrants jobs they deserve.”

– Service provider survey respondent

“Employers do not value foreign experience; this is not just the government’s problem to solve: employers need to inform themselves and take some responsibility on themselves. The business community needs to step in”

-- Key informant

“Employers need to change their attitude. The government can fund programs to bring different stakeholders together, but ultimately employers also have to act as a community and as individuals”

--Key informant

labour market. In conjunction with this void, employers and other stakeholders are not seen to be aware of the more active role that they need to play, nor are they aware of the services available to support them in this work. IEPs and service providers commented that while a few initiatives do exist (representing a good first step), these are not enough. The lack of support to these stakeholders combined with the general low level of awareness, is seen by IEPs to exacerbate the numerous challenges they face in securing work in their field of expertise. One key informant put it this way, “The employer has a certain role to play in the integration of IEPs and the government should facilitate the process.”

### **Lack of a concerted social marketing strategy**

That Ontario’s labour market needs immigrants has been clearly stated in the federal government’s recruitment strategy for immigrants, as well as in documented skill-shortage sectors. Despite this, research participants mentioned that there appears to be no accompanying social marketing strategy of immigrants to employers. This is not to say that there is no marketing taking place. But what is done tends to be ad hoc and with limited impact. Existing initiatives include marketing materials which contain employer testimonials illustrating the benefits of hiring IEPs as well as descriptions of the various services available to help employers hire IEPs.

Many key informants, IEPs in particular, reiterated the importance of a marketing campaign to encourage employers to be more active in hiring immigrants in their workplaces. Service providers also expressed their frustration that current employment services frequently do not include outreach programs to employers, nor do they address the need for “a concerted government program designed to clarify and disseminate information to employers regarding immigrants and their availability.” Another key informant told us, “The strategy should present immigrants as new members of our communities, who have both the right and the responsibility to play a role in building the communities, and the society should utilize them accordingly.”

### **Few practical supports for employers**

Another shortcoming is the limited reach of present initiatives designed to support employers in hiring IEPs. Examples of existing employer supports include:

- World Education Services (credential assessment)
- Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (language assessment)
- Job Connect
- Bridging programs
- Ontario Works
- English as a Second Language (through Ministry of Education)
- JobGrow and Training Hotline (MTCU) (1-800-387-5656)
- CON\*NECT

While these initiatives are seen as a promising move forward, service providers and IEPs alike stated that these programs are too few in number, are not well funded and accept a relatively small number of applicants. The importance of these supports is further underscored by employer survey respondents. These respondents identified that a better understanding of educational equivalencies and supporting the language proficiency of immigrants (perhaps through subsidized workplace language training) would assist them in hiring immigrants.

### **Lack of employer awareness**

Employers were seen to stand to gain many benefits from hiring immigrants (e.g., innovative ideas, additional qualifications, and global connections). Yet it was believed that employers remain unaware of, and not connected to, the existing initiatives that are available to support them. In fact over 40% of employers who responded to the survey were unable to comment on either the general effectiveness of the funding framework, and or on the range of employment initiatives that should be offered to employers. When asked to check off all the services they had used in the past to recruit immigrants, employers most frequently indicated the mainstream media, immigrant employment organizations in their communities, recruiting agencies and electronic job boards. Employers were much less likely to indicate the specific initiatives mentioned above.

“The process needs to be facilitated for the recognition of internationally-trained professionals' credentials. This inevitably means working towards institutional change in the regulatory bodies, and greater government involvement over regulation, however unpopular this may be.”

– Civil servant survey respondent

Key informants also stressed the need to raise awareness among employers about hiring immigrants. “We need to hear and see more of the positive outcomes. This might prompt employers to take more initiative.” There is a need for employers to appreciate the experience that IEPs have gained while abroad. At the moment employers are not encouraged to value this experience, nor are they given incentives to do so. For their part, key informants stressed that employers also need to play a more active role and not passively wait for government to assume a leadership role.

### **Need for additional support to other stakeholders**

The lack of sufficient support was seen to extend to other stakeholder groups, primarily regulators, credential assessors and educational institutions. While key informants acknowledged that there are some notable attempts to support the involvement of these groups, there is an overwhelming need for additional initiatives and better co-ordination among existing initiatives.

Regarding regulation there is a general perception the governments have traditionally been wary of treading too far into the domain of regulatory bodies. While there are merits to the principle of self-regulation, these should be balanced with equitable access to professions. PROMPT argues that it is in the public interest for IEPs to have access to their professions and government has a stronger role to play than previously acknowledged. On the positive side, the provincial government has provided financial support (through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities) to the Ontario

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Regulators for Access—a group of 13 regulatory bodies working to improve access by international candidates to self-regulated professions ([www.regulators4access.ca](http://www.regulators4access.ca)). However, the general sentiment is that government could play a more active role to speed up progress in regulatory reform, and for this progress to be made accountable to the public (for a detailed discussion on this topic see PROMPT's previous policy paper entitled "*In the Public Interest: Immigrant Access to Regulated Professions in Today's Ontario*, 2004).

Regarding credential assessment, IEP survey respondents repeatedly expressed how difficult it was to have their credentials and experience officially recognized. In 2000 the Ontario government signed an agreement with World Education Services (WES) to create an Ontario wide, government-recognized credential recognition service. In 2003 the federal government earmarked \$13 million toward credential assessment. Yet despite these advances notable results have not yet appeared to trickle down to IEPs. Key informants cautioned that credential assessments are good as long as they were accepted by employers or educational institutions (which is too often not the case). These stakeholders need to be informed about the process and validity of credential assessments and to recognize these assessments appropriately.

Regarding educational institutions, key informants noted that many educational institutions do not have a structured PLAR (prior learning assessment process) to recognize and credit past learning and experience. PLAR's capacity to assess the skills of highly-qualified immigrants needs itself to be evaluated and augmented. They also noted that educational institutions lack adequate support from the government and therefore do not have adequate funding to support IEP specific programs. The Conference Board of Canada has also acknowledged the lack of government support to educational institutions to enable them to build their capacity to cater to immigrant students (Bloom & Grant, 2001).

"I think that organizations have to continue to advocate (on behalf of immigrants) to their local politicians; continued reports, materials, presentations have to be made public (ie- Toronto's labour readiness plan); media coverage of individuals' experience with the system and its shortcomings."

– Civil servant survey respondent

A recent development is the new initiative under CON\*NECT, Colleges of Ontario Network for Education and Training, called Colleges Integrating Immigrants to Employment (CIITE) which will make recommendations for changing existing infrastructure, processes and programs at Ontario colleges to improve the participation of immigrants in the college system and into the workforce [[www.collegeconnect.on.ca](http://www.collegeconnect.on.ca)].

### **Finding #5 – The immigrant voice advocating on behalf of IEPs has been fragmented**

The fifth main finding that emerged is that a unified immigrant voice advocating for better access to professions has been lacking. It was primarily key informants and IEPs who made this point, acknowledging that immigrants have a critical role to play in developing solutions to how they are effectively facilitated into the labour market. However, in the past this voice has been fragmented and lacking broad-based support across immigrant

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groups. The lack of a well-organized and co-ordinated immigrant voice was seen to emerge from three interconnected factors.

The first factor was fear. IEPs and key informants noted that immigrants may be wary of becoming politically active advocating on their own behalf. “Immigrants may come from political systems where advocacy is dangerous,” said one key informant, “and [they may be] loath to do it in Canada.” In addition, the conditional citizenry of new immigrants, adds to their perception of risk in engaging in advocacy. IEPs and key informants therefore stressed the need for immigrants to become aware of their democratic rights in a civil society such as Canada, of the power of their vote, and of effective advocacy strategies. IEP survey respondents recognized the need for increased communication and mobilization in order to be heard more effectively and to gain “proper access to the powers that be.” Another IEP went further to state, “Landed immigrants should have the right to vote, only then will politicians be interested in solving their problems.”

The second factor was the lack of a collective immigrant voice representing immigrants. While the need for a unified voice was repeatedly emphasized by IEPs and other key informants, it seemed to be hard to achieve this. In the past the perception seemed to be that community organizations held some kind of mandate to represent the interest of immigrants. However, the immigrant voice of today should be directed by immigrants themselves. One key informant told us:

“Service providers do not always understand ‘what and who’. They need to develop a road map and understand who is who and what the mandate is. Immigrants themselves should identify where they are today and where they want to be in the continuum of services”.  
[Key Informant]

A third factor was negative portrayals of immigrants in the media. IEP survey respondents noted the lack of positive representation of immigrants and their stories to the general public through the media and regarded this as seriously hindering their ability to gain understanding from other Canadians. Without the general public’s support, IEPs do not believe they will be able to “build much momentum to support their case.”

Overall, IEPs and other key informants stressed the necessity for immigrants to be an active part of building solutions. It is imperative that government consults with immigrants as part of a collaborative effort to guide changes in redesigning the current system of funding and implementing immigrant employment initiatives. As one survey respondent stated, “[In] my point of view the government needs a systemic view about the problem to try to address the right solution. It needs to probably listen more [to those directly involved] in the problem—the immigrants.”

PROMPT itself was formed to address this gap of a collective IEP voice that is broad-based. Through its series of policy papers (such as this one) it seeks to put forward credible solutions that are rooted in the experience and

opinion of immigrants. The PROMPT perspective on future directions found in the next section of the report are expressions of these experiences and opinions.

## 4. Future Directions

The second section of this part of the paper offers preliminary ideas as to what a new approach to funding and implementing immigrant employment initiatives might look like. In the sections below, we summarize six main recommendations given by research participants. For each of these recommendations, PROMPT offers its own perspective. We stress that these are not definitive, but are intended to be a catalyst for provoking more in-depth discussions among stakeholders.

### **Finding #1 - A commitment is needed across and within levels of government to agree upon guiding principles for the funding of immigrant employment initiatives.**

“An effective program should provide tangible and accountable results.”  
– IEP survey respondent

When looking to the future the first theme that emerged is that governments need to agree upon guiding principles for the funding of immigrant employment initiatives. Guiding principles are those fundamental beliefs that, once articulated and agreed upon, would inform and focus future policy decisions and action. The need for such principles was suggested in order to address the perception of a present system of funding that is fragmented and lacking a cohesive vision. Having a common set of guiding principles within and across the various levels of governments is seen as necessary in bringing about a semblance of vision and coordination to the various components of the immigrant employment program funding system.

“Accountability [is needed] on existing immigrant support programs, [and information should be] open to public. [Perhaps] open an "Ontario immigrant newspaper" which would be distributed at no cost and reflect what is going on and attract [public] attention to immigrant issues.”  
– IEP survey respondent

Eleven guiding principles were identified through key informant interviews and the literature review. These eleven principles were then ranked by survey respondents. The chart on the next page lists the principles according to the collective priority of the 442 survey respondents.

All the guiding principles listed below are directed at government. This was intentional given the parameters set for the study. However, focus group participants reiterated the point that government is but one player in our society that should provide leadership in facilitating the participation of immigrants in the labour market. The private sector in particular was highlighted as another segment of our society that needs to play this leadership role. Consequently the guiding principles below should be taken in a context that acknowledges a **shared responsibility across sectors** of our society. This shared responsibility implies that sectors share the costs associated with developing and implementing effective and innovative immigrant employment initiatives.

## Summary of Guiding Principles

Priority guiding principles by stakeholder group:

IEPs:

- Comprehensive
- Effective/Efficient
- Accountable
- Transparent

Service providers:

- Sustainable
- Comprehensive
- Adequate
- Flexible/Responsive

Civil servants:

- Equitable
- Sustainable
- Flexible/Responsive
- Consultative

<b>Guiding Principle</b> (in order of collective priority of survey respondents combined)	<b>Description of Guiding Principle</b> (as articulated by key informants and identified through the literature review)
<b>Comprehensive</b>	Framework includes a range of supports for immigrants and other stakeholder groups.
<b>Effective/Efficient</b>	Evidence-based outcomes required for funded initiatives.
<b>Accountable</b>	Government able to demonstrate that the framework is developed and implemented in the public interest.
<b>Transparent</b>	Framework's processes and outcomes are communicated in a publicly accessible format and are open to public scrutiny.
<b>Sustainable</b>	Long-term funding available to plan and stabilize initiatives.
<b>Adequate</b>	Levels of funding meet demonstrated needs.
<b>Flexible/Responsive</b>	Initiatives accommodate local community needs.
<b>Equitable</b>	Access to needed initiatives is not restrictive to segments of the population.
<b>Consultative</b>	Multiple stakeholders involved in designing and monitoring funding framework.
<b>Collaborative</b>	Framework includes multi-lateral agreements between and within levels of government.
<b>Synergistic</b>	Framework allows multiple sources of funding to co-exist within settings.

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### **PROMPT's Perspective**

- A commitment is needed across and within levels of government to agree upon guiding principles for the funding of immigrant employment initiatives.
- The guiding principles that were prioritized by internationally educated professionals who answered the survey (i.e., *comprehensive, effective/efficient, accountable, and transparent*) should be the primary principles guiding the funding of immigrant employment initiatives.
- The principle of *effective/efficient* should be understood as producing short-term and long-term outcomes that are relevant to the needs of IEPs in a timely manner.
- The principle of *accountability* should be expanded to include a requirement that funding recipients demonstrate that funding received is producing positive outcomes for IEPs, and that government adopt new rules of engagement with stakeholders - particularly immigrants - to ensure programs are designed to and are effective in meeting immigrant needs.
- Two additional principles need to be included to guide the new funding approach: 1) *accessibility* (IEPs must be able to access relevant employment programs), and 2) *affordability* (programs must be affordable and should include subsidies to cover the cost of licensing and accreditation processes).
- *Relevancy* is an overarching principle that best summarizes all other guiding principles. By relevance we mean that initiatives address the range of needs of IEPs, address systemic barriers to labour market participation that are being experienced by IEPs, and serve to facilitate the securing of employment for IEPs in their fields of expertise.
- To summarize, PROMPT recommends the following guiding principles:

#### **Overarching Principle:**

*Relevant* (Programs must be relevant to a range of IEP needs, address systemic barriers to labour market participation, and facilitate the securing of employment in field of expertise)

#### **Priority Guiding Principles:**

*Comprehensive* – (Framework includes a range of supports for immigrants and other stakeholder groups)

*Effective/efficient* – (Evidence-based outcomes required for funded initiatives; employment initiatives must meet IEP needs in a timely manner)

*Accountable* – (Government must be able to demonstrate that framework is developed and implemented in the public interest; funding recipients must demonstrate that funding received is producing positive, meaningful outcomes for IEPs; new rules of engagement are followed)

*Transparent* – (Framework's processes and outcomes are communicated in a publicly accessible format and are open to public scrutiny)

*Accessible* – (IEPs must be able to access relevant programs)

*Affordable* – (Programs should be affordable to IEPs and subsidies be available to cover the cost of licensing and accreditation)

“[Government] bodies need to talk to one another and recognize that they all have a key role to play with the transition and integration of newcomers into the Canadian society”  
– Service provider survey respondent

## **Finding #2 - There needs to be a new coordinated and integrated funding strategy within and among existing government departments.**

The second main theme that surfaced from the data is the recommendation that a new funding strategy be developed. This new strategy should be coordinated and encompass all levels of government and the various departments who are currently involved with immigrant employment issues, as well as those who *should* be involved. While research participants were not necessarily unanimous on how to achieve this goal, there did emerge three overarching suggestions about potential structural change: 1) the creation of a new lateral structure within government, 2) the creation of a new funding stream dedicated to immigrants, and 3) the modification of existing funding structures to support a new coordinated funding strategy. While these suggestions are not necessarily mutually exclusive, they do represent differing views on the degree to which to alter the existing system of funding.

“[The government needs to] determine a strong vision, a consistent plan for types of initiatives and have community committee representatives of service providers and immigrants discuss with local political representatives.”  
– Service provider survey respondent

### **Lateral coordination among government levels and ministries/departments**

The first suggestion acknowledges the reality of silos within government—different political jurisdictions (i.e., federal, provincial, municipal) and different ministries/departments within a given jurisdiction will continue to develop their unique policy and programs in overlapping spheres of interest. There may in fact be value in having multi-lateral responses to complex issues such as immigrant employment. While this may be true, what is needed (and what presently is very much lacking) are lateral structures that facilitate common immigrant employment policy directions within and across governments. These intergovernmental and interdepartmental structures (i.e., horizontally across governments and vertically within governments) would allow for a more coordinated funding strategy by improving communication and developing common policy frameworks. According to Alboim (2003) the following players should be included in any new lateral structure: the federal government (Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Human Resources Skills Development Canada), the provincial government (Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration and the Ministry of Training, Colleges

and Universities) and the municipal governments within areas of large immigrant concentrations.

Integral to the implementation of such lateral structures is strong leadership. In the words of one key informant: “Mechanisms [or structures] help once people know that their political masters want them to work together...You can set up mechanisms but that in itself doesn’t change things.” A change in attitude is therefore needed among political leaders, one that recognizes and is committed to addressing issues of power inequity, discrimination and cultural insensitivity that current policies are perceived to contain (as stated by survey participants). In addition, the leadership would also address the differential impact that some policy changes and spending cuts in government services have on newcomers to Canada (Kwan, Canadian Labour Congress research paper #9)

“Right now we have different departments from different levels of [government] dealing with all the needs of immigrants. We see a lot of waste of resources without results. Since immigrants affect our local living, a task force at City level should be set up to address all these issues centrally.”  
- Service provider survey respondent

“[The government needs to] determine a strong vision, a consistent plan for types of initiatives and have community committee representatives of service providers and immigrants discuss with local political representatives.”  
- Service provider survey respondent

### **New funding stream for immigrants**

Overwhelmingly, the majority of stakeholders who responded to the survey indicated their support for the creation of a new dedicated funding stream for immigrants. It is further suggested in the literature (Lazar, 2002, O’Connor, 2003) that one way this could be achieved is through the creation of Human Resources Investment programming for skilled immigrants (such as in place for youth, older workers and First Nations people). The hope for the creation of a dedicated funding stream is that it would allow for adequate programs and services to be designed and delivered for immigrants, and in particular to meet the needs of highly skilled immigrants. Canada being founded on immigration and continuing to rely on immigration, it would appear reasonable to propose that a steady, coordinated stream of funding be exclusively dedicated to this reality, specifically the needs of new immigrants and all other stakeholders in society who form this reality. However many of our key informants and focus group participants cautioned against moving forward on this suggestion too rashly. Concerns were raised over the double-edged potential of this suggestion for further marginalizing immigrants, drawing attention away from their merit. Another warning was to avoid creating a situation whereby immigrants were in direct competition for limited funds with other specific populations such as First Nations, youth or people with disabilities. Also, the issue of access for communities with fewer numbers of immigrants to such a fund was raised.

### **Changes to existing funding streams**

Some research participants believe that immigrant employment opportunities are best advanced by improving existing funding streams. Below are examples of these proposed improvements. These suggestions are not necessarily an exhaustive list, but serve to illustrate how participants believe existing streams could be altered to the benefit of immigrants. The suggestions fall under two main categories:

- 1) Expanding and making the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada programs more responsive to newcomers needs:
  - Opening up the current Employment Insurance system to unemployed immigrants even if they do not have prior labour market attachment. This would enable immigrants to access supports and services to facilitate their participation in the labour market and into their fields of expertise.
  - Expanding current HRSDC labour market support programs to employed workers (training subsidies, employment counselling, workshops, etc.) This would enable under-employed immigrants who are working survival jobs to access jobs in their field, obtain work experience in their field and to achieve accreditation and licensing in their fields of expertise, as desired.
  
- 2) Expanding Citizenship and Immigration Canada settlement initiatives to better facilitate the labour market integration of immigrants:
  - Expanding CIC programs including more of a labour market and workplace orientation in program, workplace language skills training, information and funding for credential assessment and certification. This would help to overcome the obstacles often faced by immigrants in obtaining work in their field of expertise. Key informants noted that while ISAP has an employment component it is very weak; Enhanced Language Training and specific employment related programs need to be developed that expand on the current Job Search Workshops.

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### ***PROMPT's Perspective***

- A new coordinated funding and integrated strategy within and among existing government departments is needed.
- A change in attitude and strong leadership is urgently needed among political leaders in order to make the depth of changes required.
- Supporting structural changes are required that include the improved lateral and vertical coordination among and between government levels and ministries/departments. One form that this could take is the creation of a new structure at the provincial level that:
  - Coordinates and works towards integrating employment initiatives for immigrants across and between jurisdictions.
  - Engages all key stakeholders, including immigrants, employers, occupational regulatory bodies, organizations providing programs to immigrants, credential recognition bodies and educational institutions.
  - Is directly accountable to the public regarding the outcomes, spending and impact of programs
  - Coordinates labour market analysis and planning, develops investment strategies to build the economic base of

communities, and develops incentive strategies for employer hiring of IEPs.

- Programs that mainstream employment opportunities for immigrants are needed and existing funding streams should be used more effectively, augmented, and better utilized to meet needs of IEPs. For example:
  - The Employment Assistant Services (EAS) funding stream could be used more effectively and comprehensively as a fund through which local area HRSDC offices are *required* to develop programming to meet the needs of their communities, which would include immigrants in many regions.
  - Each local HRSDC area is *required* to have an advisory committee made up of representatives from the community – including IEPs and employers - to help design and oversee EAS programming initiatives.
  - Local area HRSDC offices are *required* to demonstrate accountability to their communities by reporting on the programming and outcomes; reporting is both to government and to the local community.
- Significant changes to existing funding streams are made that explicitly address IEP concerns.

General recommendations:

- A comprehensive program of “direct support” to immigrants should be provided – a “six month integration allowance” including income support, subsidies to defray the cost of the licensing process, relevant employment initiatives, community supports (including for example housing, healthcare)
- There should be a re-orientation of immigrant landing fees towards meeting the needs of newly arrived immigrants.
- There needs to be equity in the federal per capita spending of immigrants across the country.
- Employment initiatives, as a standard feature, should subsidize the translation of documents, credential assessment fees, and licensing fees as they relate to IEPs.

Specific recommendations regarding Employment Insurance (EI) eligibility:

- IEPs who are underemployed should be able to qualify for EI (income support and employment benefits) after 6 months or 1 year of being in Canada.
- IEPs should be able to access programs/funds to enable them to participate in accreditation and licensing procedures and/or in relevant programs for a significant amount of time to support them in their ultimate career goal or work in their profession.
- EI recipients should be able to access EI supports and programs without having to give up survival jobs.

“Federal government (specifically immigration) has to better inform [professional] immigrants what the accreditation process entails before they come to Canada. We are wasting valuable human resources because immigrants come to Canada with highly-developed skills but they face lengthy and expensive processes before they can use these skills. They often end up on OW and take low-paying jobs just to get off the system.”

– Civil servant survey respondent

“We have made too many assumptions that immigrant class denotes profound difference between people. ... We have been doing things on the basis of immigrant categories rather than immigrant skills.”

-- Key informant

Specific recommendations regarding EI implementation include:

- While on EI participants should be able to volunteer and maintain their benefits.
- EI recipients should not be forced to use RRSP and RESPs towards tuition costs; a minimum level of savings needs to be protected.
- The process for accessing training (skills development) should be more streamlined and efficient (current system is labour intensive and can present barriers to access).
- IEPs should be able to pursue training relevant to their previous occupation or their career goals regardless of what occupation they have had in Canada.
- In cases where HRSDC is the funding provider for further training, a system of accountability and transparency is needed regarding the training programs. Information needs to be available for individuals and counsellors to assess the placement rate and employer acceptance of programs. The current system lacks accountability, training is often substandard and not industry appropriate.

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### **Finding #3 - There needs to be a new implementation strategy that provides a continuum of employment-related interventions.**

The third main theme that emerged during the research is the need for a new implementation strategy. This new approach for carrying out employment interventions needs to represent a continuum of employment-related interventions expanded to include pre- in addition to post-immigration supports. Secondly, the strategy must allow for flexibility to accommodate a range of needs both in terms of individual client needs as well as differing regional contexts. Lastly, the strategy must include the provision for the participation of all stakeholder groups. This last point is elaborated on in Future Finding #5 and is therefore only briefly mentioned at this point.

#### **Expanding employment-related interventions to pre-immigration**

The first suggestion within the new implementation strategy highlights the need for interventions which begin pre-arrival in Canada and continue until employment in the immigrant's field of expertise is attained (Alboim & Maytree Foundation, 2001). Key informants pointed to the need to better inform potential applicants prior to their arrival in Canada. Many IEP survey respondents expressed their disillusionment with the immigration process. They felt as though they were misled during the immigration process regarding the ease of finding employment in their profession of choice. They emphasized the need for the availability of detailed and accurate information prior to immigrants' arrival in Canada regarding the labour market, assessment and licensing procedures, and the investments required in order to find employment. Furthermore, it was suggested that federal and provincial governments should jointly sponsor activities that would provide

“More comprehensive/bridging/customized programming is needed where immigrants are getting their specific needs fulfilled and not wasting time going through generic programs.”

– Civil servant survey respondent

“I attended [organization name] and it helped me a lot to understand the Canadian work environment and culture. These programs need more government funding to increase staff and facilities.”

– IEP survey respondent

“I am grateful I took the workshop at [organization name] because it has opened the door for me and provided me with the necessary tools I need in my search for the job that I want. In my opinion, these programs can be expanded with further government [funding].”

– IEP survey respondent

this information to potential immigrants, including their work prospects in different regions and the availability of training.

IEP survey respondents also raised the issue of expanding credential assessment services overseas. Assessment at this point in the immigration process would serve to shape realistic employment expectations of immigrants and help to speed up labour market participation upon arrival. However, when exploring this idea further during the focus groups, there were many unanswered questions about how to implement pre-immigration credential assessment: Who would cover the costs of such assessment? Should credential assessment be linked with immigration selection or be conducted after selection? What are the dangers of linking credential assessment to immigration selection? More thought is needed in order to determine how best to practically implement pre-immigration credential assessment.

### **Flexibility in programming to accommodate a range of needs**

The need for programming that is broad enough to address general needs of immigrants but allows for flexibility to adapt to the specific needs of individual clients was stressed. It was repeatedly implied that a new integrated system of programming is needed that would meet the full range of client needs – not just those with lower skills. To begin, generic employment supports that are open to all immigrants should be offered primarily for general labour market issues (e.g., job search techniques). But then supports should be targeted for specific sub-populations of immigrants. These targeted supports should be based on profession-specific issues, skill-specific issues and level of English proficiency. Tailored employment supports should not be targeted by immigration class as this is a less effective distinction when considering labour market participation.

In addition, regional specific supports need to cater programming to the unique context of each region. For example, employment supports could emphasize areas of regional skill demand (e.g., industry type that is representative for a region). This suggestion acknowledged the very real differences between larger metropolitan centres with large immigrant concentrations and those centres with smaller concentrations of immigrants.

Suggestions for new, sustained or improved programming were made with the agreement that program evaluation needs a standard feature. Program suggestions are listed below:

- Programs that engage employers and community
- Programs that offer work experience
- Programs that offer sector-specific skills and language training, not generically but only as needed
- Programs that handle issues related to regulation and accreditation, without overlap with the function of regulatory bodies

“We need projects that involve a number of stakeholders...for example, community agencies, colleges, employer associations/ licensing bodies, employers and IEPs themselves....each can play a role in providing the steps to access for internationally-trained professionals to work in their field.”  
– Service provider survey respondent

- Programs that offer employment incentives to businesses to hire immigrants (e.g., tax breaks, subsidies)
- Programs that raise awareness and educate people about immigrant employment issues
- Programs that are aligned with employer needs
- Programs that include an active outreach and marketing to employers
- Mentoring, matching, bridging, co-op, and internship programs
- Programs that support immigrant advocacy

### **Provision for broad stakeholder involvement**

Research participants were also very clear that a new implementation strategy must involve stakeholders other than immigrants, primarily employers, educational institutions, credential assessors and regulators. In part this means consulting these stakeholder groups in developing a new implementation strategy. This means that government resources be committed to enabling these stakeholder groups to do more to create conditions favourable to immigrant employment. We will elaborate on this point under Future Finding #5.

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### ***PROMPT's Perspective***

- There needs to be a new implementation strategy that provides a continuum of employment-related interventions.
- Pre-immigration employment-related interventions are necessary to expedite the process of immigrant integration upon arrival in Canada. While pre-immigration strategies are important, this emphasis must not result in a requirement of licensure as a condition for immigration selection. However, as part of a pre-immigration strategy, immigrants should be able to begin their application for their occupational licenses, so that the element of informed choice is available to them. If, for instance, obtaining a license is a lengthy process, prospective immigrants can make the informed choice to proceed with immigration, choose a different immigration destination where opportunities to practice in their profession are more readily available or remain in their country of origin.
- Pre-immigration interventions would have the following critical components:
  - Realistic promotion of Canada and job prospects.
  - Credential assessments done for the purposes of immigration are transferable to licensing and employment processes.
  - Labour market analysis by geographic region and area of expertise is available.

- Information is communicated in a variety of formats, not relying solely on the existing internet portal. When web-based information is developed, it includes the perspective of immigrants. For example, CIC could sub-contract an immigrant-based organization to develop the content of such a web-site.
- The first three months of an IEP's life in Canada are critically important. It is vital that an IEP get connected to the key mainstream and community players in their profession in this time frame. Relevant employment-related interventions must support IEPs in this regard.
- There needs to be more creativity and flexibility in capacity-building to accommodate a range of IEP needs:
  - Being responsive to the IEP client is the most critical consideration. Supports must meet the range of immigrant needs and match the actual skills of the IEP. Furthermore, settlement and integration programs need to be more effective in facilitating the economic integration of immigrants. These programs should include enhanced labour market orientation/integration components, as well as social integration, for both newcomers and the settled community.
  - Examples of effective programming include:
    - Profession-based targeted supports (e.g., profession or sector-specific networks/initiatives to allow people to be immediately integrated into their professions; to speak with and to receive information, advice and guidance from professionals in their field).
    - Initiatives to support immigrant entrepreneurs to overcome barriers to self-employment.
    - Sector-specific mentoring (supported by volunteers with a wide variety of experience).
    - Paid co-ops and internships to provide access to the work place (co-ops designed to meet the specific needs of IEPs could be modeled on the current structures in place for youth and university students where a set of relationships have been established with suitable employers).
  - The framework needs to include immigrants, and stakeholder groups such as employers, occupational regulatory bodies, organizations providing programs to immigrants, credential recognition bodies and educational institutions.
  - Centralized information and advisory support needs to be available to IEPs and other stakeholder groups that comprehensively detail the range of program options available.
- Up-to-date analysis of the labour market needs to be clearly communicated to appropriate stakeholders (e.g., service providers,

employers and professional bodies). Labour market information must be relevant and forward looking.

“The parameters about outcomes need to be changed and cost-out but agencies should be contracted for results not for services.”  
-- Key informant

- The creation of an independent body with legislative power to provide true and accessible recourse for immigrants in cases of grievances against employers (this includes hiring processes and treatment on the job) be explored. Currently the only recourse for immigrants is legalistic and bureaucratic, and may not recognize or address the systemic barriers that are unique to newcomer immigrants.

Top three outcomes as ranked by stakeholder survey respondents:

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**Finding #4 - Government funders need to have a different understanding of the outcomes that immigrant employment initiatives are expected to reach.**

IEPs

1. Client employment (job in related field of expertise)
2. Client co-op / mentoring placement
3. Employer involvement in programming

A fourth suggestion centred on the outcomes that funders expect of immigrant employment initiatives, particularly those initiatives that help immigrants find work. More specifically, it was a call to move away from the simplistic single outcome mentality of “finding a job, any job” that was seen to be so dominant among funders today. The assumption behind the suggestion is that supporting people to employment is a complex process that involves multiple outcomes achievable through a variety of interventions.

Civil Servants

1. Client employment (job in related field of expertise)
2. Client employment (job in skill-shortage sectors)
3. Client co-op / mentoring placement

Focus group participants and key informants in particular pointed out the complexity of supporting immigrants to employment. For one, finding meaningful employment often involves a variety of intermediary steps that may differ from individual to individual, and may take differing lengths of time to achieve. The path to employment also differs from profession to profession. A range of outcomes are therefore needed that consider such factors as client skills, expectations and employment readiness, and most significantly the dynamics of a specific labour market sector. The evaluation of outcomes therefore becomes, in part, an exercise of determining how responsive an employment program is to its various clients within the labour market context.

Service Providers

1. Client employment (job in related field of expertise)
2. Client labour market integration skills / knowledge
3. Client satisfaction, Client employment (job in skill-shortage sectors) and Employer involvement in programming (tied)

Being responsive to a client’s expectation of finding work in their field of expertise is no simple task. Governments should therefore be setting aside development funds earmarked to test innovative employment support programs. “Prototype programs” was how one focus group participant put it using the analogy of the automotive industry. If a prototype program proves to be successful there should then be commitment from government to “roll it out into the bigger funding pot.” In other words, government needs to invest in researching innovative programs with a vision of incorporating those programs which demonstrate positive outcomes into the established, more stable funding streams.

This discussion about outcomes comes at a time when many government funding streams are developing accountability frameworks detailing the expected outcomes from the use of public funds (Newberry, Taylor, Case, &

Roderick, 2004). Focus group participants pointed out how other government ministries have been going through a process of determining the various program activities within their funding stream (what programs do), the variety of anticipated outcomes (what changes occur as a result of activities) and associated indicators (how one knows that outcomes are achieved). The rational link between activities, outcomes and indicators are often summarized through a collective program logic model exercise. The advantage of such a process is that it builds on the existing experience of funding recipients who understand the programming context (i.e., it is inductive), and it acknowledges the complexity and many layers of outcomes and their inter-relationships. Another advantage of this approach is that it de-links outcomes from their measurement. That is, it focuses first on being clear on what outcomes are expected, before worrying about how to measure if these outcomes have been achieved.

“There is also a need for employment-service delivery to align to the needs of the employers. They have to know what employers are looking for and empower their clients with those specific skills.”  
-- Key informant

Some preliminary insight into some of the outcome areas that might be included in an accountability framework include:

**Client employment**

- Job in related field of expertise
- Job in skill-shortage sector

**Client satisfaction**

- The highest possible outcome for the client
- Services tailored to meet the needs of the clients

**Client skills or knowledge**

- Client labour market integration skills and knowledge
- Client co-op/mentoring placement
- Client completing education/training/licensing

**Employer involvement in programming**

- Employer co-op placements

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***PROMPT's Perspective***

- Government funders need to be aware of emerging information and statistics and respond to the systemic inequities in immigrant employment in a timely way
- Government funders need to have a different understanding of the expected outcomes for immigrant employment interventions.
- An accountability framework is needed that cuts across all immigrant employment initiatives. This framework should be developed inductively, drawing on the existing experience of IEPs and funding recipients. It should detail the range of activities that are carried out, link these to a variety of outcomes that are expected, and note associated indicators for

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measuring these outcomes. Services should be tailored to meet not only the perceived needs of immigrants, but the aspirations of immigrants.

- More public investment is needed in developing “prototypes” of innovative immigrant employment initiatives. If proved successful, these innovative programs should be incorporated into existing funding streams and implemented across the province.
- The outcome “a job in a skills-shortage sector” is not an acceptable outcome to be reached by employment interventions (with the exception of cases where an IEP has come to Canada because of the skills they have in a skills-shortage sector). The primary outcome that is expected from the IEP perspective is finding employment in the IEP’s field of expertise. A secondary outcome is finding employment in a related field of expertise.
- The evaluation of outcomes achieved by programs within a given funding stream needs to be made public and communicated widely, so that there is recognition of the effectiveness of programs.
- Assessing effectiveness of funding initiatives should include:
  - Tracking the funding streams to determine the portion of funds that result in direct service to immigrants versus the amount that is allocated to administration and logistical arrangements.
  - Determining the opportunity cost of giving these funds directly to the immigrant who then chooses to invest these in an employment preparation service of the immigrant’s own choosing.

“Immigrants with relevant experience should be allowed to work in government establishments if they satisfy the experience requirements rather than the current practice of employing only Canadians alone.”  
– IEP survey respondent

“Government establishments should give room for immigrants to acquire Canadian experience within their own setting and not leave everything to the private sector. Private sector is driven by profits only.”  
– IEP survey respondent

“Employ qualified immigrants who understand the needs of immigrants”  
– IEP survey respondent

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### **Finding #5 - The various levels of government need to fund and facilitate other stakeholder groups to support the participation of immigrants in the labour market.**

The fifth main theme that came out of the research is the belief that government needs to play an increased role in facilitating the participation of other stakeholder groups (e.g., employers, educational institutions, and occupational regulatory bodies) in integrating immigrants into the labour market. Government is perceived as needing to better support these groups and to increase communication among them. Inherent in this task, government is seen to perform a dual role of encouraging participation of stakeholders through: 1) raising the awareness of these groups about the need for them to be involved, and 2) actively supporting their involvement by providing practical resources and opportunities for them to participate. There is also an underlying belief that government needs to “lead by example” in its own labour practices.

Research participants made a variety of suggestions of how government could tangibly assist other stakeholder groups. These are listed below. Again, these are not to be taken as an exhaustive list but as a starting point to show the range of options for supporting stakeholders to recognize and accept their responsibility for promoting newcomer labour market participation. In some cases governments may be currently involved in these activities, but participants wished to reinforce their importance and urge governments to intensify their efforts.

We were told that governments should support:

*Employers:*

- By involving them in all phases of the process of integrating immigrants into the labour market.
- By facilitating partnerships between employers and public education institutions.
- By encouraging the provision of employer initiated interventions such as English as a Second Language training, company orientation sessions, and skills upgrading (with a tuition reimbursement or payment of some portion of their salary) [i.e., government should offer incentives or subsidies for employers to offer these interventions].
- By publicly acknowledging “positive results” to motivate employers to hire IEPs.
- By encouraging employers and labour organizations to take responsibility on this issue. As one key informant pointed out, “after all, they are the main beneficiaries in this process”.
- By targeting marketing efforts to sectors where there is a great demand for the skills that IEPs possess.

“Internationally-educated professionals and service providers working together to advocate for service needs ...together we can promote what is needed, where the gaps are...”

-- Service provider survey respondent

*Educational Institutions:*

- By facilitating the alignment of programs with current and emerging labour market needs.
- By building capacity to facilitate the process of prior learning assessment and recognition.
- By helping to create national training credentials and continuing to work on increasing the recognition of international credentials.
- By facilitating the improvement of institutional linkages within Canada and internationally.

*Occupational Regulatory Bodies:*

- By reviewing assessment practices and access-related issues.
- By facilitating the assessment of immigrants prior to arrival.

### **PROMPT's Perspective**

- The various levels of government need to fund and facilitate other stakeholder groups to support the participation of immigrants in the labour market through more coordinated means.
- Stakeholder groups for immigrant labour market participation have the ability and capacity to recognize the skills and knowledges of clients.
- While employers have much to benefit from hiring IEPs in their workplace, we must ensure that this does not lead to the exploitation of IEPs.
- It is important for governments to lead by example - governments are large employers. Governments should demonstrate their ability to increase the numbers of IEPs in the civil service and in their third-party contracts.
- IEPs need the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and expertise in the workplace. To facilitate this, employers should be encouraged to acknowledge their broader social role in society to support immigrant settlement. Subsidies to encourage them to hire more IEPs should be considered. These subsidies could be in the form of tax breaks for employers. Such an initiative would have clear criteria to ensure that IEPs are being hired at a level commensurate with their experience and that their employment is not short-term.
- The government needs to take a role with educational institutions that provide training in human resources to ensure that curriculum builds on trainees' know-how and capacity to recognize the skills of immigrants, trainees' ability to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases, as well as includes information about the needs and benefits of hiring IEPs.
- The government needs to take a leadership role in human resources through the aggressive promotion of hiring IEPs in the workplace. Human resource practices that are more inclusive of new immigrants, needs to be promoted and encouraged throughout the private, public and third sectors; this needs to include recruitment and personnel agencies.
- The government, especially at the provincial level, should strengthen its accountability requirements of profession/trade regulating bodies. In this regard, PROMPT has made the following recommendations in a previously-released policy paper, "In the Public Interest: Immigrant Access to Regulated Professions in Today's Ontario". Further, the government needs to encourage professional associations to take leadership on the issue of integrating IEPs within their professions. In our previous paper, PROMPT recommends that:

- Registration processes within regulated professions are guided by the overarching principles of being equitable, accountable and in the public interest. Registration processes are guided by the values of relevancy, consistency, transparency, timeliness, affordability, accessibility, respect and defensibility.
- Occupational regulatory bodies are required by legislation to undertake regulatory audits (both outcome and process) that result in equity action plans. Annual equity reports are provided to the public.
- Strategies to strengthen the public nature of accountability through regulatory councils are required.
- A centralized secretariat for the regulated professions is created to enhance accountability and to provide a vehicle for cross jurisdictional collaboration.
- Arms-length appeal processes are required for each profession or across sectors.

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**Finding #6 - Immigrants need to play an increased and on-going role in ensuring the effective implementation of these suggestions.**

The last main theme was expressed strongly and passionately by research participants, particularly IEPs. They emphasized that immigrants need to be more actively involved and heard during all phases of the process of developing and implementing a new approach to immigrant employment initiatives. In part this is a responsibility of immigrants to articulate their voice in a more organized and coherent fashion. Funding to build capacity for immigrants to articulate their voice is also crucial. In part it is the responsibility of government to ensure that avenues of consultation are offered to immigrant groups. After all, the unique perspectives and experiences of immigrants are central to this issue.

In the spirit of having immigrant voices heard, we end with the words of Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) on this point:

"[We need to carry out] non-violent direct action informing the government of the size of foreign trained human [resources] that are being wasted and at the same time that some organizations are facing human resource shortages."

"...mobilization of IEPs as representatives in decision making bodies."

"[Involve] all level of immigrants in open dialogue/question answer, and awareness building through local newspapers (in different languages)."

"Encourage a stronger organization of immigrants and their active role in making new policies."

"Establish a sustainable and meaningful professional internationally-trained association with the capacity to participate in political decision-making, within provincial and federal levels."

"Every immigrant will become a Canadian Citizen after 3 years of being in the country. Right and wrong decisions (including lack of appropriate actions) [made by politicians] should influence our votes and political support."

"[Demonstrate] in the streets to explain the problem we are facing and ask the media to reflect the problem. The problem will be known world-wide and people will not immigrate to Canada... this will put pressure on the politicians to solve the problem."

"...share the career and even life experience of an immigrant with the public on the radio or TV show."

"Most Canadians do not see anything that does not affect them. They see immigrants as people to take the jobs that Canadians do not want. They are working under the feeling that international credentials are not as good as Canadian ones. I have even heard that my University degree is like leaving high school here. They do not understand the frustrations educated individuals feel to have their qualifications viewed as second class. Until the Canadian citizens want to do something about this other than gloss over this, the government will not make it a priority."

"It is ... interesting to remark that many foreign-trained immigrants that cannot settle and integrate are leaving the country as is my case. And, with the Canadian-trained professionals that are leaving the country too, Canada is losing highly educated people that are needed to fill relevant positions in ... society."

"A committee of new immigrants should be made in which immigrants with less than 2 years of stay should be members with a President with more than 2 years stay in Canada. [This committee] will assist government to [channel] funding to immigrants based on their research gathered through their presentation and feedback."

"IEPs and others should: 1- Vote only for leaders who will implement the needs of the new immigrants. 2- Expose the tragic situation of the new immigrants to the public media."

***PROMPT's Perspective***

- Immigrants need to play an increased and on-going role in ensuring the effective implementation of these suggestions.
- The government needs to play a role in supporting immigrants in constructive engagement as equal partners in the development of Canada. This needs to translate into financial support to ensure immigrants can be effective in their political participation.
- Processes need to be created to ensure that the IEP voice is integrated into the development and assessment of all programs of relevance to IEPs.
- The voice of immigrants should be represented through the participation of more immigrant umbrella organizations and other immigrant associations at any initiative aimed at increasing the integration of immigrants.

## 5. Conclusion

“Highly qualified immigrants end up in poverty, depression, shame and [embarrassment] because the Canadian government that seduced us into moving here, having [paid] large sums of money, treats us like [society’s] rejects once we are landed. We do not need a program to "support" us. We need people to employ us.”  
– IEP survey respondent

This policy paper builds the case for a new approach to funding and implementing employment initiatives that would better facilitate the participation of immigrants in Ontario’s labour market. It has done this by reporting on the opinions of different stakeholder groups who offered their critical analysis of the present context of publicly funded employment initiatives for immigrants. This paper has also highlighted six areas that research participants suggested need to be addressed in order to improve on these initiatives.

As the collective voice of internationally educated professionals across Ontario, PROMPT has offered its own perspectives on each of the six areas of recommendation. PROMPT’s views presuppose strong government leadership toward developing a new approach to funding and implementing immigrant employment initiatives. This leadership will require political will, clear vision and long-term commitment. By working in collaboration with other stakeholder groups, notably IEPs, PROMPT believes that such leadership can improve how our province, and Canada, facilitates the participation of immigrants in the labour market.

## **Appendices**

- A. References
- B. Working Group Members and Research Team
- C. List of Key Informants
- D. Key Informant Questions
- E. List of Focus Group Participants
- F. Focus Group Questions
- G. Summary of Existing Funding Initiatives
- H. Endnotes

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## B. Research Team and Working Group Members

**Working Group:** Members of the Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades (PROMPT), internationally-educated professionals not formally represented on PROMPT, selected immigrant employment service providers across the province, and a staff representative from TRIEC (the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council).

Damindra Diaz*	Progress Career Planning Institute
Josie Di Zio	Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
Stelian George-Cosh*	Conestoga Institute of Technology
Rafi Khan*	Internationally Educated Professional Engineer
Marlene Kramer	New Canadian Program, Waterloo
Isabel Mahoney*	Canadian Association of Latin American Professionals, Tradespeople and Entrepreneurs
Elizabeth Mclsaac	Maytree Foundation, Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council Secretariat (TRIEC)
Fuzail Siddiqui*	The Access Project
Valeria Vicco*	Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
Jane Cullingworth	PROMPT Project Coordinator

### **Research Team: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services**

Rich Janzen	Senior Researcher
Aurelia Tokaci*	Centre Researcher
Maria Hatzipantelis	Centre Researcher
Dana Friesen	Intern Student

\*Internationally-educated professionals

## **C. List of Key Informants**

Naomi Alboim  
Fellow at the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University

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Council for Access to the Profession of Engineering

Catherine Bouchard  
Director, Human Resources, MDS International, Employer

David Carter-Whitney  
Director General, Programs and Services, Human Resources and Skills  
Development Canada, Ontario Region

Rosaline Frith  
Director General, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Robert Hoskings  
Robert Half International, Employer

Mena Falcone Johnstone  
Director, HR Policy, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, Employer  
Association

Edwin Kothiringer  
Job Start, Service Provider

Marlene Kramer  
New Canadian Program, Service Provider

Patti Redmond  
Director, Skills Investment Branch, Ministry of Training, Colleges and  
Universities

Menghistab Tsegaye  
LASI World Skills, Service Provider

## D. Key Informant Questions

### 1. The Present Situation

#### a) Funding Initiatives

- What are the current sources of funding that help to facilitate the participation of immigrants into the labour market?
- In general terms, how effective is the present system of funding in facilitating the participation of immigrants into the labour market? (What is working well and what is not working well?)

#### b) Implementing Initiatives

- What are the main kinds of employment initiatives for immigrants that exist in Ontario today?
- In general terms, how effective are these employment initiatives in facilitating the participation of immigrants into the labour market? (What is working well and what is not working well?)

### 2. Future Directions

#### a) Guiding Principles

- What principles should guide the funding of immigrant employment initiatives\*?

#### b) Policy

- What needs to change within and among existing government departments in order to effectively facilitate the participation of immigrants into Ontario's labour market?
- What would an effective intergovernmental/interdepartmental structure look like?
- What would need to happen to get this structure?
- Should there be a dedicated employment funding stream for immigrants?
- How receptive are policy makers in moving toward a new funding framework that integrates services and dedicates immigrant employment funding?

#### c) Programming

- What types of initiatives should be included in a new funding framework?
- Should some of these initiatives be tailored to a specific sub-group of immigrants?
- What, if any, types of initiatives should be tailored exclusively for internationally educated professionals?
- What key elements are necessary in programs for internationally educated professionals?
- What regional differences should be considered in programming?
- What are the main outcomes and main indicators of success that employment initiatives should strive for?

#### d) Roles

- What advocacy strategies could be effective in increasing the political will towards a new funding framework?
- How can immigrants play an ongoing role in ensuring the effective implementation of a new funding framework?
- What supports/investment do employment organizations need to fulfill their mandate?
- What additional types of supports than are currently available would increase their programming effectiveness?
- What is the role of employers in supporting the participation of immigrants in the labour market? What's the role of government in facilitating this?
- What is the role of other stakeholder groups in supporting the participation of immigrants in the labour market?
- What is the role of government in facilitating this?

Note: By “immigrant employment initiatives” we mean any publicly-funded strategy that helps to facilitate the participation of immigrants into Ontario’s labour market. The focus of these initiatives may be on supporting individual immigrants towards participation, or on supporting other stakeholder groups to facilitate the participation of immigrants.

## **E. List of Focus Group Participants**

### ***PROMPT Focus Group***

12 PROMPT members representing:

- The Access Project (TAP)
- Association for Access to the Professions of Planning and Architecture (AAPPA)
- Association of International Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (AIPSO)
- Canadian Association of Latin American Professional, Tradespeople and Entrepreneurs (CALAPTE)
- Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
- Council for Access to the Profession of Engineering (CAPE)
- Internationally-Educated Social Workers Network (IESWN)
- MOHANDÉS – Canadian Society of Iranian Engineers and Architects
- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)

### ***Mixed Stakeholder Focus Group***

Kate Acs

Colleges of Ontario Network for Education and Training, CON\*NECT

Regius Brown

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Susan Brown

City of Toronto, Municipal Government

Maike Christiansen

City of Toronto, Municipal Government

Huzaifa Doctor

Robert Half International, Employer

Peggy Edwards

Skills for Change, Service Provider

Gillian Kerr

Consultant

Edwin Kothiringer

Job Start, Service Provider

Immaculate Tumwine

Ontario Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)

Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades (PROMPT)  
Centre for Research in Education and Human Services (CREHS)  
Nikhat Rasheed, Gurmeet Bambrah and Faviola Fernandez

Representative  
Occupational Regulatory Body

Federal Ministry Staff  
Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ontario Administration of Settlement  
and Integration Services

## **F. Focus Group Questions**

### ***PROMPT Focus Group***

For each of the six findings about future directions:

What is PROMPT's position on this finding?

- To what extent do you agree with the opinion of others?
- To what extent has the voice of IEP's been adequately captured?

### ***Mixed Stakeholder Focus Group***

For each of the six findings about future directions:

How desirable and feasible are the suggestions being made?

- To what extent do you agree with the directions being suggested?
- What is workable and not workable in what is being suggested?
- What additional ideas would you suggest on this point?

## G. Summary of Existing Funding Initiatives

For the purposes of this chart immigrant employment initiatives include those that provide individual supports to immigrants through employment preparation programs, language training, information and referral services as well as specific employment initiatives such as the bridging programs.

Please note the primary focus of the chart is on government funded initiatives. All levels of government also fund some research and advocacy projects related to immigrant employment issues; we have not included these here.

Category	Fund Source / Name	Description / Purpose	Size of Fund	Eligibility Criteria (Universal or Immigrant specific)	Accountability / Expected Outcomes
FEDERAL  Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)	Employment Insurance Part II  1. Employment Benefits (EBs)  [O'Connor, 2003, p.24]	<p>"Since 1996, HRDC has provided labour market supports to newcomers largely through its \$2 – 2.2 billion/year EI Part II fund." [O'Connor, 2003, p.24]</p> <p>"EBs help unemployed <b>EI insured</b> Canadians gain work experience, improve job skills, start new businesses and encourage employers to provide opportunities for work experience." Four programs offered under EBs to eligible individuals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Skills Development</i> – provides financial assistance to help pay for the cost of skills training while enrolled in a training program</li> <li>2. <i>Self-Employment</i> – provides financial support in business planning</li> <li>3. <i>Job Creation Partnerships</i> – provides opportunities to gain work experience on various projects (industry, government, community groups)</li> <li>4. <i>Targeted Wage Subsidies</i> – provides help in accessing employment for individuals facing barriers by providing a temporary wage subsidy to employers as an</li> </ol>	<p>\$2.1 billion - 2003 forecast spending</p> <p>- \$645 million 2003 forecast spending for EBs</p> <p>- \$447 million of that to go to Skills Dvpt 2003 forecast (O'Connor, 2003)</p>	<p>Universal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Must be an insured EI participant [Eligible workers = those who are either current EI recipients, had received EI during the last 3 years or were not working and receiving special benefits during last 5 years (eg., parental benefits)]</li> <li>2. EI eligible participants must meet additional criteria as required by each specific program. Based on need as assessed by a counsellor according to HRSDC guidelines.</li> </ol> <p>Note: Most newcomers</p>	<p>The shared outcomes are to help <b>unemployed EI insured</b> Canadians gain work experience; improve job skills or start new businesses; and to provide funding to businesses organizations, and communities that provide employment services to unemployed Canadians.</p> <p>Measurement Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Returns to Work</i> - # of people who became employed or self-employed</li> <li>2. <i>EI Clients Served</i> - # of active &amp; former claimants</li> </ol>

		incentive to hire these individuals [Labour Market Development Agreements, <a href="http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/h004_e.asp">www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/h004_e.asp</a> ]		are ineligible for EB restricted programs because they do not qualify for EI	3. <i>Unpaid Benefits</i> – difference between entitlement & actual benefits paid out
HRSDC	Employment Insurance Part II  2. Support Measures (SMs)  [O'Connor, 2003, p.24]	<p>“Support measures (SMs) provide funding to organizations, businesses and communities that provide employment assistance services to <b>unemployed</b> Canadians. The funding is also used to address human resource, labour market and labour force issues.”</p> <p>Three programs offered under SMs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Employment Assistance Services</i> – helps unemployed individuals prepare for, obtain and maintain employment by providing them with services such as counselling, job search techniques, job placement and labour market information.</li> <li>2. <i>Labour Market Partnerships</i> – provides funding to assist employers, employee and/or employer associations and communities to improve their capacity to deal with human resource requirements and to implement labour force adjustments.</li> <li>3. <i>Research &amp; Innovation</i> – helps support research activities that identify improved methods of helping Canadians prepare for and keep employment and be productive participants in the labour force.</li> </ol> <p>[Labour Market Development Agreements, <a href="http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/h004_e.asp">www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/h004_e.asp</a> ]</p>	<p>- \$526 million to go to ON, forecast spending 2003 (O'Connor, 2003)</p> <p>“Support measures include Human Resource Centres, worker assessment, counselling and referral through the \$327 million a year EAS fund.” [O'Connor, 2003, p.13]</p>	<p>Universal  (Unemployed EI &amp; non-EI recipients eligible)</p> <p>- Eligible participants must meet additional criteria as required by each specific program. Based on need as assessed by a counsellor according to HRSDC guidelines. - In Canada less than 3 yrs <a href="http://www.skillsforchange.org">www.skillsforchange.org</a></p> <p>“Newcomers are making use of the centres’ job-hunting information and resources, and an unknown number are also accessing EAS counselling, referral and in Ontario, limited volunteer work placement programs.” [O'Connor, 2003, p.13]</p>	<p>The shared outcomes are to help unemployed EI insured Canadians gain work experience; improve job skills or start new businesses; and to provide funding to businesses organizations, and communities that provide employment services to unemployed Canadians.</p> <p>Measurement Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Returns to Work</i> - # of people who became employed or self-employed</li> <li>2. <i>EI Clients Served</i> - # of active &amp; former claimants</li> <li>3. <i>Unpaid Benefits</i> – difference between entitlement &amp; actual benefits paid out</li> </ol>
HRSDC	SMs	EAS – EAS program services can be targeted specifically for immigrants at the discretion of	See above	See above	Some contracts stipulate a 70%

		local HRSDC offices. Services could include: career planning, job search preparation, mentorship, resume writing workshops, employment counselling, sector-specific language training, licensing / accreditation and job-finding clubs., job search techniques workshops, job placements, employment resource centres, labour market information sessions and practice firms.			outcome. (e.g., 70% employment in field / related field of expertise in 3 months after completion of service)
HRSDC	SMS	<i>LMP</i> – As an example. LMP has been used to fund a program for the recruitment of mentors. Projects approved for a max of 3 yrs.	See above (Capital costs up to 1 mill/yr) (HRSDC,2004)	Not a direct client service.	Specific outcomes required on a contract by contract basis.
FEDERAL Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)	Office of Learning Technologies (OLT)  Community Learning Networks Initiative (CLN)  <a href="http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/asp/gateway.asp?hr=en/hip/lld/olt/about/FAQ.shtml&amp;hs=xt">www.hrsdc.gc.ca/asp/gateway.asp?hr=en/hip/lld/olt/about/FAQ.shtml&amp;hs=xt</a>	<p>“The OLT provides funding to Canadian organizations to expand innovative learning opportunities through technology. The opportunities facilitate adult learning and skills development in order to enable Canadians to fully participate in the workplace and their community.”</p> <p>“The CLN is OLT’s funding initiative. It supports community-based pilot projects that demonstrate innovative and sustainable uses of existing network technologies to upgrade skills &amp; knowledge in Canadian communities. These approaches help individuals to prepare for &amp; keep employment and to participate in a culture of lifelong learning.”</p> <p>This fund is being accessed by some service providers to develop on-line training &amp; supports for IEPs.</p>	<p>Max amt of funding for CLN projects = \$600,000 over 3 years.</p> <p>OLT provides up to 60% of total project costs. Funding cannot exceed \$250,000 in any year.</p> <p>Total gov funds can’t exceed 75% of eligible resources for project (cash or in-kind)</p>	<p>Target groups in universal population</p> <p>OLT funded projects must benefit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- workers affected by shift to knowledge-based economy (e.g., older workers)</li> <li>- unemployed or underemployed</li> <li>- new immigrants</li> <li>- persons with disabilities</li> <li>- women</li> <li>- Aboriginal people</li> </ul>	<p>Annual evaluation reports are required.</p> <p>Evaluation must be completed by an independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party not associated with project, staff, or partners.</p>
FEDERAL Citizenship and	Settlement and Integration Services (SIS)	“CIC offers programs and services to help newly arrived permanent residents settle into, adapt to and integrate into Canadian society.	“CIC spends about \$350 million/ year	Immigrant Specific	

Immigration Canada (CIC) <a href="http://www.cic.gc.ca">www.cic.gc.ca</a>	<a href="http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/isap-1e.html">[http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/isap-1e.html]</a>	<p>Programs and services provide newcomers with many of the tools they need to settle into Canada and integrate as quickly as possible. They encourage new arrivals to become self-reliant and to participate fully in the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of Canadian life.” ISAP also funds projects to complement or improve the delivery of settlement services. These include research projects on settlement and integration, seminars and conferences to share information, and training of ISAP-supported agency staff.</p> <p>Funding is also available through ISAP for pre-departure orientation sessions in selected countries overseas. These sessions help dispel unrealistic expectations that prospective newcomers may have about life in Canada, and prepare them for such aspects of Canadian life as climate, culture shock, employment, education, rights and responsibilities, housing and cost of living.</p> <p>Three programs offered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Host Program</i></li> <li>2. <i>Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada</i></li> <li>3. <i>Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program</i></li> </ol>	promoting newcomer integration. \$50 million for transfer payments for BC & MB services to integrate newcomers, “ [O’Connor, 2003, ]		
CIC		<i>Host Program</i> -- a "two-way street" approach to immigrant integration, helping establish friendships between newcomers & resident Canadians. It matches newcomers with a volunteer who is familiar with Canadian ways & can teach newcomers about available services, work with them to practice English or French, help them make employment contacts & encourage them to participate in community activities.	\$4 million to the Host program.” [O’Connor, 2003, ]	Immigrant specific	N/A

CIC		<p><i>LINC</i> -- funds basic language instruction to permanent residents in one of Canada's official languages to help adult newcomers integrate. Before attending training, students are assessed to determine their placement level. May include full- or part-time training, self-assisted &amp; distance learning, or community or institutionally based programs, according to the newcomer's abilities and needs. Free to newcomers but does not include training allowances. Child minding may be provided on site. Limited transportation assistance available if needed.</p>	<p>\$90 million goes to transfer payments of LINC, [O'Connor, 2003,]</p>	<p>Immigrant specific - Except Refugee Claimants &amp; Cdn citizen - In Canada less than 3 years</p>	<p>Achievement of language benchmark.</p>
		<p><i>Immigrant Settlement &amp; Adaptation Program (ISAP)</i> -- funds service provider organizations to deliver direct, essential services to newcomers.</p> <p>ISAP Stream A -- Services include reception &amp; orientation, translation &amp; interpretation, referral to community resources, counselling, general information and employment-related services (job-finding clubs, etc.)</p> <p>ISAP Stream B -- Activities that strengthen service delivery, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• workshops and seminars;</li> <li>• publications and newsletters;</li> <li>• audio-visuals;</li> <li>• performing and visual arts activities;</li> <li>• research or studies;</li> <li>• staff training.</li> </ul> <p>-- Activities under Stream B also include: settlement.org, settlement workers, newcomer info centres, resource development Activities must be related to the adaptation, settlement and integration of immigrants; they must not duplicate other activities, and must be consistent with government policy. Stream B activities may be carried out in a</p>	<p>"\$32 million to transfer payments for ISAP —a forecast \$25 million of it to Ontario (CIC, 2003).  [O'Connor, 2003]</p>	<p>- All immigration status except Refugee Claimants &amp; Cdn citizen - In Canada less than 3 years</p>	<p># of clients served # of new clients served</p>

		particular community, or in several provinces at once.			
		ISAP Stream B – Specific initiative is the Job Search Workshops (3 day pre-employment preparation workshops which provide job search techniques and preparation assistance, and labour market information sessions)		- All immigration status except Refugee Claimants & Cdn citizen - In Canada less than 3 years	- 40% employment within 6 months of completion - # of clients served
FEDERAL  Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)  www.cic.gc.ca	Special Initiative	CIC was allocated \$25 million over 5 years for the development and delivery of labour market levels of language training outside of Quebec. ELT projects include development and delivery activities that will provide: language training at Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) levels 7-10; job-specific language training; and language training at CLB levels 1-10 in some small centres. [www.integration-net.cic.gc.ca/inet/English/elt-clna/elt-clan02.htm]			
FEDERAL	Canadian Heritage <a href="http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca">www.canadianheritage.gc.ca</a>  Multiculturalism Program	Canadian Heritage is responsible for national policies and programs that promote Canadian content, foster cultural participation, active citizenship and participation in Canada's civic life, and strengthen connections among Canadians.  Provides funding for community-based initiatives across Canada. The Multiculturalism Program has funded numerous projects on access to professions and trades.		Funds projects that are community action, public education, research or institutional development projects; emphasize social development, highlight community initiative, partnership & self-help. Must meet additional assessment criteria for funding.	
FEDERAL	Industry Canada <a href="http://www.ic.gc.ca">www.ic.gc.ca</a>	Industry Canada's mandate is to help make Canadians more productive and competitive in the knowledge-based economy, thus		Participating in the Canadian Council for Human Resources in	

		<p>improving the standard of living and quality of life in Canada. The Department's policies, programs and services help grow a dynamic and innovative economy that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provides more and better-paying jobs for Canadians;</li> <li>- supports stronger business growth through continued improvements in productivity and innovation performance; and</li> <li>- gives consumers, businesses and investors confidence that the marketplace is fair, efficient and competitive.</li> </ul> <p>Through its five strategic objectives (innovation, connectedness, marketplace, investment &amp; trade), Industry Canada aims to help Canadians contribute to the knowledge economy and improve productivity and innovation performance.</p>		<p>the Environmental Industry Immigration Project, being funded by HRSDC. Working with CIC and HRSDC on the development of the Immigration Portal to provide labour market information and other information and services to immigrants online.</p>	
PROVINCIAL	<p>Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP)</p> <p>Facilitate Finding Employment  <a href="http://www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/english/citdiv/immigrat/newcomer.htm">www.gov.on.ca/citizenship/english/citdiv/immigrat/newcomer.htm</a></p>	<p>-NSP supports the early and effective settlement of newcomers to Ontario. Its objective is to help newcomers, settle, adjust and contribute to life in Ontario. In addition to its core services category (assessment, referral, general settlement, info/orientation), the Facilitate Finding Employment category "provides more in-depth assistance than the employment related information and referral that is part of the core services."  Examples of employment services include: job finding clubs, resume writing workshops, and employment resources.</p>	<p>Overall Fund: Annual NSP budget varies 2004-2005 = \$4 million</p> <p>- max annual \$95,000, although for partnership applications funding may go beyond this</p>	<p>Immigrant specific</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-In Canada less than 5 years</li> <li>-All immigrant classes &amp; refugee claimants</li> </ul>	<p>Require mid- &amp; end-of-year report.  Mostly output recording (e.g., volunteer hours.)  In addition, org'ns funded for Facilitate Finding Employment must provide – NSP client and service data (# of clients served individually &amp; in groups; # of client visits, group services&amp; group topics)</p>
	<p>Ministry of Community &amp; Social Services</p> <p><a href="http://www.gov.on.ca/ccs">www.gov.on.ca/ccs</a></p>	<p>-Delivered through municipalities. The cities contribute 20% to the OW fund. Some cities provide immigrant specific training programs, and training allowances for education/training programs related to licensure.  -Offers a range of employment services</p>	<p>- 3% rate increase by March 2005</p>	<p>Universal</p> <p>Immigrants must meet OW criteria to receive services</p>	<p>Depends on program stream and is municipal specific</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supports shortest route to employment</li> </ul>

	ON Works	through employment placement, employer subsidies, skills development, community participation, resource centres, and some credential assessment.			
	Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU),  Access to Professions and Trades Unit (APT Unit)  <a href="http://www.edu.gov.on.ca">www.edu.gov.on.ca</a>	<i>Bridge-training projects:</i> APT Unit funds individual projects that provide the training and workplace experience that immigrants need to begin to practice their trade or professions, without duplicating what they have already learned elsewhere. Some existing projects include: teachers, nurses, engineering technicians, pharmacists, medical laboratory science professionals, medical laboratory technologists, midwives. - Intended to be a multi-stakeholder group approach to fast-tracking IEPs into practice. In some cases includes training, work placements, internships, sector specific career planning, and licensing preparation.	\$15 million invested since 2001	Most bridging programs are targeted for immigrants in specific professions & trades.  Other type of programs include Career Bridge program with 4-month paid internship: IEP must have 3 yrs int'l work experience and meet additional qualifications	Increased access to professions & trades by IEPs. Evaluation a component of each funded project  # of internships # of jobs obtained after participating in internships
	APT Unit also supports some information and referral services.	<i>World Education Services Canada:</i> APT Unit funds WES to conduct academic credential assessment service assessing qualifications from more than 180 countries against Ontario standards. Began in 2000. Goal: For WES to be self-sustaining.		Accessible to any IEP in Canada or overseas. - Basis document by document fee (\$100) - Course by course fee (\$200) Some government programs cover fees.	N/A
	MTCU - APT	<i>Occupation-specific fact sheets:</i> APT Unit developed in cooperation with industry representatives and professional regulatory groups, these fact sheets summarize the requirements for licensing and certification. Also developed a guide that helps tradespeople to obtain recognition of their qualifications, experience, and enter apprenticeship programs.		For IEPs	N/A

	MTCU-APT	<i>Right Before Your Eyes -- Internationally Trained Workers</i> : APT Unit funded the development of a guide for employers to hire immigrants. It includes information on the benefits of hiring immigrants and services to help assess qualifications, language ability, how to set up workplace language training, and how to find internationally trained workers. Also includes vignettes from workplaces with internationally trained workers.		For employers	N/A
		<i>211Ontario.ca</i> : APT Unit funded the development and maintenance of the Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario portion of the Community Information Toronto web service. This service connects IEPs to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- services that can help put their skills and knowledge to work</li> <li>- a guide to working in the professions and trades in ON (e.g., how professions and trades are regulated, etc.)</li> <li>- job profiles (e.g. special requirements for working in certain trades and professions)</li> <li>- articles re: how credentials are evaluated, etc. from Settlement.org</li> </ul> <a href="http://www.211ontario.ca/apt/index.htm">www.211ontario.ca/apt/index.htm</a>		For IEPs	N/A
	MTCU	<i>Job Connect Program</i> allocates 20% of the funding to adults, many of them immigrants. Service includes info & referral, sector specific terminology, info & counselling, work experience, job placement, financial training support, resume writing workshops, job search preparation and techniques, resource centres, labour market information sessions, and employer subsidies, . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This service is intended to assist employers with finding &amp; training appropriate individuals for job vacancies, including IEPs. Financial</li> </ul>		Universal  All unemployed adults. IEPs are an area of focus.  Not eligible: EI and WSIB recipients	- Outcomes measured through service standards  - % outcomes for employment

		assistance may be available for employers to help offset training costs [max \$4,000]. [Right Before Your Eyes]			
	Ministry of Education <a href="http://www.edu.gov.on.ca">www.edu.gov.on.ca</a> English as a Second Language	Ministry provides funding and policy directives to school boards to provide language training. Ministry provides guidance to boards on matters relating to curriculum, program org'n, staff, and research.	\$ 44 million/yr (MCI, 2003, Backgrounder)		
	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade  <a href="http://www.ontario.ca/en/home.jsp">http://www.ontario.ca/en/home.jsp</a>	The goal of the Ministry is to promote economic growth. The website states "Faced with an increasingly competitive global marketplace, we aim to accomplish this by creating a culture of innovation, promoting investment and expanding exports to world markets. We act as a catalyst for innovation through: - research and development funding partnerships; - advisory services to help small and medium-sized enterprises grow; - programs to encourage young people to explore careers in science or start their own businesses. We promote investment in the province by: - marketing Ontario to the world as a preferred business location; - helping our regional economies plan and invest for strategic growth; - investing in our greatest resource—our people—through strategic skills development partnerships. We encourage trade development by: - helping Ontario exporters increase their international market opportunities; - providing export education, counseling and market intelligence;		The ministry works with provincial and multi-national companies to recruit internationally-trained individuals when the local labour pool cannot meet needs.	

		- showcasing Ontario's products and services abroad.			
Municipal		Municipalities have limited resources but some provide specific programs for immigrants. There are different programs in different cities. An example from Ottawa is included.			
	The Ottawa Community Loan Fund (OCLF)  <a href="http://www.oclf.org/oclf_website_english/index_e.html">http://www.oclf.org/oclf_website_english/index_e.html</a>	-OCLF provides short-term loans to individuals and groups with worthwhile business concepts, practical work experience and/or training, and a solid business plan.  -OCLF was formed to ensure that those promising entrepreneurs, with viable business ideas, are able to access financing not available elsewhere. The goal is to help more people become self-sufficient through self-employment.	-Short-term loans of up to \$15,000	-Recently, the OCLF has also developed a customized loan product for foreign-trained teachers & nurses participating in a local professional accreditation program	
Non-Governmental Organizations		Most services are provided through federal and provincial funding. Although there are some examples of NGOs who also fund immigrant employment supports. The following is not an exhaustive list but meant to provide an example of what may be available in different communities.			
	Maytree Foundation-Metro Credit Union (MCU),  Immigrant Employment Loan Program  <a href="http://www.maytre">http://www.maytre</a>	-The objective of the loan program is to develop a new and permanent stream of financial capital for immigrants and refugees who do not possess a credit history or collateral, but require short term training and upgrading that leads to employment or require an assessment of their previous skills, education and experience that could lead to certification.  The borrower will be provided with a loan for	-The maximum loan is \$5,000	Immigrant specific: - Landed immigrant or protected person (Convention refugee) who resides in the Greater Toronto Area. - Must meet additional program criteria	-# of borrowers who have successfully completed their training & received diplomas, certificates, licenses to practice in their field. - # of borrowers who have obtained work in their field - Loans must be completely paid off

	<a href="http://e.com/RefugeemigrantProgram/ImmigrantEmploymentLoanProgram/ImmigrantEmploymentLoanProgram.htm">e.com/RefugeemigrantProgram/ImmigrantEmploymentLoanProgram/ImmigrantEmploymentLoanProgram.htm</a>	the cost of the training program. The program fee will go directly to the training organization. Loans will be increased by \$175 so that a borrower can pay the loan application fee (\$50) and MCU member fee (\$125).			within three years. - The rate of interest will be the floating prime rate plus 6%.
	Ontario Trillium Foundation	Funds local and provincial initiatives-seed money, project-based, up to 4 years, some with impact on immigrants.  Some examples of initiatives include: - Research study and resource centre for IEPs in Hamilton (2004-2007) - Professionals workplace mentorship program in Peel region - Skills international.ca website for employers to access trained IEPs to facilitate hiring of IEPs			
	Local United Ways <a href="http://www.unitedway.ca">www.unitedway.ca</a>	Provides mainly seed money for project-based initiatives (up to 3 years). Each local United Way is independent and funds its own projects. Examples of some initiatives include: - JSL Program in Hamilton - Newcomer grants program in Toronto			

## H. End Notes

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- <sup>i</sup> Janzen R., Lymburner, M., Case, R., Vinograd, J., & Ochocka, J. (2003). *Voices for change: Making use of immigrant skills to strengthen our communities*. (Waterloo Region, City of London & Grand Erie). Kitchener, ON: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services. [www.crehs.on.ca](http://www.crehs.on.ca)
- <sup>ii</sup> A sample of research reports outlining immigrant barriers to employment include:
- a) Cumming, P.A., & Lee, E.L.D. (1989). *Access! Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario*. Toronto, Ontario: Ministry of Citizenship.
- b) Janzen, R., Ochocka, J., & Wing Sang Wong, V. (1998). *Dignity and opportunity: Assessing the economic contribution of foreign trained newcomers*. Kitchener, ON: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services. [www.crehs.on.ca](http://www.crehs.on.ca)
- c) Brower, A. (1999). *Immigrants Need Not Apply*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy. [www.maytree.com](http://www.maytree.com)
- <sup>iii</sup> Janzen R., Lymburner, M., Case, R., Vinograd, J., & Ochocka, J. (2003). *Voices for change: Making use of immigrant skills to strengthen our communities*. (Waterloo Region, City of London & Grand Erie). Kitchener, ON: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services. [www.crehs.on.ca](http://www.crehs.on.ca)
- <sup>iv</sup> Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- <sup>v</sup> Nelson, G., Ochocka, J., Griffin, K., & Lord, J. (1998). Nothing about me, without me. Participatory action research with self-help/mutual aid organizations for psychiatric consumer/survivors. *American Community Psychology Journal*, 26, 881-912.