



# Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in Langley, British Columbia

This community report is part of the "Immigration Settlement Services and Gaps in CIC's Western Region" study.

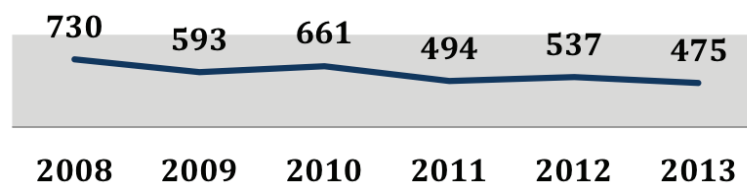


Population (2011): 25,081 in the downtown core, and 104,177 including the surrounding area.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

## Permanent Resident Landings Langley 2008-2013

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada



UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA



**Data sources: 6 Service Providing Organizations (SPOs)** receiving funding from CIC, Provincial, NGO, and private sources.

- Findings validated locally.

## SETTLEMENT SERVICES



### Top services offered

- Needs assessment and referral, information and orientation, help with daily life, transportation support, help finding a job, cultural events, interpretation services, legal support/ referral, integration support



### Key gaps identified

- Recognition of foreign credentials, job specific and workplace language training, literacy education for grade 12s and adults
- Most services need to expand



### Barriers to access services

- Confusion about where to get help, ineligibility for services, language and financial difficulties of newcomers, lack of childcare, transportation difficulties, geographic concentration of services and dispersed population.



### Top services needed

Language training, help finding a job, information and orientation, integration support, needs assessment and referrals, help with daily life.



### Services needed by newcomers ineligible for CIC funded services

- Language training and assessment
- Needs assessment and referrals
- Integration support

## PARTNERSHIPS



- The most commonly identified partnerships exist with school/school boards, umbrella organizations, settlement service providers, labour market services, public libraries, religious organizations and others.
- Some participants reported a desire for a partnership with municipal offices.
- A need for long term funding to strengthen partnership initiatives was identified by participants.



## INTEGRATION IN COMMUNITY

- There is a mixed perception of how easy it is for newcomers to settle in Langley. Program ineligibility, language barriers, not knowing where to get help, social isolation, stress, lack of adult literacy education, unemployment, and community divisions (social and geographical) were identified as main barriers for newcomers to settle successfully in Langley.
- Perception: It is difficult for newcomers to get jobs in Langley, with language being the main barrier.

# IMMIGRATION SETTLEMENT SERVICES AND GAPS IN CIC'S WESTERN REGION: Langley, British Columbia

## Introduction

The purpose of this project is to better understand the settlement and integration services available to newcomers and to explore the service gaps and opportunities in Langley, British Columbia and 28 other rural communities across Western Canada. This research offers a current snapshot of Langley by providing information gathered from a sample of local service providers. It is not a comprehensive review of all settlement services in Langley. Data was collected in October 2014 from 6 organizations that serve newcomers in Langley through a telephone survey completed by a representative from each organization.

Three organisations are CIC funded, 3 receive provincial funding, 3 receive private funding, and 2 receive funding from NGOs. In addition, 2 survey respondents attended a feedback focus group and 1 provided email feedback on the preliminary survey findings.

## Background

Langley is a geographically dispersed community in the lower mainland of British Columbia with a 2011 population of 25,081 in the downtown core, and 104,177 including the surrounding area. According to Statistics Canada, the population of the City of Langley grew 6.2% from 2006-2011, compared to 11.2% growth in the district as a whole. CIC figures show that from 2008-2013, 3,490 permanent residents (PR) arrived to Langley.

## Community Settlement Concerns

Survey respondents reported that the number of newcomers living in or near Langley has increased in the past 5 years, and speculated that reasons for this include: demand for employment in the agricultural sector, a lower cost of living compared to other lower mainland municipalities, and the relative availability of affordable housing. In the feedback session, participants stressed that CIC PR arrival figures do not take into account significant secondary migration. When asked to provide their overall perception of how easy it is for newcomers to settle in Langley, 3 respondents indicated that it is "somewhat easy," and 3 indicated "somewhat difficult" or "very difficult." The existence of a referral network among long established settlement agencies who are connected with key ethnic groups was perceived to ease settlement, while successful

settlement is hindered by: program ineligibility, language barriers, not knowing where to get help, social isolation, stress, unemployment, and community divisions (social and geographical). An additional factor noted is the lack of specialized literacy services, for grade 12 students and adults. In the feedback session, participants repeatedly emphasized that the lack of adult literacy education, especially workplace language and literacy, poses a significant barrier.

## ACCESSING SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Five respondents believe that over 25% of newcomers to Langley find it difficult to locate the services they need. Respondents reported that a large number of concerns have been raised about the ability for newcomers to access services in Langley, including: confusion about where to get help, ineligibility for services, language difficulties, lack of childcare, transportation difficulties, hours of the day that services are offered, financial difficulties, discrimination because of being a newcomer, and, importantly, the geographic concentration of services in the context of a widely dispersed population.

## GETTING JOBS

Respondents unanimously agreed that it is difficult for newcomers to get jobs in their community, with language being the number one barrier. Lack of Canadian experience, lack of foreign credential recognition, and perceived lack of transferrable skills were noted as additional barriers.

## Available Settlement Services

### CURRENT SERVICE PROVIDER CAPACITY

The organizations that took part in the survey primarily serve PRs and Refugees. According to respondents, their 6 agencies serve a combined total of over 600 people from those two categories each month. In addition, respondents reported that they serve approximately 70 Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs), 6 Refugee Claimants, and over 100 Naturalized Citizens each month. An additional 50 people whose category of entry was not known were also provided services. At least one organization also assisted children born to immigrant parents. The total number of newcomers served per month by the 6 agencies is over 850 people. An additional 200 newcomers requested services but did not receive them.

## INVENTORY OF SETTLEMENT SERVICES

All of the organisations that took part in the survey provide needs assessment and referral. Most also provide: information and orientation, help with daily life, transportation support, help finding a job, interpretation services, cultural events, legal support/ referral, integration support, and services for women and youth. Services that are not provided by any of the participating organisations include: recognition of foreign credentials, help setting up a business, and financial supports. Respondents indicated that other SPOs in the community provide all of the services listed in Appendix A except job-specific language training.

According to survey respondents, the most needed services for newcomers include: language training, help finding a job, information and orientation, integration support, needs assessment and referrals, and help with daily life. Although these services are offered in Langley, the responses may point to the inadequacy of current offerings. For example, in the month before the survey was conducted, approximately 120 PRs requested assistance from the organisations that took part in the survey, but did not receive services. In this context, respondents provided examples of services that are currently provided by other community SPOs, but which need to expand, including: interpretation services, childcare, services for women, services for seniors, mental health services, health services, and needs assessment and referral. Three respondents mentioned that job-specific language training and recognition of foreign credentials are also needed, but not currently offered. In addition, some respondents noted that language services on employer sites, trauma counseling, and accompaniment for clients who struggle with English are also lacking.

## NEWCOMERS INELIGIBLE FOR CIC FUNDED SERVICES

In the month prior to the survey, respondents received at least 250 requests for assistance from newcomers who are ineligible for CIC-funded services. These included approximately 150 Naturalized Citizens, 80 TFWs, 5 International Students, and 8 Refugee Claimants. While the most needed services are reportedly language training and assessment, needs assessment and referrals, and integration support, respondents indicated a large number of other needed services. Refugee Claimants were considered by all respondents to need all of the services listed in Appendix A, except for help setting up a business. Naturalized Citizens were also reported to be in need of almost all of the services listed. In the feedback session, participants drew attention to a large number of Naturalized Citizens who are in desperate need of language and other settlement services that they no longer qualify for. All respondents agreed that TFWs require assistance with interpretation services, needs assessment and referral, information and orientation, and integration support,

while a large majority felt that International Students need help with interpretation services; integration support; mental health services; health services; recreational services; and needs assessment and referral.

## Tracking and Planning

Almost all respondents indicated that services for newcomers in their organisation are guided by both internal and joint strategic plans, and that their organization assesses the service needs of newcomers in Langley several times per year using: surveys, community meetings, needs assessment and referrals, client intake forms, community statistics, consultation with other SPOs, and activity evaluation sheets. Additional sources of information include: census data, other SPO statistics and feedback, word of mouth, and media reports. Two organisations mentioned that they produce internal annual reports on settlement achievements, and one of those also produces a report jointly with other SPOs. The reports are released informally into the community through information sharing, or as a newsletter and on the organisation website.

## Specific Capacities

All participants reported that their agency currently enjoys adequate capacity to communicate with stakeholders. Similarly, a majority stated that they have adequate capacity to coordinate services with other service providers and create governing and strategic plans, as well as adequate financial support to maintain current services from non-governmental sources, and staff skills for delivery and maintenance of services. However, none report adequate capacity for the mobilization of community to support and welcome newcomers, and a majority also lack adequate capacity to provide services in both official languages and to meet reporting requirements. A large majority also mentioned that financial support from government sources to maintain current services is inadequate. Further, all respondents indicated that they required greater capacity with regard to staff to provide services and financial support from government sources to maintain current services. Similarly, a large majority stated that they will require additional future capacity in most of the capacities listed in Appendix B.

## Partnerships

The activities conducted in partnership were categorized into three groups; settlement (e.g., getting jobs and housing, daily functioning), integration (e.g., teaching labour rules and human rights), and welcoming (e.g., orientation to community, civic events). All respondents reported that they undertake integration activities within active SPO partnerships, 5 carry out settlement activities, and 3 provide welcoming services in partnership. Most respondents noted partnerships with all of the partners listed in Appendix

C, apart from francophone organizations, newcomers, and housing services. Three respondents stated that they partner with municipal offices, while 3 stated that they desire such a partnership. Two respondents suggested the need for a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) in Langley. In the feedback session, participants emphasized that a LIP would need to be based in the municipal government in order to ensure the inclusion of all relevant agencies. Although there are many organizational partnerships, these are arranged without dedicated funding and there is no community table devoted to immigration concerns. Participants stressed the need for long term funding to strengthen partnership initiatives.

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## Appendix A – Possible Concerns about Access to Services

- Lack of services in community
- Confusion about where to get help
- Not being eligible for services
- Language difficulties
- Lack of childcare
- Transportation difficulties
- Hours of the day that services are offered
- Financial difficulties
- Discrimination because of being a newcomer
- Discrimination because of race or ethnicity

## Appendix B – List of Possible Services

### SETTLEMENT

- Greeting upon arrival/initial reception
- Information and orientation

- Needs assessment and referral
- Interpretation services
- Language assessment
- Language training
- Help finding housing
- Help with daily life (e.g., registering for school, getting a bank account)
- Transportation support

### ECONOMIC

- Help finding a job
- Educational upgrading
- Recognition of foreign credentials
- Investment opportunities
- Job-specific language training
- Help setting up a business
- Occupational/business mentorship and networking
- Financial supports

### SOCIAL

- Childcare
- Cultural Events
- Recreational services
- Legal support/referral
- Health Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social inclusion/ integration support
- Services for seniors
- Services for women
- Services for youth

## Appendix C – Possible Organizational Capacities

- Staff to provide services
- Financial support from government sources to maintain current services
- Financial support from non-government sources to maintain current services
- Communication with stakeholders
- Coordinating services with other service providers
- Staff skills for delivery and maintenance of services
- Mobilization of community to support and welcome newcomers
- Creation of governing and strategic plan
- Meet reporting requirements
- Provide services in both official languages