

# SUCCEED AND STAY

UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF  
GREATER SAINT JOHN REGION'S IMMIGRANT POPULATION:  
FROM SETTLEMENT TO RETENTION

# RÉUSSIR ET RESTER

COMPRENDRE LES EXPÉRIENCES ET LES PERSPECTIVES DE LA  
POPULATION IMMIGRANTE DE LA RÉGION DU GRAND  
SAINT JOHN : DE L'ÉTABLISSEMENT À LA RÉTENTION

A REPORT BY THE CITY OF SAINT JOHN  
AND THE SAINT JOHN LOCAL  
IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

UN RAPPORT DE LA VILLE DE SAINT JOHN  
ET DU PARTENARIAT LOCAL POUR  
L'IMMIGRATION À SAINT JOHN

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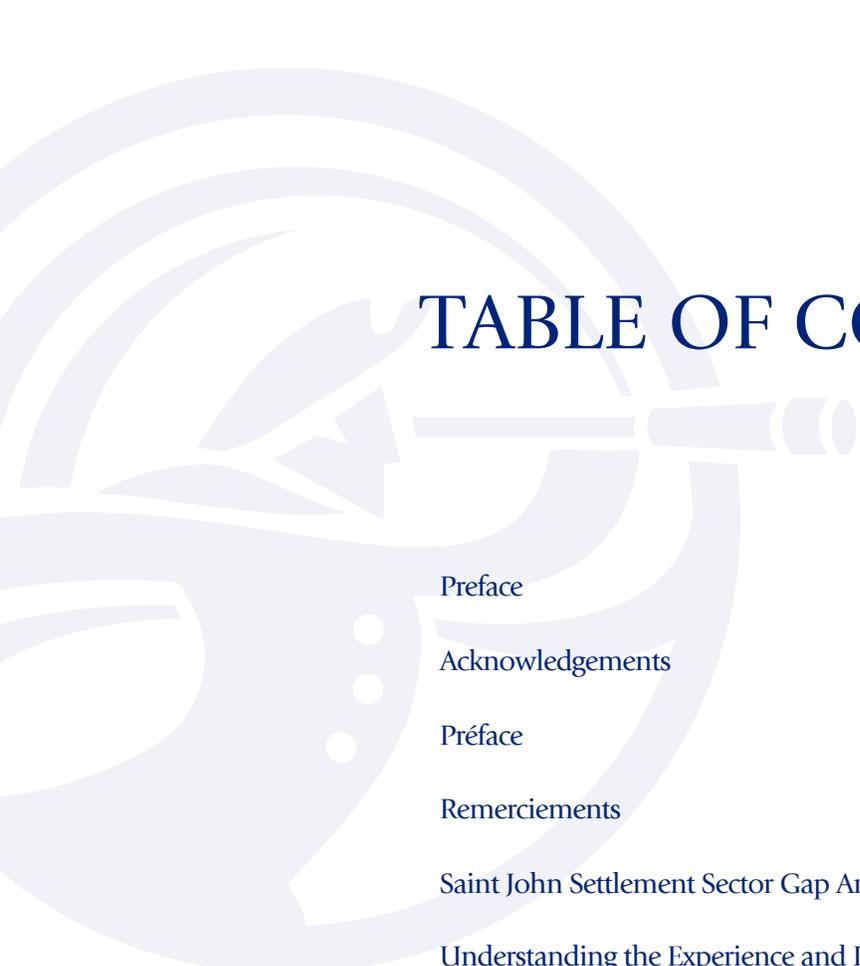
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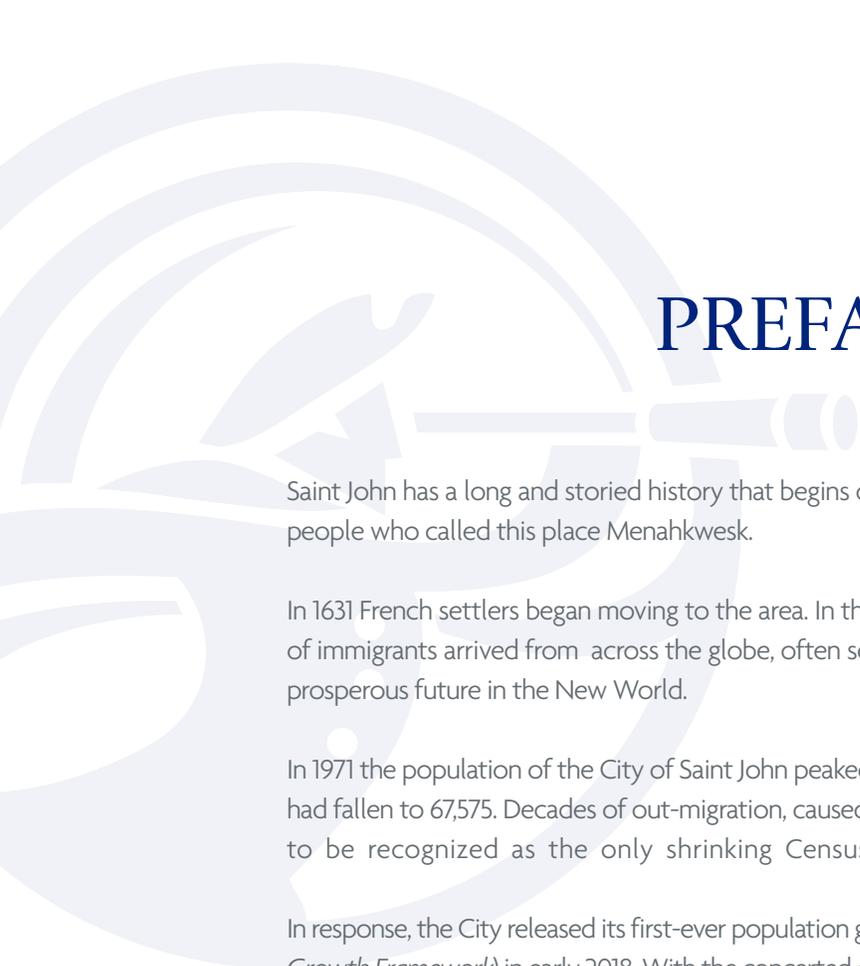
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# PREFACE

Saint John has a long and storied history that begins over 12,000 years ago with the Wolastoqiyik people who called this place Menahkwesk.

In 1631 French settlers began moving to the area. In the centuries that followed, wave upon wave of immigrants arrived from across the globe, often seeking refuge, and all looking for a fresh and prosperous future in the New World.

In 1971 the population of the City of Saint John peaked at 89,039. However, by 2016 the population had fallen to 67,575. Decades of out-migration, caused in part by economic decline, led Saint John to be recognized as the only shrinking Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) in Canada.

In response, the City released its first-ever population growth strategy (*City of Saint John Population Growth Framework*) in early 2018. With the concerted efforts of all levels of government, businesses, settlement agencies, schools, local organizations and dozens of cultural community groups Saint John is now growing again.

Despite these early signs of population growth, the challenges of attracting, supporting, and retaining immigrants remain. Prior to the release of the *Framework*, Saint John had the lowest five-year immigrant retention rate among Canadian CMAs at 35.5 per cent (2017). For Saint John to continue growing, and even accelerate its growth, it must become significantly more welcoming and increase the retention rate of our immigrant community.

In order to accomplish this, we must first understand the issue of why immigrants leave or remain in Saint John. This is the genesis of the **Succeed and Stay** research project. Together with the *Saint John Local Immigration Partnership* the City partnered with the Government of Canada and the Province of New Brunswick to fund this program which seeks to understand why Immigrants **Succeed** in Saint John, and why they **Stay**. This information will be used to shape public policy, provide a foundation for a robust immigration strategy for the region, and to help ensure Saint John becomes and remains the most welcoming community in Canada.

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## **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The City of Saint John launched the Succeed and Stay research project in mid-2019. The project was designed and led by a research core team who were involved over the full duration of the two-year project period. It was supported by a multidisciplinary advisory committee with particular support from the University of New Brunswick and assisted by a dedicated research team whose members rotated in and out over the lifecycle of the project to provide specific contributions.

The City of Saint John is enormously grateful to these dedicated individuals, other stakeholders, and especially the hundreds of immigrants who participated in this project and shared their perspectives on living in Saint John.

### **There are three primary deliverables for the project:**

#### **1) A Gap Analysis of the settlement landscape in Saint John**

The City retained the services of Diversis Inc to conduct a Gap Analysis of the settlement landscape in Saint John in late 2019 and early 2020 to give an objective 'outside' perspective on our strengths and weaknesses as a region. Diversis met with 27 organizations and hosted 11 focus groups with 78 immigrants representing a wide cross section of our newcomer community.

#### **2) The Saint John Immigrant Survey**

The City of Saint John's first immigrant survey was completed by 735 immigrants in the Fall of 2019 who responded to over 81 questions related to demographics, settlement experiences, integration, and retention. The City partnered with UNB Saint John and the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership to conduct the survey. Over 250,000 unique data points were analyzed and represent a treasure trove of local data that will allow for an in-depth and geo-located analysis of immigrants' opinions and experiences to help in adjusting programs, spending, and supports to enhance the experience of newcomers to Saint John.

#### **3) Interviews with Immigrants who Succeed and Stay**

The Succeed and Stay research team also hosted 39 individual in-depth interviews with immigrants to examine their individual experiences with moving, settling, and remaining in Saint John. The project team also met with immigrants who moved away from Saint John, including some who returned, to find out why they left.

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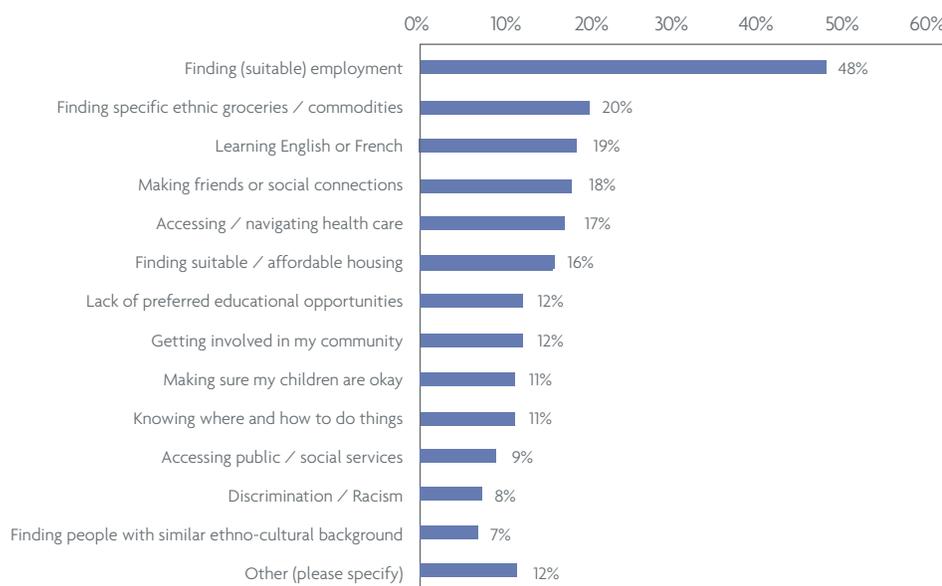
## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following are a series of themes extracted from the three reports. For a fuller comprehension of the issues and findings, readers are invited to review the reports directly.

The study can be summarized with two primary realities for immigrants in Saint John that could probably be said of almost anywhere; Saint John is a great place for immigrants to live, and it also has its challenges.

The following table presents a snapshot of the most pressing issues as reported by immigrants who filled out the City’s first immigrant survey in mid-2019.

Most Challenging Issues Currently Faced by Immigrants (check up to 3 boxes)



2019 Saint John Immigrant Survey

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## **INTENTION TO STAY IN SAINT JOHN**

We heard from our participants that almost two-thirds of immigrants intend to stay in Saint John long term. This finding bodes well for increasing our retention rate as a community, provided immigrants can find and maintain adequate employment. Almost half (49 per cent) of immigrants who came to Saint John on a study permit want to remain in Saint John. With new pathways to permanent residency for graduates, this pool of newcomers represents ‘low hanging fruit’ for permanently growing the population of our region, especially as we increase enrollment in post-secondary schools. And with almost 22 per cent of immigrants telling us they came to Saint John on a study permit initially, this also demonstrates the critical role our post-secondary institutions play in immigrant attraction.

It is also hard to overstate the importance of providing support for the integration of children of immigrants. In many cases, immigrants move to Canada for a better life for their children, and while disruptive, immigrants will migrate again to another city if they feel their children are not integrating well in Saint John. Conversely, if children are thriving and happy, immigrant parents are reluctant to move them to another community, even if they themselves are struggling.

We heard many stories from immigrants who toiled to find adequate employment, and ultimately left Saint John when they were unsuccessful. We also heard from employers who witnessed immigrant employees who would leave for another province as soon as they became permanent residents. While incidences such as these are still ongoing concerns, immigrant pathways, such as the Atlantic Immigration Program, are now driving stronger retention rates due to the requirement for job attachment.

In some cases, we heard from immigrants who settled here with no intention of staying, but ultimately fell in love with the community and now consider it home. In summary, there is a certain recipe for successful integration that we heard over and over:

- 1) Access to a good job for both the primary applicant and their partner (if applicable). Professional networking, and credential recognition are essential prerequisites.
- 2) Access to adequate (right-sized) and affordable housing in a safe neighbourhood.
- 3) Access to good schools and extra-curricular activities for their children.
- 4) Access to settlement and language learning supports, especially for refugees, and secondary applicants.

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- 5) Access to strong social connections with diaspora ethnocultural communities and with local residents.
- 6) Access to amenities, such as green spaces & shopping, and cultural staples, such as ethnic foods and ingredients, and places of worship.

Having a good job is the single largest determinant as to whether a newcomer stays in Saint John. Historically this is an area when Saint John, and the Maritimes in general have struggled with retention. However, we also heard over and over that a good job is not enough on its own. Immigrants also want a great quality of life at an affordable price, ideally with family and friends close by.

## **ACTIONS TO BETTER SUPPORT IMMIGRANTS**

We asked our immigrant community to make recommendations for their top three changes that could be made to better support immigrants as they settle in our region. The top five suggestions were:

- 1) Educate employers regarding hiring and retaining immigrant employees (59%).
- 2) Provide more affordable and suitable housing options (37%).
- 3) Offer more second language learning options to improve English / French (31%).
- 4) Improve social connectedness between newcomers and the community (29%).
- 5) Create a central location where immigrants can receive settlement and other services (23%).

## **EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Saint John is a place of work for thousands of immigrants. However, at least 54 per cent of immigrants bemoaned the lack of local job opportunities, with two in five saying they have had difficulty getting employers to recognize their experience. We heard very clearly from immigrants that this is the single largest push factor for immigrants, i.e. if a newcomer cannot find a meaningful job commensurate with their experience they will be 'pushed' out of Saint John to another city.

Some immigrants were able to find work very quickly, with one in three finding a job in less than three months. However, there is stubborn unemployment for at least one in five immigrants, many of whom are refugees with limited English language fluency upon arrival to Saint John.

We heard from many immigrants that they struggled to get access to jobs due to a lack of networking, or not knowing how to access the hidden job market as newcomers. We also heard some stories

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of newcomers being denied interviews for jobs because they had a ‘foreign’ last name or lacked “Canadian Work Experience”. In a period where employers are decrying our ageing and shrinking workforce, it is very clear that immigrants, especially ones already living in Saint John remain an untapped resource and should be readily considered by local employers for jobs at every level.

Canadians are familiar with the cliché of doctors driving taxicabs. For regulated professions, credential recognition is an issue for at least one-quarter of immigrants in Saint John, and it is clear that more can and must be done to break down these barriers. However, underemployment is also a reality in Saint John with over half of immigrants reporting they are underemployed in some way and not realizing their full potential.

We observed that immigrants are incredibly entrepreneurial with over 65 per cent of respondents saying they had started (18%) or were interested (47%) in starting their own business. Entrepreneurship requires a certain attitude of boldness and risk-taking, and part of the explanation for the entrepreneurial spirit of immigrants can be accounted for by the adventurous nature of people who are willing to leave their current way of life for a new start in a new country. However, in many cases we also heard from immigrants that they started a business out of necessity as they couldn’t find a job that matched their experience, with the logic being that if you can’t find a job, you make one.

We also heard that it is not enough for the primary applicant to have a good job, we heard from families where one partner was unemployed or underemployed and this was a direct cause for the family considering moving away, or actually leaving.

In summary, if we want families to stay in Saint John, both partners must be able to find meaningful employment if they want to.

## **IMMIGRANT SERVING AGENCIES**

Saint John has a robust settlement sector with over 90 employees and approximately \$4.5M is budgeted annually towards supporting newcomers, primarily through funding from the Federal Government.

We found that approximately one-half of the immigrants to Saint John (52%) accessed services through a local settlement agency, such as the YMCA Newcomer Connections, the Saint John Newcomers Centre, or PRUDE Inc.

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The main reason that newcomers did not access services was a lack of awareness of the services (46%) or that they did not need the service (35%). This can be illustrated in a comment we received:

“I understand now that things have changed, compared to when I came in four or five years ago. I understand that, today, they have a lot of settlement services that people can go, that help them settle into the system. But when I came in five years ago, I don't know if those things existed, but nobody came to us and was like, "Hey... I think you can go to this agency ... and they will be able to provide you with all of this information to help you settle down." For me, it was from the day-to-day Saint Johners that I met on the street, and I tell you that, for me, that was very good. It actually helped me settle in pretty well”

While we observed that there is no significant duplication of services, we did hear from the newcomer community that they were unsure which agency offered which services, and who was eligible. As such, many respondents found the local settlement landscape confusing. A ‘no-wrong door’ will likely ameliorate many of these issues, as well as stronger linkages with local employers. We heard that in general newcomers found these services helpful, and increased efforts should be made to build awareness of these services in Saint John.

## LANGUAGE

In 2011, 3,865 people in Saint John spoke a non-official language. By 2016 that number had risen by 19 % to 4,600. Participants in the study speak 41 first languages with approximately one in five speaking Arabic and one in five speaking Mandarin. This has significant implications for service delivery for government, businesses, and service-based organizations. There are a number of robust programming options for Immigrants to learn English, and fewer options for learning French. However, 39 per cent of participants reported that they could not speak English well enough to work professionally. This is a critical issue for a number of reasons as language unlocks full integration and access to employment in most cases.

We heard in many cases that children enrolled in school readily learn English, and primary applicants who are working also learn English more quickly as they are exposed to an immersive English environment at work. In some cases, especially among refugees, secondary applicants such as spouses or grandparents are not learning English as quickly as they end up staying home more frequently.

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In cases where immigrants register for language classes, we learned that over 75 per cent of immigrants who take language instruction are doing so with the YMCA Newcomer Connections Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes. In over half of the cases (56%) respondents indicated that their language improved quite a bit or better through participation in LINC classes. In some cases, this programming is either not meeting the needs of newcomers due to scheduling issues, or the way the curriculum is taught. Conversely, we also heard that some newcomers themselves drop out permanently, or temporarily for extended periods of time, such as during Ramadan, and miss out on the opportunity to learn. It is clear that while language programs are generally working well, there is room to pilot new improvements, especially in work settings.

A prevailing myth is that immigrants in Saint John do not understand English. This likely strongly correlates to another myth that all newcomers are refugees. Both myths are false. Almost seven in ten immigrants have either basic (18%) or professional fluency (51%) in English upon arrival. While the vast majority of refugees who arrived in Saint John did not speak English or French upon arrival, only 12 per cent of our immigrant population arrived in Saint John as refugees.

## **AMENITIES AND ACTIVITIES**

When asked about Greater Saint John's most important amenities to immigrants 65 per cent of immigrants said that parks and trails were one of their top three most important amenities in the region, followed by 40 per cent saying malls and shops and 32 per cent considering libraries in their top three amenities.

It is difficult to overstate how much green spaces mean to immigrants, especially those coming from megalopolises. We heard from immigrants who said they lived in a "concrete jungle" before moving to Saint John, which is why Saint John appealed so strongly to them.

However, this clear value proposition does not necessarily mean that more parks and trails are needed to attract more immigrants, rather, what we have in Saint John in terms of access to water, parks, trails, and other green spaces is clearly valued by our immigrant community, and at minimum, our community should maintain its investment in these amenities. Furthermore, our beautiful natural landscape should be part of our marketing strategy for attracting new immigrants to the region.

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There are mixed feelings from immigrants about whether there are enough things to do in Saint John. While 42 per cent of immigrants believe there are many activities for them or their families we also heard from many immigrants who are looking for increased diversity of activities that would be found in larger centres such as nightclubs and amusement park activities.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

We heard from newcomers that one of their first purchases in Saint John is often a personal vehicle. However, it is not always simple or easy for newcomers to get a Canadian driver's license, or a vehicle due to a lack of credit history, and many opt to use Saint John Transit. In fact, almost three in five newcomers have used Saint John Transit at some point, and newcomers rate our system as average (2.47 out of five).

Eighty-two percent of our international student community uses Saint John Transit four or more times weekly. One barrier we heard repeatedly is the lack of bus service to the NBCC Campus and the Saint John airport. We heard that at least 26 per cent of newcomers do not use our transit system because it takes too long to get to a destination, or there is a low frequency of busses. The City has completed a system review and is currently undertaking a redesign of the service.

## **DIVERSITY**

Saint John is becoming increasingly diverse. Over 6,640 immigrants called Greater Saint John Home in 2016<sup>1</sup>. In just the last four years 3,369 people immigrated to Saint John<sup>2</sup>. Seven-hundred and thirty five immigrants from 98 different countries participated in the Saint John Immigrant Survey. Our immigrant community brings different experiences with only 11 percent of respondents previously living in a city of the same size as Saint John. The vast majority (76%) lived in larger cities, with 44 per cent living in cities of five million or more residents. This means that newcomers are likely bringing vastly different perspectives than local-born residents. They prefer an urban experience, with almost 80 per cent of immigrants to our region living in the City of Saint John. Immigrants also tend to cluster in specific areas of the city. Millidgeville has now become one of the most diverse neighbourhoods in the province with over 25 per cent of the population having a mother tongue that is not English or French. While service-based industries tend to follow and meet the needs of the local population, with a burgeoning immigrant population there are new appetites for commodities that were previously unavailable. Still, over one in five respondents reported that they have a significant issue finding ethnic foods and groceries and this is a significant push factor for immigrants moving to larger Canadian cities.

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<sup>1</sup> 2016 Census.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0136-01 Components of population change by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration, 2016 boundaries.

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## WELCOMING COMMUNITY

We heard that the vast majority of immigrants (95%) consider Saint John to be welcoming, with 60 per cent believing Saint John is very welcoming to extremely welcoming. However, we also heard the phrase repeated that Saint Johners are “friendly but not as welcoming.” In practice, this means that Saint Johners will happily provide assistance or information to newcomers, but they may not invite them over for supper, or into their own social circles.

We asked respondents to share with us how many immigrant and Canadian-born friends they had. 89 per cent of respondents had three or more friends who were immigrants, while 57 per cent had three or more Canadian-born friends. Considering there are approximately 28 Canadian-born residents for every immigrant in Greater Saint John, this data demonstrates that immigrants both tend to cluster in groups with other immigrants, but also struggle to break into social circles with local-born residents. One parent shared with us the experience of their son struggling to find friends:

“...my son one time told me, ‘I don’t know who I am. I feel like I don’t belong with my Canadian friends because I’m not Canadian enough for them, and I don’t belong with other friends who speak our language or the other newcomers because I don’t speak the language very well.’ They’re Canadian. They’re born here.”

The feeling of isolation is also a push factor for why families leave Saint John. When asked why immigrants feel lonely the top three reasons are 1) family is far away; 2) they don’t have enough friends, and ; 3) they can’t find a job. In a city where social capital is a strong determinant for access to the local opportunities and the job market, more can and must be done to assist newcomers in developing personal and professional networks.

We also heard that 46 per cent of immigrants in Saint John do not have a family doctor. While most immigrants are in good health, and are required to complete a medical examination before immigrating to Canada, they still require good health care, and need access to a family physician. Horizon Health has been taking proactive steps towards greater inclusion, and are making more use of the “Interpreter On Wheels” program to support immigrants who do not speak an official language well enough to understand their medical professional.

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## **DISCRIMINATION**

We spoke about experiences of discrimination in the survey, in focus groups, and in individual interviews. Approximately 35 per cent of respondents said they experienced discrimination at some point in Saint John, with approximately 20 per cent of respondents saying they had experienced discrimination in the past year. We suspect this may be higher in reality, as some immigrants preferred not to answer questions regarding experiences of discrimination, or in some cultural contexts there is a view that what they may have experienced may not be discrimination, while such actions would be considered discriminatory in Canada.

When reviewing the responses by gender, we found that men reported experiencing discrimination less than women (33% vs 36%). When reviewing responses by ethnic background the following immigrants have experienced discrimination in Saint John (White: 28% | Asian: 30% | Latin American: 41% | Arab: 42% | Black: 44%).

We heard that discrimination or racism was not usually overt, but it was more often the case in school settings. For instance, one respondent shared:

“My children tell me they don't want to go to school because somebody tells them they look like poop.”

Over one-quarter (26%) of immigrants have experienced discrimination at work, or when applying for a job. Almost one in five (19%) of immigrants have experienced discrimination in a public place. And while government is often very proactive in eliminating discrimination, at least five percent of immigrants say they have experienced discrimination when obtaining government services.

While discrimination needs to be addressed, especially in the workplace, it should be noted that only eight percent of immigrants believe it is one of the top three issues facing immigrants in Saint John. However, there is a definite link between a perceived lack of employment opportunities and discrimination that needs to be remedied as quickly as possible. We spoke with a few immigrants who struggled to find local employment until they anglicized their names on their resumes. Some progressive employers are starting to adopt policies to reduce implicit bias, such as name-blind hiring, or offering cultural competency training to hiring managers and supervisory staff.

We also found a link between discrimination and an immigrant's intention to stay in Saint John. 66 per cent of newcomers who have never experienced discrimination intend to stay in Saint John. However, that number drops to 50% if they experienced discrimination in the last one to three years.

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## **EDUCATION, CHILDCARE, AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING**

It is no surprise that many immigrants are highly educated. Approximately 18.7 per cent of residents in the Saint John CMA have a university degree<sup>3</sup>, whereas 71 per cent of immigrants surveyed reported having a university degree on arrival to Saint John. This represents a deep talent pool for local employers to draw upon.

Both the Anglophone and Francophone school districts have streamlined approaches to enrolling new students, and we heard that there has been considerable new support offered to students, especially in the area of language assistance. Saint John has robust educational offerings at a primary and secondary level in both official languages, though there is sometimes confusion on which school system a newcomer should enter if they do not already speak an official language.

We also heard that there are cultural challenges to education. For instance, in some cultures, women are expected to get married early, and we learned of a number of instances where 16-year-old girls would leave high school in Saint John to get married. New solutions will need to be found to ensure that all students can complete their education.

We also heard a number of success stories of schools that were slated for closure being filled with newcomer students. In addition to creating greater diversity, increasing enrolment acts as a bulwark against potential school closures.

In general, most newcomers are able to find child care, though it is not always affordable, or accessible when they need it. We also heard from a number of graduate students, especially in the UNB MBA program, who feel that there should be child-care services on campus.

We also heard that many parents have successfully registered their children in a wide variety of sports and recreation programs. These programs benefit the children by providing them with all the benefits that these programs offer to any child. However, we also learned that parents really benefit from registering their children in programs, as this becomes an avenue for them to meet other parents, and build friendships and social capital.

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<sup>3</sup> 2016 Census.

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## **INCOME**

The longer an immigrant has lived in Saint John, the greater their household income. In the first year of arrival, approximately 24 per cent of immigrants were making more than \$40,000. However, within five years of arrival, the number balloons to 70 per cent of immigrants.

Income levels also correlate with citizenship status with 26 per cent of permanent residents reporting a household income of greater than \$60,000, while 57 per cent of immigrants who have become Canadian Citizens exceed this household income threshold.

We found that income also correlates strongly with feelings of attachment to the community. Many of the respondents reported taking a 'survival' job upon arrival to Saint John before finally finding a 'permanent' job that better aligned with their skills, credentials, and income expectations. The quicker immigrants (and their spouses, if applicable) find that 'permanent' job, the more likely they are to stay in Saint John long-term.

## **HOUSING**

The average household size for respondents is 3.4 people which is considerably higher than the Saint John average of 2.1<sup>4</sup>. One in six respondents had difficulty finding affordable or suitable housing with 22 per cent saying it took them longer than four months to find their current home. However, 60 per cent of respondents who arrived in the last two years found their current home in less than a month.

As more immigrants move to Saint John this will place higher pressure on our regional housing market with more supply needed to meet this demand. Just over a quarter of respondents said their current home does not meet their needs or expectations with almost 40 per cent of renters feeling that way.

When drilling down into this issue, the two largest reasons for this were either a lack of bedrooms, or a lack of newer housing in preferred areas. Sixty-eight percent of respondents in the City of Saint John are renting their place of residence. This is a particular opportunity for the City of Saint John as over 90 per cent of all rental units in the CMA are within the City limits and 99 per cent of immigrant post-secondary students reported living in the city. One important note for the

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<sup>4</sup> 20216

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development community is that immigrants predominantly rent one- or two-bedroom homes rather than purchase them (97% and 91% respectively), and they typically will only start purchasing a home if it has three or more bedrooms.

The City has released a Newcomer Housing Study for the City of Saint John conducted by Dillon Consulting with explores the issues in greater depth.

## **BELONGING IN SAINT JOHN**

The majority (52%) of immigrants living in the region feel a strong sense of belonging in Greater Saint John.

The strong consensus from our newcomer community is that nearly 80% feel safe in the city, and only two percent feel unsafe.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Succeed and Stay study is the groundwork on which Saint John's new immigration strategy is built. There are a number of gaps to fill and challenges to address, however, there are also significant number of things Saint John is doing well in supporting and integrating newcomers. Our community is well on its way to making Saint John the destination of choice for newcomers and their families in New Brunswick.

David Dobbelsteyn  
Growth Manager  
The City of Saint John  
July, 2022

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Saint John expresses its gratitude to the many contributors who made the Succeed and Stay study possible (listed in alphabetical order).

We are **especially grateful and indebted to the hundreds of immigrants** who took the time to participate in the City's first immigrant survey, focus groups, or individual interviews, and for providing their valuable feedback on various aspects of their lives and experiences living in Greater Saint John. Thank you for choosing Saint John as your home!

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# PRÉFACE

Saint John a une longue et riche histoire qui a commencé il y a plus de 12 000 ans avec le peuple Wolastoqiyik qui appelait cet endroit Menahkwesk.

En 1631, des colons français ont commencé à s'installer dans la région. Au cours des siècles qui ont suivi, des vagues successives d'immigrants sont arrivées du monde entier, souvent à la recherche d'un refuge, mais tous en quête d'un avenir nouveau et prospère dans le Nouveau Monde.

En 1971, la population de la ville de Saint John a atteint un sommet de 89 039 habitants. Cependant, en 2016, la population était tombée à 67 575 habitants. Des décennies d'exode, causées en partie par le déclin économique, ont conduit Saint John à être reconnue comme la seule région métropolitaine de recensement (RMR) en décroissance au Canada.

En réaction, la Ville a publié sa toute première stratégie de croissance démographique *City of Saint John Population Growth Framework (Cadre de la croissance démographique de la Ville de Saint John)* au début de 2018. Grâce aux efforts concertés de tous les paliers de gouvernement, des entreprises, des organismes d'établissement, des écoles, des organisations locales et de dizaines de groupes communautaires culturels, Saint John connaît à nouveau la croissance.

Malgré ces premiers signes de croissance démographique, les défis pour attirer, soutenir et retenir les immigrants demeurent bien réels. Avant la publication du Cadre, Saint John affichait le plus faible taux de rétention des immigrants sur cinq ans parmi les CMA canadiens, soit 35,5 % (2017). Pour que Saint John poursuive sa croissance, et même l'accélère, elle doit devenir beaucoup plus accueillante et augmenter le taux de rétention de notre communauté d'immigrants.

Pour ce faire, nous devons d'abord comprendre la question de savoir pourquoi les immigrants quittent Saint John ou y restent. C'est la genèse du projet de recherche **Succeed and Stay** (Réussir et rester). En collaboration avec *le Partenariat local pour l'immigration de Saint John* la ville s'est associée au gouvernement du Canada et à la province du Nouveau-Brunswick pour financer ce programme qui vise à comprendre pourquoi les immigrants **réussissent** à Saint John et pourquoi ils **y restent**. Ces informations serviront à façonner la politique publique, à jeter les bases d'une stratégie d'immigration solide pour la région et à faire en sorte que Saint John devienne et reste la communauté la plus accueillante du Canada.

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## CONTEXTE DU PROJET

La ville de Saint John a lancé le projet de recherche Succeed and Stay (Réussir et rester) à la mi-2019. Le projet a été conçu et dirigé par une équipe centrale de recherche qui a été impliquée pendant toute la durée du projet, soit pendant deux ans. Il a été soutenu par un comité consultatif multidisciplinaire, avec le soutien particulier de l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick, et assisté par une équipe de recherche spécialisée dont les membres se sont relayés tout au long du projet pour apporter des contributions spécifiques.

La ville de Saint John est extrêmement reconnaissante envers ces personnes dévouées, les autres intervenants et surtout les centaines d'immigrants qui ont participé à ce projet et qui ont partagé leurs points de vue sur la vie à Saint John.

### Il y a trois principaux produits livrables pour le projet :

#### 1) Analyse des lacunes du paysage urbain de Saint John

La Ville a retenu les services de Diversis Inc pour effectuer une analyse des lacunes du paysage de l'établissement à Saint John à la fin de 2019 et au début de 2020 afin de donner un point de vue « extérieur » objectif sur nos forces et nos faiblesses en tant que région. Diversis a rencontré 27 organisations et a organisé 11 groupes de discussion avec 78 immigrants représentant un large éventail de notre communauté de nouveaux arrivants.

#### 2) L'enquête sur les immigrants de Saint John

La première enquête sur les immigrants de la ville de Saint John a été remplie par 735 immigrants à l'automne 2019, qui ont répondu à plus de 81 questions liées aux données démographiques, aux expériences d'établissement, à l'intégration et à la rétention. La Ville s'est associée à la University of New Brunswick à Saint John et au Partenariat local pour l'immigration de Saint John pour mener l'enquête. Plus de 250 000 points de données uniques ont été analysés et représentent un trésor de données locales qui permettront une analyse approfondie et géolocalisée des opinions et des expériences des immigrants afin d'aider à ajuster les programmes, les dépenses et les soutiens pour améliorer l'expérience des nouveaux arrivants à Saint John.

#### 3) Entretiens avec des immigrés qui réussissent et qui restent

L'équipe de recherche de Succeed and Stay (Réussir et rester) a également organisé 39 entretiens individuels en profondeur avec des immigrants afin d'examiner leurs expériences individuelles en matière de déménagement, d'installation et de séjour à Saint John. L'équipe du projet a également rencontré des immigrants qui ont quitté Saint John, y compris certains qui sont revenus, pour savoir pourquoi ils sont partis.

# PRÉFACE

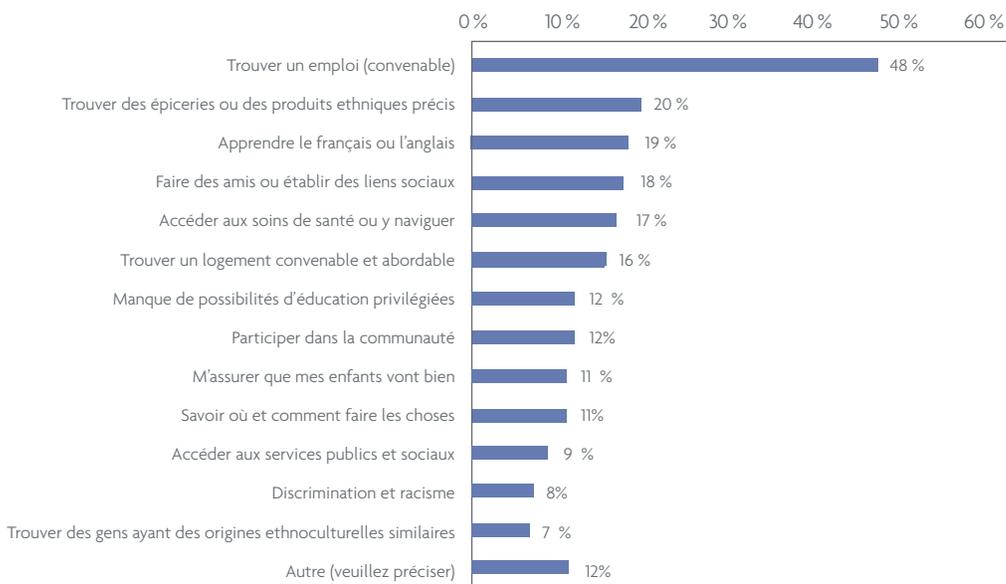
## RÉSUMÉ DES CONCLUSIONS

Voici une série de thèmes extraits des trois rapports. Pour une meilleure compréhension des questions et des résultats, les lecteurs sont invités à consulter directement les rapports.

L'étude peut être résumée par deux réalités principales pour les immigrants de Saint John, que l'on pourrait probablement dire de presque n'importe où : Saint John est un endroit où il fait bon vivre pour les immigrants, mais il a aussi ses défis.

Le tableau suivant présente un aperçu des problèmes les plus urgents, tels qu'ils ont été signalés par les immigrants qui ont rempli la première enquête de la Ville auprès des immigrants à la mi-2019.

### Problèmes les plus difficiles auxquels les immigrants sont actuellement confrontés (cochez jusqu'à 3 cases)



enquête 2019 sur les immigrants à Saint John

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## **INTENTION DE RESTER À SAINT JOHN**

Nos participants nous ont dit que près des deux tiers des immigrants ont l'intention de rester à Saint John à long terme. Ce résultat est de bon augure pour l'augmentation de notre taux de rétention en tant que communauté, à condition que les immigrants puissent trouver et conserver un emploi adéquat. Près de la moitié (49 %) des immigrants qui sont venus à Saint John avec un permis d'études veulent rester à Saint John. Avec les nouvelles voies d'accès à la résidence permanente pour les diplômés, ce groupe de nouveaux arrivants représente un bassin important pour accroître de façon permanente la population de notre région, surtout si nous augmentons le nombre d'inscriptions dans les écoles postsecondaires. Et comme près de 22 % des immigrants nous disent être venus à Saint John avec un permis d'études au départ, cela démontre également le rôle essentiel que jouent nos établissements postsecondaires pour attirer les immigrants.

On ne saurait non plus trop insister sur l'importance de soutenir l'intégration des enfants d'immigrants. Dans de nombreux cas, les immigrants s'installent au Canada pour offrir une meilleure vie à leurs enfants, et bien que cela soit perturbant, les immigrants migreront à nouveau vers une autre ville s'ils estiment que leurs enfants ne s'intègrent pas bien à Saint John. À l'inverse, si les enfants sont épanouis et heureux, les parents immigrés sont peu enclins à les déplacer dans une autre communauté, même s'ils ont eux-mêmes des difficultés.

Nous avons entendu de nombreuses histoires d'immigrants qui ont peiné pour trouver un emploi adéquat et qui ont fini par quitter Saint John lorsqu'ils n'y sont pas parvenus. Nous avons également entendu des employeurs témoins d'employés immigrants qui partaient dans une autre province dès qu'ils devenaient résidents permanents. Bien que des incidents comme ceux-là soient toujours préoccupants, les voies d'immigration, comme le Programme d'immigration au Canada atlantique, entraînent maintenant des taux de rétention plus élevés en raison de l'exigence d'attachement à l'emploi.

Dans certains cas, nous avons entendu des immigrants qui se sont installés ici sans avoir l'intention d'y rester, mais qui sont finalement tombés amoureux de la communauté et la considèrent désormais comme leur foyer. En résumé, il existe une certaine recette pour une intégration réussie que nous avons entendue à maintes reprises :

- 1) L'accès à un bon emploi tant pour le demandeur principal que pour son partenaire (le cas échéant). Le réseautage professionnel et la reconnaissance des titres de compétences sont des conditions préalables essentielles.
- 2) Accès à un logement adéquat (de bonne taille) et abordable dans un quartier sûr.
- 3) L'accès à de bonnes écoles et à des activités parascolaires pour leurs enfants.

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- 4) Accès aux aides à l'établissement et à l'apprentissage de la langue, en particulier pour les réfugiés et les demandeurs secondaires.
- 5) Accès à des liens sociaux solides avec les communautés ethnoculturelles de la diaspora et avec les résidents locaux.
- 6) L'accès aux commodités, telles que les espaces verts et les magasins, et aux produits culturels de base, tels que les aliments et ingrédients ethniques et les lieux de culte.

Avoir un bon emploi est le facteur le plus déterminant pour qu'un nouvel arrivant reste à Saint John. Historiquement, il s'agit d'un domaine où Saint John, et les Maritimes en général, ont lutté pour la rétention. Toutefois, nous avons également entendu à maintes reprises qu'un bon emploi ne suffit pas en soi. Les immigrants souhaitent également bénéficier d'une excellente qualité de vie à un prix abordable, idéalement avec leur famille et leurs amis à proximité.

## MESURES POUR MIEUX SOUTENIR LES IMMIGRANTS

Nous avons demandé à notre communauté d'immigrants de recommander les trois principaux changements qui pourraient être apportés pour mieux soutenir les immigrants qui s'installent dans notre région. Les cinq premières suggestions étaient les suivantes :

- 1) Sensibiliser les employeurs à l'embauche et à la rétention des employés immigrés (59 %).
- 2) Fournir davantage d'options de logement abordables et adaptées (37 %).
- 3) Offrir plus d'options d'apprentissage d'une seconde langue pour améliorer l'anglais ou le français (31 %).
- 4) Améliorer les liens sociaux entre les nouveaux arrivants et la communauté (29 %).
- 5) Créer un lieu central où les immigrants peuvent recevoir des services d'établissement et autres (23 %).

## EMPLOI ET ENTREPRENEURIAT

Saint John est un lieu de travail pour des milliers d'immigrants. Cependant, au moins 54 % des immigrants déplorent le manque de possibilités d'emploi au niveau local, et deux sur cinq disent avoir eu des difficultés à faire reconnaître leur expérience par les employeurs. Les immigrants nous ont dit très clairement qu'il s'agit du plus grand facteur d'incitation pour les immigrants, c'est-à-dire que si un nouvel arrivant ne peut pas trouver un emploi intéressant correspondant à son expérience, il sera « poussé » hors de Saint John vers une autre ville.

Certains immigrants ont pu trouver du travail très rapidement, un sur trois ayant trouvé un emploi en moins de trois mois. Cependant, il y a un chômage persistant pour au moins un immigrant sur cinq, dont beaucoup sont des réfugiés ayant une maîtrise limitée de l'anglais à leur arrivée à Saint John.

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De nombreux immigrants nous ont dit qu'ils avaient du mal à accéder à des emplois en raison d'un manque de réseautage ou parce qu'ils ne savaient pas comment accéder au marché caché de l'emploi en tant que nouveaux arrivants. Nous avons également entendu des histoires de nouveaux arrivants qui se sont vus refuser des entretiens d'embauche parce qu'ils avaient un nom de famille « étranger » ou qu'ils n'avaient pas « d'expérience professionnelle canadienne ». À une époque où les employeurs déplorent le vieillissement et la diminution de notre main-d'œuvre, il est évident que les immigrants, en particulier ceux qui vivent déjà à Saint John, constituent une ressource inexploitée et devraient être pris en considération par les employeurs locaux pour les emplois de tous niveaux.

Les Canadiens connaissent bien le cliché des médecins conduisant des taxis. En ce qui concerne les professions réglementées, la reconnaissance des titres de compétences est un problème pour au moins un quart des immigrants de Saint John, et il est clair que l'on peut faire davantage pour éliminer ces obstacles et qu'on doit le faire. Cependant, le sous-emploi est également une réalité à Saint John, plus de la moitié des immigrants déclarant être sous-employés d'une manière ou d'une autre et ne pas réaliser leur plein potentiel.

Nous avons observé que les immigrants font preuve d'un incroyable esprit d'entreprise, plus de 65 % des répondants ayant déclaré avoir créé leur entreprise (18 %) ou être intéressés (47 %) par la création de leur propre entreprise. L'esprit d'entreprise requiert une certaine attitude d'audace et de prise de risque, et l'on peut expliquer en partie l'esprit d'entreprise des immigrants par la nature aventureuse des personnes qui sont prêtes à quitter leur mode de vie actuel pour prendre un nouveau départ dans un nouveau pays. Toutefois, dans de nombreux cas, les immigrants nous ont également dit qu'ils avaient créé une entreprise par nécessité, car ils ne pouvaient pas trouver un emploi correspondant à leur expérience, la logique étant que si vous ne pouvez pas trouver un emploi, vous en créez un.

Nous avons également entendu dire qu'il ne suffit pas que le demandeur principal ait un bon emploi, nous avons entendu des familles où l'un des partenaires était au chômage ou sous-employé et que cela était une cause directe pour que la famille envisage de déménager, voire de partir.

En résumé, si nous voulons que les familles restent à Saint John, les deux partenaires doivent être en mesure de trouver un emploi intéressant s'ils le souhaitent.

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## AGENCES D'AIDE AUX IMMIGRANTS

Saint John a un secteur d'établissement robuste avec plus de 90 employés et environ 4,5 millions de dollars font partie du budget annuellement pour soutenir les nouveaux arrivants, principalement grâce à un financement du gouvernement fédéral.

Nous avons constaté qu'environ la moitié des immigrants de Saint John (52 %) ont accédé aux services par l'entremise d'un organisme d'établissement local, comme le YMCA Newcomer Connections, le Centre de nouveaux arrivants de Saint John ou PRUDE Inc.

La principale raison pour laquelle les nouveaux arrivants n'ont pas eu recours aux services est le manque de connaissance des services (46 %) ou parce qu'ils n'en avaient pas besoin (35 %). Cela peut être illustré par un commentaire que nous avons reçu :

« Je comprends maintenant que les choses ont changé, par rapport à mon arrivée il y a quatre ou cinq ans. Je crois savoir qu'aujourd'hui, il existe de nombreux services d'aide à l'installation auxquels les gens peuvent s'adresser pour les aider à s'intégrer dans le système. Mais quand je suis arrivé il y a cinq ans, je ne sais pas si ces choses existaient, et personne n'est venu nous dire : « Hé... je pense que vous pouvez vous adresser à cette agence... et ils pourront vous fournir toutes ces informations pour vous aider à vous installer. » Pour moi, le soutien est venu des habitants de Saint John du quotidien que j'ai rencontrés dans la rue, et je vous dis que, pour moi, cela a été très bien. En fait, ça m'a aidé à m'installer plutôt bien. »

Bien que nous ayons observé qu'il n'y a pas de duplication importante des services, nous avons entendu de la part de la communauté des nouveaux arrivants qu'ils ne savaient pas exactement quelle agence offrait quels services, et qui était admissible. Ainsi, de nombreuses personnes interrogées ont trouvé le paysage local de l'habitat déroutant. La mise en place de « Aucune fausse route » devrait permettre d'améliorer nombre de ces problèmes et de renforcer les liens avec les employeurs locaux. Nous avons entendu qu'en général, les nouveaux arrivants trouvaient ces services utiles, et que des efforts accrus devraient être déployés pour faire connaître ces services à Saint John.

## LANGUE

En 2011, 3 865 personnes à Saint John parlaient une langue non officielle. En 2016, ce nombre avait augmenté de 19 % pour atteindre 4 600. Les participants à l'étude parlent 41 langues maternelles, dont environ un sur cinq parle l'arabe et un sur cinq le mandarin. Cela a des conséquences importantes

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sur la prestation de services pour le gouvernement, les entreprises et les organisations basées sur les services. Il existe un certain nombre d'options de programmes solides pour permettre aux immigrants d'apprendre l'anglais, et moins d'options pour apprendre le français. Toutefois, 39 % des participants ont déclaré qu'ils ne parlaient pas assez bien l'anglais pour travailler professionnellement. Il s'agit d'une question cruciale pour un certain nombre de raisons, car dans la plupart des cas, la langue permet une intégration complète et l'accès à l'emploi.

Nous avons entendu dans de nombreux cas que les enfants scolarisés apprennent facilement l'anglais, et que les demandeurs principaux qui travaillent apprennent également l'anglais plus rapidement, car ils sont exposés à un environnement immersif en anglais au travail. Dans certains cas, notamment parmi les réfugiés, les demandeurs secondaires, tels que les conjoints ou les grands-parents, n'apprennent pas l'anglais aussi rapidement, car ils restent plus souvent à la maison.

Dans les cas où les immigrants s'inscrivent à des cours de langue, nous avons appris que plus de 75 % des immigrants qui suivent des cours de langue le font dans le cadre des Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada (CLIC) de Newcomer Connections YMCA. Dans plus de la moitié des cas (56 %), les répondants ont indiqué que leur langue s'était améliorée un peu ou mieux grâce à leur participation aux CLIC. Dans certains cas, ce programme ne répond pas aux besoins des nouveaux arrivants en raison de problèmes d'horaires ou de la façon dont le programme est enseigné. À l'inverse, nous avons également entendu que certains nouveaux arrivants abandonnent eux-mêmes définitivement, ou temporairement pour de longues périodes, comme pendant le Ramadan, et manquent ainsi l'occasion d'apprendre. Il est clair que si les programmes linguistiques fonctionnent généralement bien, il est possible de piloter de nouvelles améliorations, notamment dans les milieux professionnels.

Un mythe dominant est que les immigrants de Saint John ne comprennent pas l'anglais. Il existe probablement une forte corrélation avec un autre mythe selon lequel tous les nouveaux arrivants sont des réfugiés. Ces deux mythes sont faux. Près de sept immigrants sur dix ont une connaissance de base (18 %) ou professionnelle (51 %) de l'anglais à leur arrivée. Alors que la grande majorité des réfugiés qui sont arrivés à Saint John ne parlaient ni l'anglais ni le français à leur arrivée, seulement 12 % de notre population immigrante est arrivée à Saint John en tant que réfugiés.

## **COMMODITÉS ET ACTIVITÉS**

Lorsqu'on leur a demandé quelles étaient les commodités les plus importantes du Grand Saint John pour les immigrants, 65 % d'entre eux ont répondu que les parcs et les sentiers faisaient partie des

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trois commodités les plus importantes de la région, suivis par 40 % des centres commerciaux et des magasins et 32 % des bibliothèques.

Il est difficile d'exagérer l'importance des espaces verts pour les immigrants, en particulier ceux qui viennent de mégapoles. Des immigrants nous ont dit qu'ils vivaient dans une « jungle de béton » avant de s'installer à Saint John, ce qui explique pourquoi Saint John les a tant séduits.

Cependant, cette proposition de valeur claire ne signifie pas nécessairement qu'il faut plus de parcs et de sentiers pour attirer plus d'immigrants, mais plutôt que ce que nous avons à Saint John en termes d'accès à l'eau, aux parcs, aux sentiers et aux autres espaces verts est clairement apprécié par notre communauté d'immigrants, et qu'au minimum, notre communauté devrait maintenir son investissement dans ces commodités. En outre, notre magnifique paysage naturel devrait faire partie de notre stratégie de marketing pour attirer de nouveaux immigrants dans la région.

Les immigrants sont partagés quant à savoir s'il y a suffisamment de choses à faire à Saint John. Si 42 % des immigrants pensent qu'il y a beaucoup d'activités pour eux ou leur famille, nous avons également entendu de nombreux immigrants qui recherchent une plus grande diversité d'activités que l'on trouve dans les grands centres, comme des boîtes de nuit et des parcs d'attractions

## **TRANSPORTS PUBLICS**

Les nouveaux arrivants nous ont dit que l'un de leurs premiers achats à Saint John est souvent un véhicule personnel. Cependant, il n'est pas toujours simple ou facile pour les nouveaux arrivants d'obtenir un permis de conduire canadien ou un véhicule en raison d'un manque d'antécédents de crédit, et beaucoup choisissent d'utiliser Saint John Transit. En fait, près de trois nouveaux arrivants sur cinq ont utilisé Saint John Transit à un moment donné, et les nouveaux arrivants évaluent notre système comme moyen (2,47 sur cinq).

Quatre-vingt-deux pour cent de notre communauté étudiante internationale utilise Saint John Transit quatre fois ou plus par semaine. Un obstacle que nous avons entendu à plusieurs reprises est le manque de service d'autobus vers le campus du NBCC et l'aéroport de Saint John. Nous avons entendu qu'au moins 26 % des nouveaux arrivants n'utilisent pas notre système de transport en commun parce qu'il faut trop de temps pour se rendre à une destination, ou parce que la fréquence des autobus est faible. La Ville a procédé à un examen du système et entreprend actuellement une refonte du service.

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## DIVERSITÉ

Saint John est de plus en plus diversifié. Plus de 6 640 immigrants ont élu domicile dans le Grand Saint John en 2016<sup>1</sup>. Au cours des quatre dernières années seulement, 3 369 personnes ont immigré à Saint John<sup>2</sup>. Sept cent trente-cinq immigrants de 98 pays différents ont participé à l'enquête sur les immigrants de Saint John. Notre communauté d'immigrants apporte des expériences différentes, puisque seulement 11 % des répondants ont déjà vécu dans une ville de la même taille que Saint John. La grande majorité (76 %) vivait dans des grandes villes, 44 % dans des villes de cinq millions d'habitants ou plus. Cela signifie que les nouveaux arrivants sont susceptibles d'apporter des perspectives très différentes de celles des résidents nés sur place. Ils préfèrent une expérience urbaine, puisque près de 80 % des immigrants de notre région vivent dans la ville de Saint John. Les immigrants ont également tendance à se regrouper dans des zones précises de la ville. Millidgeville est maintenant devenu l'un des quartiers les plus diversifiés de la province, plus de 25 % de la population ayant une langue maternelle autre que l'anglais ou le français. Alors que les industries basées sur les services ont tendance à suivre et à répondre aux besoins de la population locale, avec une population d'immigrants en plein essor, il existe de nouveaux appétits pour des produits qui n'étaient pas disponibles auparavant. Pourtant, plus d'un répondant sur cinq a déclaré avoir beaucoup de mal à trouver des aliments et des produits d'épicerie ethniques, ce qui constitue un facteur de motivation important pour les immigrants qui s'installent dans les grandes villes canadiennes.

## COMMUNAUTÉ ACCUEILLANTE

Nous avons appris que la grande majorité des immigrants (95 %) considèrent que Saint John est accueillante, 60 % d'entre eux estimant que Saint John est très accueillante ou extrêmement accueillante. Cependant, nous avons également entendu la phrase répétée voulant que les habitants de Saint John soient « amicaux, mais pas si accueillants ». Dans la pratique, cela signifie que les habitants de Saint John seront heureux de fournir de l'aide ou des informations aux nouveaux arrivants, mais qu'ils ne les inviteront peut-être pas à souper ou à entrer dans leur propre cercle social.

Nous avons demandé aux répondants de nous dire combien d'amis immigrants et nés au Canada ils avaient. 89 % des répondants avaient trois amis ou plus qui étaient des immigrants, tandis que 57 % avaient trois amis ou plus nés au Canada. Si l'on considère qu'il y a environ 28 résidents nés au Canada pour chaque immigrant dans le Grand Saint John, ces données démontrent que les immigrants ont tendance à se regrouper avec d'autres immigrants, mais qu'ils ont également du mal

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<sup>1</sup> Recensement de 2016

<sup>2</sup> Statistique Canada. Tableau 17-10-0136-01 Composantes de la variation de la population selon la région métropolitaine de recensement et l'agglomération de recensement, limites de 2016

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à s'intégrer aux cercles sociaux des résidents nés au pays. Un parent a partagé avec nous l'expérience de son fils qui avait du mal à trouver des amis :

« ..... un jour, mon fils m'a dit : « Je ne sais pas qui je suis. J'ai l'impression que je n'ai pas ma place parmi mes amis canadiens parce que je ne suis pas assez canadienne pour eux, et je n'ai pas ma place parmi mes amis qui parlent notre langue ou les autres nouveaux arrivants parce que je ne parle pas très bien la langue. Ils sont canadiens. Ils sont nés ici. »

Le sentiment d'isolement est également un facteur qui pousse les familles à quitter Saint John. Lorsqu'on demande aux immigrants pourquoi ils se sentent seuls, les trois principales raisons sont les suivantes : 1) la famille est loin; 2) ils n'ont pas assez d'amis, et; 3) ils ne trouvent pas d'emploi. Dans une ville où le capital social est un facteur déterminant pour l'accès aux occasions locales et au marché du travail, on peut faire davantage pour aider les nouveaux arrivants à établir des réseaux personnels et professionnels et on doit le faire.

Nous avons également appris que 46 % des immigrants de Saint John n'ont pas de médecin de famille. Bien que la plupart des immigrants soient en bonne santé et qu'ils soient tenus de passer un examen médical avant d'immigrer au Canada, ils ont néanmoins besoin de bons soins de santé et doivent avoir accès à un médecin de famille. Le Réseau de santé Horizon a pris des mesures proactives en faveur d'une plus grande inclusion et a davantage recours au programme « Interpreter On Wheels » (Interprètes mobiles) pour aider les immigrants qui ne parlent pas assez bien une langue officielle pour comprendre leur professionnel de santé.

## **DISCRIMINATION**

Nous avons parlé des expériences de discrimination dans l'enquête, dans les groupes de discussion et dans les entretiens individuels. Environ 35 % des répondants ont déclaré avoir été victimes de discrimination à un moment donné à Saint John, et environ 20 % des répondants ont déclaré avoir été victimes de discrimination au cours de l'année écoulée. Nous soupçonnons que ce chiffre est peut-être plus élevé en réalité, car certains immigrants ont préféré ne pas répondre aux questions concernant les expériences de discrimination, ou dans certains contextes culturels, on considère que ce qu'ils ont pu vivre n'est peut-être pas de la discrimination, alors que de tels actes seraient considérés comme discriminatoires au Canada.

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En examinant les réponses par sexe, nous avons constaté que les hommes ont déclaré être moins victimes de discrimination que les femmes (33 % contre 36 %). Si l'on examine les réponses par origine ethnique, les immigrants suivants ont été victimes de discrimination à Saint John (Blanche : 28 % | Asiatique : 30 % | Amérique latine : 41 % | Arabe : 42 % | Noire : 44 %).

Nous avons entendu dire que la discrimination ou le racisme n'étaient généralement pas manifestes, mais que c'était plus souvent le cas en milieu scolaire. Par exemple, un répondant a indiqué ce qui suit :

« Mes enfants me disent qu'ils ne veulent pas aller à l'école parce que quelqu'un leur dit qu'ils ressemblent à du caca. »

Plus d'un quart (26 %) des immigrants ont été victimes de discrimination au travail ou lors d'une demande d'emploi. Près d'un immigré sur cinq (19 %) a été victime de discrimination dans un lieu public. Et bien que le gouvernement soit souvent très proactif dans l'élimination de la discrimination, au moins cinq pour cent des immigrants disent avoir été victimes de discrimination lors de l'obtention de services gouvernementaux.

Bien que la discrimination doive être abordée, en particulier sur le lieu de travail, il convient de noter que seulement huit pour cent des immigrants pensent qu'il s'agit de l'un des trois principaux problèmes auxquels sont confrontés les immigrants à Saint John. Toutefois, il existe un lien certain entre le manque apparent de possibilité d'emploi et la discrimination, auquel il convient de remédier le plus rapidement possible. Nous avons parlé avec quelques immigrants qui ont eu du mal à trouver un emploi local jusqu'à ce qu'ils anglicisent leur nom sur leur CV. Certains employeurs progressistes commencent à adopter des politiques visant à réduire les préjugés implicites, comme l'embauche en aveugle ou l'offre d'une formation sur les compétences culturelles aux responsables de l'embauche et au personnel d'encadrement.

Nous avons également constaté un lien entre la discrimination et l'intention d'un immigrant de rester à Saint John. 66 % des nouveaux arrivants qui n'ont jamais été victimes de discrimination ont l'intention de rester à Saint John. Toutefois, ce chiffre tombe à 50 % s'ils ont été victimes de discrimination au cours des un à trois dernières années.

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# PRÉFACE

## **ÉDUCATION, GARDE D'ENFANTS ET PROGRAMMES PARASCOLAIRES**

Il n'est pas surprenant que de nombreux immigrants soient très instruits. Environ 18,7 % des résidents de la RMR de Saint John possèdent un diplôme universitaire<sup>3</sup>, tandis que 71 % des immigrants interrogés ont déclaré posséder un diplôme universitaire à leur arrivée à Saint John. Cela représente un bassin de talents dans lequel les employeurs locaux peuvent puiser.

Les districts scolaires anglophones et francophones ont rationalisé leurs méthodes d'inscription des nouveaux élèves, et nous avons appris qu'un nouveau soutien considérable a été offert aux élèves, en particulier dans le domaine de l'aide linguistique. Saint John dispose d'une offre éducative solide aux niveaux primaire et secondaire dans les deux langues officielles, bien qu'il y ait parfois une certaine confusion quant au système scolaire dans lequel un nouvel arrivant doit entrer s'il ne parle pas déjà une langue officielle.

Nous avons également entendu qu'il existe des défis culturels en matière d'éducation. Par exemple, dans certaines cultures, on attend des femmes qu'elles se marient tôt, et nous avons appris qu'il y avait plusieurs cas où des jeunes filles de 16 ans quittaient le lycée à Saint John pour se marier. De nouvelles solutions devront être trouvées pour garantir que tous les étudiants puissent terminer leurs études.

Nous avons également entendu un certain nombre d'histoires de réussite d'écoles qui étaient vouées à la fermeture et qui ont été remplies d'élèves nouveaux arrivants. En plus de créer une plus grande diversité, l'augmentation du nombre d'inscriptions constitue un rempart contre les fermetures potentielles d'écoles.

En général, la plupart des nouveaux arrivants sont en mesure de trouver des services de garde d'enfants, bien que ceux-ci ne soient pas toujours abordables ou accessibles lorsqu'ils en ont besoin. Nous avons également entendu un certain nombre d'étudiants diplômés, en particulier dans le programme MBA de l'University of New Brunswick, qui estiment qu'il devrait y avoir des services de garde d'enfants sur le campus.

Nous avons également appris que de nombreux parents ont réussi à inscrire leurs enfants à une grande variété de programmes sportifs et récréatifs. Ces programmes bénéficient aux enfants en leur offrant tous les avantages que ces programmes offrent à tout enfant. Cependant, nous avons également appris que les parents profitent réellement de l'inscription de leurs enfants à des programmes, car cela leur permet de rencontrer d'autres parents et de nouer des amitiés et créer un capital social.

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<sup>3</sup> Recensement de 2016

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# PRÉFACE

## REVENU

Plus un immigrant vit depuis longtemps à Saint John, plus le revenu de son ménage est élevé. Au cours de la première année d'arrivée, environ 24 % des immigrants gagnaient plus de 40 000 \$. Toutefois, dans les cinq années suivant l'arrivée, ce chiffre grimpe en flèche pour atteindre 70 % des immigrants.

Les niveaux de revenu sont également en corrélation avec le statut de citoyenneté, 26 % des résidents permanents déclarant un revenu du ménage supérieur à 60 000 \$, tandis que 57 % des immigrants ayant obtenu la citoyenneté canadienne dépassent ce seuil de revenu du ménage.

Nous avons constaté que le revenu présente également une forte corrélation avec le sentiment d'attachement à la communauté. Bon nombre des répondants ont déclaré avoir accepté un emploi de « survie » à leur arrivée à Saint John avant de trouver finalement un emploi « permanent » qui correspondait mieux à leurs compétences, à leurs titres de compétences et à leurs attentes en matière de revenu. Plus les immigrants (et leurs conjoints, le cas échéant) trouvent rapidement cet emploi « permanent », plus ils ont de chances de rester à Saint John à long terme.

## LOGEMENT

La taille moyenne des ménages des répondants est de 3,4 personnes, ce qui est considérablement plus élevé que la moyenne de Saint John, qui est de 2,1<sup>4</sup>. Une personne interrogée sur six a eu des difficultés à trouver un logement abordable ou adapté, et 22 % ont déclaré qu'il leur a fallu plus de quatre mois pour trouver leur logement actuel. Toutefois, 60 % des personnes interrogées qui sont arrivées au cours des deux dernières années ont trouvé leur logement actuel en moins d'un mois.

L'augmentation du nombre d'immigrants qui s'installent à Saint John exercera une pression plus forte sur le marché du logement de la région, et une offre plus importante sera nécessaire pour répondre à cette demande. Un peu plus d'un quart des personnes interrogées ont déclaré que leur logement actuel ne répond pas à leurs besoins ou à leurs attentes, et près de 40 % des locataires sont de cet avis.

Les deux principales raisons de cette situation sont soit le manque de chambres, soit le manque de logements neufs dans les zones préférées. Soixante-huit pour cent des répondants de la ville de Saint John louent leur lieu de résidence. Il s'agit d'une occasion particulière pour la ville de Saint John, car plus de 90 % de tous les logements locatifs de la RMR se trouvent dans les limites de la

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<sup>4</sup> Recensement de 2016

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# PRÉFACE

ville et 99 % des étudiants immigrants de niveau postsecondaire ont déclaré vivre dans la ville. Une remarque importante pour la communauté du développement est que les immigrants louent principalement des maisons d'une ou deux chambres à coucher plutôt que de les acheter (97 % et 91 % respectivement), et ils ne commenceront généralement à acheter une maison que si elle comporte trois chambres à coucher ou plus.

La ville a publié une étude sur le logement des nouveaux arrivants pour la ville de Saint John, réalisée par Dillon Consulting, qui explore ces questions de manière plus approfondie.

## **APPARTENANCE À SAINT JOHN**

La majorité (52 %) des immigrants vivant dans la région éprouvent un fort sentiment d'appartenance au Grand Saint John.

Le consensus important de notre communauté de nouveaux arrivants est que près de 80 % d'entre eux se sentent en sécurité dans la ville, et seulement 2 % ne se sentent pas en sécurité.

## **PROCHAINES ÉTAPES**

L'étude « Succeed and Stay » (Réussir et rester) constitue le fondement de la nouvelle stratégie de Saint John en matière d'immigration. Il y a un certain nombre de lacunes à combler et de défis à relever, mais il y a aussi un nombre important d'éléments que Saint John fait bien pour soutenir et intégrer les nouveaux arrivants. Notre collectivité est en bonne voie pour faire de Saint John la destination de choix des nouveaux arrivants et de leur famille au Nouveau-Brunswick.

David Dobbelsteyn  
Responsable de la croissance  
La ville de Saint John  
Juillet 2022

# REMERCIEMENTS

La ville de Saint John exprime sa gratitude aux nombreux contributeurs qui ont rendu l'étude Succeed and Stay (Réussir et rester) possible [énumérés par ordre alphabétique].

Nous sommes **particulièrement reconnaissants et redevables aux centaines d'immigrants** qui ont pris le temps de participer au premier sondage de la Ville auprès des immigrants, aux groupes de discussion ou aux entrevues individuelles, et qui ont fourni leurs précieux commentaires sur divers aspects de leur vie et de leurs expériences dans le Grand Saint John. Merci d'avoir choisi Saint John comme votre foyer!

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- Government of New Brunswick
- City of Saint John
- Mita

# SAINT JOHN SETTLEMENT SECTOR GAP ANALYSIS

## Report (2020)

Prepared by

Diversis Inc.

Immigration and Cultural Diversity Consulting Firm

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A REPORT BY THE CITY OF SAINT JOHN AND  
THE SAINT JOHN LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Saint John has a very big problem: it must significantly increase its population or risk significant decline in its economic output and quality of life for its residents. Recognizing this, the municipal government issued a Population Growth Framework in 2018 to initiate an all-of-society movement to increase the city's population, with an emphasis on attracting and retaining immigrants. It was a call to action and Saint John residents and organizations are beginning to step up. Determining how, where and why they are coming together to support immigrants and where improvements should be made is the purpose of this report.

Diversis, working with the City government's Succeed and Stay research group, conducted a gap analysis of the Saint John community's network of formal and informal immigration support services and programs. Through focus groups, one-on-one interviews and research we examined the strengths and weaknesses, using our "i-readiness!" scoring system. This tool provides an objective, clinical look at the Saint John community, its organizations, its workplaces and its institutes of learning. The end result is a detailed report that captures where Saint John is now, and where it should be headed. To chart a new course for immigration attraction and retention, Saint John residents, their city government and community organizations need to know and understand where they are starting from, so they set off in the right direction together.

## THE BIG PICTURE

The Saint John region currently invests close to \$5 million annually in newcomer services directed at attracting, retaining and integrating newcomers into the Saint John community. The bulk of this investment – \$4.5 million – is distributed amongst five immigrant-serving organizations (ISO), two of which are settlement agencies and three which offer specialized services. Cumulatively these five ISOs employ 90 people and draw on the talents of hundreds of volunteers. An additional \$400,000 is invested in indirect immigration services.

In addition to these primary service providers, Saint John also benefits from specialized services and programs offered by local cultural organisations, refugee sponsorship organizations, post-secondary education institutions, schools, and municipal and provincial governments that are actively engaged in this all-of-society approach to population growth.

Despite these efforts, Saint John recorded a significant decline in new immigrants in 2018 and 2019, compared to Fredericton, Moncton and other areas of New Brunswick. It attracted less immigrants via three programs: the Provincial Nominee Program, the Temporary Foreign Workers program and the Federal Express Entry.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For those immigrants who did move to Saint John, finding employment was a top priority. Immigrants to Saint John did find work, with an unemployment rate just 1 per cent lower than non-immigrants. However, their employment is concentrated in a few industries.

Immigrants to Saint John are:

- over-represented in accommodations and food industries;
- under-represented in public administration and manufacturing;
- pursuing entrepreneurship and self-employment at double the rate of non-immigrants (11.9 per cent v. 6.36 per cent); and,
- earning 3 per cent lower median salaries than non-immigrants (with the exception of French speaking immigrants).

While Saint John's overall newcomer Canadian population boasts people from around the world, the majority of recent immigrants to Saint John are:

- Asian (77 per cent);
- English-speaking (91 per cent); and
- arriving via the economic stream (59 per cent).

## **SAINT JOHN AND THE i-readiness™ RESULTS**

Saint John received an overall i-readiness™ score of 75 per cent. This makes Saint John slightly above average in attracting and retaining immigrants. It's a good start, and we recommend the City of Saint John consider its i-readiness score a baseline upon which to set measurable and timely improvement targets. The City of Saint John has strong physical, social and human capital capacities; its principal weaknesses lie within its political and economic capital.

### **Key Saint John strengths**

**Human capital:** Presence of essential services for integration of immigrants. This provides the building blocks upon which to refocus service delivery to make it immigrant-focused, particularly related to accessibility and adaptability.

**Social capital:** Presence of cultural programs and services. There are many cultural organizations, social groups and networks that are open and welcoming. There is mutual trust between group members and newcomers, with the exception of employers. However, many immigrants and international students told us it's still hard to make friends with non-immigrant Saint Johners. The Saint John Local Immigration Partnership (SJLIP) is very active in engaging and bringing together immigrants and the local community to work on common goals.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Saint John weaknesses

**Economic:** Lack of a community-wide comprehensive engagement and communications strategy to attract and retain economic immigrants, including international students. The region lacks a formal assessment process to determine immigrants' needs related to economic integration, a key determinant of retention, and a signature attraction and promotion campaign, unlike other urban areas in the Maritimes. The lack of a similar big public push from Saint John could explain why Saint John recorded a significant immigration drop.

**Political:** Need an updated and comprehensive immigration strategy. The Population Growth Framework was a great first step but it's now time to develop a multi-year strategy, complete with expected outcomes and key performance indicators (KPI). An updated immigration strategy should focus on addressing the identified gaps and take a proactive approach that aligns attraction and retention activities with population growth needs.

## GAP ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Diversis identified six service gaps the Saint John community will need to address to increase its chances of success in attracting and retaining immigrants.

**Information gap:** Accurate and verifiable research and information needs to be accessible to all key players, from potential immigrants looking for information about Saint John to service providers looking to design and deliver what immigrants need. This includes sharing and amplifying success stories.

**Collaboration gap:** Saint John needs to develop a substantive immigration strategy focused on identifying the gaps and taking a proactive approach to attraction and retention services, including creating a one-stop shop for immigrant service delivery.

**Attraction gap:** Saint John needs to develop an attraction strategy and engagement campaign that tracks results and actively promotes the city's strengths, including labour market needs, international connections and local culture.

**Service needs assessment gap:** The immigrant service delivery sector in Saint John needs to implement regular internal reviews and organizational assessments to determine if needs are being met. This includes promoting a culture of constructive criticism.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Employer engagement gap:** A focused engagement and communications strategy is required to help employers develop cross-cultural HR capacity, learn how to make use of existing services and to support those already actively engaged with attraction and retention and who want to accelerate hiring practices.

**International student transition to resident gap:** Develop a targeted international student recruitment strategy that encourages and supports post-secondary institutions in attracting students with career objectives most likely to succeed in the Saint John labour market. The strategy must also support development of post-secondary institutions placement services that help international students make local connections.

## **CONCLUSION**

Over the past few years the City of Saint John took major steps to address challenges related to immigrant retention. It must now accelerate its transition to an all-of-community approach to population growth via immigration. To do this, the municipality must lead by example, applying an immigrant-focused lens to all municipal operations and Council priorities. A culture of diversity must be reflected in City Hall hiring practices across all divisions and at levels, concrete proof that immigrants can succeed in Saint John, and that the City succeeds when it integrates the new perspectives and experiences immigrants offer.



# INTRODUCTION

The City of Saint John wants and needs to attract more immigrants. While the number of immigrants settling in the Saint John region has steadily increased over the past five years, the region continues to have one of the lowest immigrant retention rates among Canadian census metropolitan areas (CMAs). To address this challenge, the Saint John municipality created Succeed and Stay, a diverse research team with a mandate to investigate the reasons why some immigrants succeed and stay, and others choose to leave. The team, led by principal investigator Duyen Nguyen, Ph.D and co-investigator Mikael Hellstrom, Ph.D., conducted surveys, focus groups and interviews with immigrants and stakeholders to investigate this important priority. To support this research, Diversis Inc. conducted a gap analysis on services that are available to immigrants in Saint John.

This report presents Diversis' findings, including: an explanation of our methodology, a brief overview of the immigration profile of the City of Saint John, an analysis of the municipality's capacity to attract, welcome and retain immigrants, the services available to immigrants, and our recommendations on how to address the major gaps to improve the City's immigrant retention rates.

# METHODOLOGY

Diversis Inc. adapted its participatory method for the City of Saint John and its specific requirements including public sector best practices, result-based management, and federal and provincial governments' criteria for recognizing immigrant-ready communities.

For the gap analysis we used the *i-readiness*<sup>TM</sup> indicators for both communities and municipalities and previous Succeed and Stay research, supplemented with our own statistical research and analysis.

This work was conducted over a three-month period (October to December 2019) and included the following activities.

## Data Review

A combination of our original research and a review of Succeed and Stay's body of work.

## Stakeholder interviews

We interviewed 44 people during 27 interviews with immigrant serving organizations (ISOs), local ethnocultural organizations, places of faith and key municipal departments. This included individual and joint interviews, conducted by phone, Zoom web conferencing or in-person depending on interviewees' preference and availability. The full list of participating organizations can be found in Appendix A.

These interviews enabled us to inventory existing immigrant services according to the immigration continuum, identifying strengths and weaknesses, areas needing collaboration, gaps, opportunities for service provision and how to generally improve services to immigrants.

## Focus Groups

We held 11 focus groups with immigrants to ascertain whether their needs are being met by ISOs, their opinions and perspectives on living in Saint John and the services they use or do not use. A total of 78 people participated to the following focus groups:

- Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR)
- Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR)
- Economic immigrants (Temporary foreign workers – TFW)

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the characteristics and the community's needs, the *i-readiness*<sup>TM</sup> process is based on a simple and practical approach while resting on theoretical foundations arising from numerous studies and concrete experiments. It is a practical tool to assess communities in its ability to welcome, integrate and retain immigrants based on a community and participatory approach in order to allow decision makers and planners to assess a community's capacities to strategically build on strengths and, most importantly, address gaps.

---

# METHODOLOGY

- Economic immigrants (Permanent residents currently employed in a job that matches their education and skills)
- Economic immigrants (Unemployed)
- Economic immigrants (Underemployed)
- Business immigrants
- International students
- Francophone immigrants
- Anglophone youths
- Francophone youths

Participation was limited to people who had arrived in Saint John within the last four years (2015). We ensured a diversity of perspectives, with each focus group having a mix based on age, gender and place of origin. We conducted seven focus groups in English and two each in French and Arabic, the latter with an interpreter.

# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

## STATISTICS CANADA 2016 CENSUS DATA<sup>2</sup>

The 2016 Census reported 6,645 immigrants in the Saint John CMA, about five per cent of the total population.<sup>3</sup> Of those, 1.6 per cent, or 1,995 people, had arrived after 2011.

Jurisdiction:	Southern NB			Saint John CMA	
	Comparative Index CAN = 1.0 NB = 1.0			Comparative Index CAN = 1.0 NB = 1.0	
<b>Immigration population in 2016</b>	<b>8,805</b>			<b>6,645</b>	
Share of total population	5.2%	0.24	1.16	5.3%	0.25
% of total population – recent immigrants (2011-2016)	1.4%	0.41	1.13	1.6%	0.46
% of immigrants arriving before 2000	54%	0.93	1.05	50%	0.87
% of immigrants arriving before 1981	36%	1.41	1.07	34%	1.31
% of the population 3rd generation Canadian or more	85%	1.48	0.98	85%	1.48

## Immigration Pathways

The bulk of new immigrants, 59 per cent, to Greater Saint John arrive via an economic stream. Only 23 per cent arrive via the family class, eight per cent lower than the national average of 31 per cent. Refugees account for the remaining 15 per cent, equivalent to the Canadian average.

## Country of origin

Prior to 2011, Americans and residents of the United Kingdom represented the main sources of immigration to Saint John. However, Asia now dominates, with 77 per cent of new immigrants to the Saint John CMA between 2011 and 2016. China, South Korea, the Philippines and Syria are the top source countries. Saint John receives the vast majority of New Brunswick's Asian immigrants – 89 per cent. In comparison, Saint John is home to 59 per cent people of German descent and 47 per cent of Americans. There has been an increase in the Jewish population, but it is hard to measure as they are coming from Israel and eastern Europe and only a portion list Hebrew as their mother tongue.

Top Country / Region of Origin (% of total)									
Origin:	Southern NB	% of total	Saint John CMA	% of total	Origin:	Southern NB	% of total	Saint John CMA	% of total
<b>All countries</b>	<b>8,800</b>		<b>6,645</b>		<b>All countries</b>	<b>8,800</b>		<b>6,645</b>	
United States	1,865	21%	875	13%	Africa (all)	385	4%	360	5%
United Kingdom	1,690	19%	1,340	20%	Phillippines	380	4%	140	2%
China	685	8%	680	10%	Syria	370	4%	345	5%
Korea,, South	485	6%	450	7%	Germany	280	3%	165	2%

<sup>2</sup> Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census – The analysis does not include Temporary Foreign Workers or international students

<sup>3</sup> The Saint John CMA includes the City of Saint John; the towns of Grand Bay-Westfield, Hampton, Quispamsis and Rothesay; as well as several outlying communities.

# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

## Languages

Across the country, 21 per cent of people have a mother tongue other than French or English. In New Brunswick it is only 3.2 per cent, about equivalent to southern New Brunswick's 3.3 per cent and slightly lower than Greater Saint John, which sits at 3.7 per cent. After English and French, the most popular mother tongue languages spoken in southern New Brunswick are Arabic (765), Mandarin (710), Korean (535), Spanish (345), Tagalog (330) and German (315). A significant share of Tagalog and German speakers live outside the Saint John CMA.

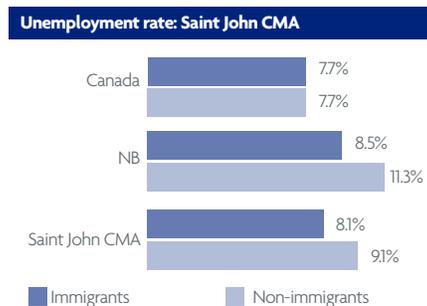
English continues to dominate in greater Saint John in the newcomer community, with 91 per cent of immigrants aged 15 and older, listing English as their first official language spoken; 4 per cent speak neither official language, 3 per cent have French and 2 per cent have both. Overall, immigrants in the Saint John CMA are not as bilingual and the non-immigrant population – 10 per cent compared to 15 per cent.

Bilingualism rate*   Population+: Saint John CMA					
Canada		New Brunswick		Saint John CMA	
Non-immigrants	Immigrants	Non-immigrants	Immigrants	Non-immigrants	Immigrants
21%	12%	36%	22%	15%	10%

## Labour Market

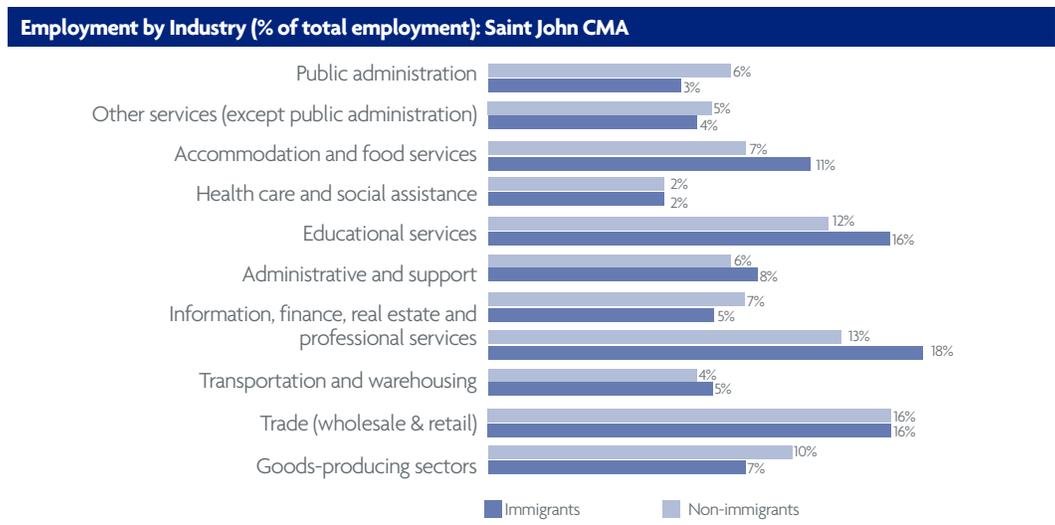
The Greater Saint John immigrant unemployment rate is 8.1 per cent versus 9.1 per cent for non-immigrants. Immigrants that arrived post-2011 have a higher unemployment rate of 12.8 per cent, a figure influenced by the Syrian refugee population.

Immigrants make up 5.1 per cent of the Saint John CMA workforce (not including temporary foreign workers or international students) compared to 25 per cent across the country. There are 3,580 immigrants participating in the labour market (2016); the top employment sectors are health care (590 people), retail trade (405 people), accommodation and food services (405 people), professional services (370 people), education (280 people) and manufacturing (185 people). Saint John has a relatively high concentration of immigrant workers in professional services, which includes IT services, engineering, legal, etc., account for nine per cent of the total workforce in this sector. Of the immigrant workers arriving in the Saint John CMA



# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

between 2011 and 2016, 14 per cent were employed in professional services. After a boost during this period, immigrant workers now account for eight per cent of all workers in the accommodation and food services sector. It does not appear that many immigrant workers are employed in the Saint John CMA back office/contact centre industry, which is sub-classified within administrative and support services.



## Income levels

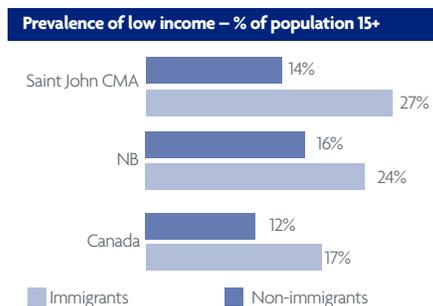
The median income for immigrants (all sources of income and all age groups) was 11 per cent below the non-immigrant level (2016 Census). The table below compares median income and median employment income (full time, full year) for immigrants and non-immigrants in the Saint John CMA. The levels are compared to Canada as a whole setting the national income level at 1.00. Non-immigrants in the urban centre report a median income seven per cent less than non-immigrants in the rest of Canada while immigrants in the Saint John CMA have a median income slightly higher than immigrants across Canada. For median employment income (full year, full time), immigrants in the Saint John CMA earn slightly more compared to non-immigrants but when compared to the national level, immigrants earn about the same compared to other immigrants across the country while non-immigrants in the Saint John CMA earn 10 per cent less than other non-immigrants across the country.

# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

While the total number is small, the median employment income (full year, full time) in the Saint John CMA of immigrants who learned French first is more than double the national level for immigrants who learned French first.

Jurisdiction: Saint John CMA							
Median total income – all sources			First official language		Income Comparison Index Canada = 1.00		
			English	French	Total	English	French
Total	\$ 33,408		\$ 33,350	\$ 36,786	0.98	0.95	1.07
Non-immigrants	\$ 33,649		\$ 33,526	\$ 36,901	0.93	0.91	1.05
Immigrants	\$ 30,075		\$ 30,075	\$ 37,271	1.01	0.98	1.25
Median employment total income: Full year full time							
Total	\$ 33,408		\$ 48,666	\$ 59,010	0.92	0.88	1.21
Non-immigrants	\$ 33,649		\$ 48,620	\$ 58,053	0.90	0.86	1.18
Immigrants	\$ 30,075		\$ 50,783	\$ 99,983	1.04	0.99	2.25

Immigrants in the Saint John CMA have a considerably higher share below the poverty line (low income cutoff). Among the population 15+, 27 per cent of immigrants are below compared to 14 per cent of non-immigrants in the urban centre.



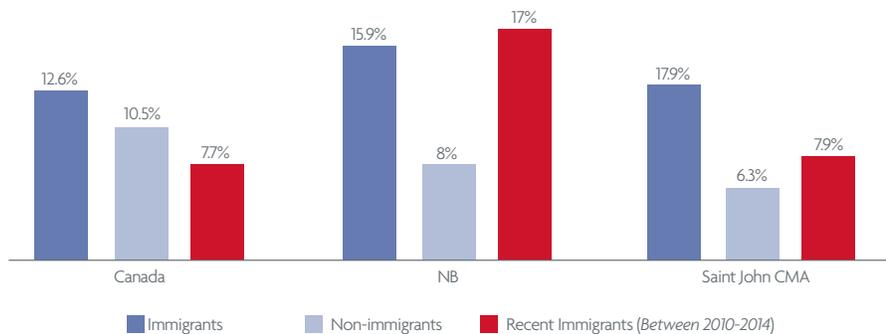
# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

## Entrepreneurship

Statistics Canada classifies workers as either employees or self-employed (the latter an indicator of entrepreneurship). Immigrants in the Saint John CMA have a higher rate of self-employment as 11.9 per cent of all full-time workers in 2015 were in this category compared to only 6.3 per cent among non-immigrants. Among recent immigrants, those starting a business between 2010 and 2014, the self-employment rate in the Saint John CMA was 7.9 per cent (only 15 in total).

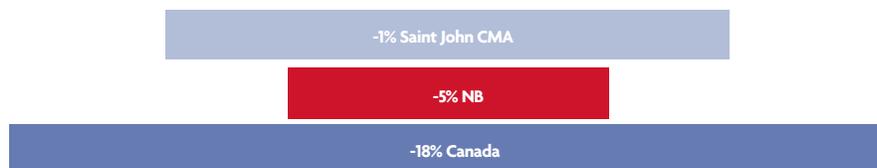
Self-employed immigrants in the Saint John CMA earn the same median employment income compared to their non-immigrant counterparts. Self-employed immigrants report a median employment income one per cent less than their non-immigrant counterparts in the Saint John CMA while across the country they earn 18 per cent less. Across New Brunswick immigrant entrepreneurs (self-employed) earn five per cent less than non-immigrants who are self-employed.

**Percentage of Full Year, Full Time Workers who were Self-employed in 2015**



It's important to point out that business owners also earn different types of income (e.g. dividends) and this data relates to employment income only.

**Median employment income of self-employed immigrants compared to self-employed non-immigrants**



# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

## IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP CANADA DATA

Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) tracks the admission of permanent residents (PR) by area of intended destination on a quarterly basis. The following section presents the available data that applies to Saint John.

This most recent data shows an increasing attraction gap between Saint John and New Brunswick's other two major urban centres, Moncton and Fredericton. This is doubly problematic because New Brunswick attracts a lower level of immigrants per capita than other regions, and of that smaller pie, Saint John receives less than its population size should attract. This might be due to the level of uptake via the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) and should be investigated further. There is also a notable decrease in the temporary foreign worker (TFW) federal program that may be related to introduction of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program (AIPP). Saint John is welcoming a good share of refugees. It surpasses the other regions in the number of Blended Visa Office-Referred Program (BVOR) and private sponsorship of refugees (PSR) from Syria, but welcomes less via the Government-Assisted Refugee Program (GAR).

**Canada-Admissions of Permanent Residents by Consensus Metropolitan Area of Intended Destination (2018 ranking), January 2015- October 2019**

Consensus Metropolitan Area	2015 Total	2016 Total	2017 Total	2018 Total	2019				
Fredericton	645	1,495	1,380	1,470	305	475	560	90	1,435
Moncton	850	1,390	970	1,440	320	550	625	190	1,685
<b>Saint John</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>1,235</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>860</b>
Bathurst	30	60	85	75	20	40	35	10	100
Miramichi	10	35	40	60	30	30	40	5	110
Edmundson	45	50	35	60	5	45	40	20	110
Campbelltown (New Brunswick part)	10	–	5	10	–	10	–	–	15
Other- New Brunswick	295	405	360	660	170	270	385	95	920
<b>New Brunswick Total</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>4,675</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>4,610</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>1,705</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>5,235</b>

Source: Monthly IRCC Update (Oct. 2019)

# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

## Canada - Express Entry Candidates\* by Province/Territory of Intended Destination, Invitation Category and Census Metropolitan Area of Intended Destination, 2015 - October 2019

Province/Territory, Invitation Category and Census Metropolitan Area	2015	2016	2017	2018	Jan-Oct 2019
Bathurst	0	0	–	–	–
Campbellton (New Brunswick part)	0	0	0	–	–
Edmundston	0	0	0	0	–
Fredericton	–	10	85	50	30
Miramichi	–	–	–	0	–
Moncton	–	15	45	35	40
<b>Saint John</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>
Other - New Brunswick	–	5	15	15	–
<b>Canadian Experience Class Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>95</b>
Fredericton	0	–	0	0	0
Moncton	–	0	–	0	0
<b>Saint John</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Other - New Brunswick	–	–	0	0	0
<b>Federal Skilled Trades Total</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Bathurst	–	0	–	–	–
Edmundston	0	–	5	5	5
Fredericton	10	5	30	30	20
Miramichi	0	–	–	0	–
Moncton	10	–	45	60	60
<b>Saint John</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>
Bathurst	–	–	5	–	–
Campbellton (New Brunswick part)	0	0	0	–	–
Edmundston	0	0	0	5	5
Fredericton	40	230	300	240	95
Miramichi	0	0	–	0	0
Moncton	15	130	170	215	165
<b>Saint John</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>25</b>
Other - New Brunswick	–	20	10	15	–
<b>Provincial Nominee Program Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>New Brunswick Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>500</b>

## Number of temporary foreign worker (TFW) positions on positive Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs) by urban area

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Moncton	351	336	225	126	99	108	106	129
Saint John	193	154	142	90	89	60	48	28
Fredericton	172	93	88	36	23	22	30	22
New Brunswick	2496	2320	1654	1830	1107	1468	1797	1361

Source: Monthly IRCC Updates (Oct. 2019)

# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

## Canada - Admissions of Syrian Refugees under Canada's Syrian Refugee Resettlement Commitment by Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) of Intended Destination and Immigration Category, November 4th, 2015 – October 31st, 2019 Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs) by urban area

Province/Territory and Census Metropolitan Area	Blended Sponsorship Refugee	Government-Assisted Refugee	Privately Sponsored Refugee	Total
Moncton	35	515	10	560
Fredericton	40	470	10	515
<b>Saint John</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>490</b>
Miramichi	10	0	0	10
Other - New Brunswick	60	10	—	70
<b>New Brunswick Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>1 425</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1 650</b>

Source: Monthly IRCC Updates (Oct. 2019)

### ATTRACTION AND RETENTION FACTORS

Through the focus groups we ascertained what first attracted immigrants to Saint John, what surprised them when they got here, what was keeping them here and what would make them leave. This section presents what they told us. All information is presented in order of occurrence it was mentioned.

#### Attraction

Saint John was the first Canadian destination for the majority of focus group participants. A very small number arrived from Ontario, Nova Scotia, Fredericton or other parts of the province. The majority arrived through the PNP skilled worker and business streams.

The remainder arrived on work or study visas, and one person arrived via the Federal Express Entry program<sup>4</sup>.

Focus group participants chose to settle in Saint John for the following reasons.

- Job opportunity
- Family and friends
- Quality of life (especially for families)
- Environment and landscape
- Cost of living
- Immigration programs, promotion and exploratory visits
- City size (small but urban)

<sup>4</sup> This question was not asked to the participants who came through a refugee program as they did not necessarily have a say where they would first settle in Canada.

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# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

- Postsecondary Education programs
- Schools
- Language (bilingualism and English environment)
- Business environment
- Community

## Surprises

Most participants said Saint John met their initial expectations and the pre-arrival promotion and messages they received were accurate. Those who experienced surprises told us the following:

### *Negative surprises:*

- Challenges associated with finding a job
- Weather (winter conditions and change of seasons)
- Less Support from the government than expected
- Work conditions (lower wages compared to other provinces)
- Limited services and activities (especially after 5 p.m. and during weekends)
- Transportation (city transit limited and need to buy a car)
- Declining economy (provincial and local)

### *Positive surprises:*

- Multicultural and welcoming community
- Quality of life (better than expected)
- City size (thought it was much smaller)

## Push and Pull

When asked what would make them leave Saint John, participants said the following:

- Better job opportunity
- Local economy
- Family and cultural community (in other parts of Canada or in the country of origin)
- City and province size (too rural and isolated)
- Cost of living and taxes
- Lack of public transit and an international airport
- Better postsecondary education opportunity and French speaking university
- Language (limited job opportunities when not bilingual)
- Cultural events, activities and food options
- Warmer weather

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# SAINT JOHN IMMIGRATION PROFILE

- Health care information and coverage
- Once they obtain Permanent Residence status
- Day care
- After class activities for youths

Participants reasons for staying in Saint John include the following:

- Current job
- Family
- Social networks
- Environment
- Quality of life
- Cost of living
- Languages (to learn English)
- Education (schools and pathways to career)
- Immigration process
- Soccer infrastructure
- Business based in Saint John

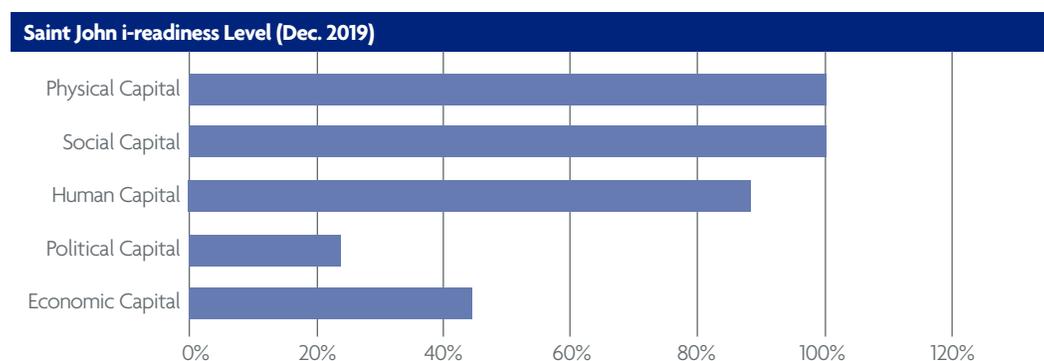
# i-readiness™ FOR SAINT JOHN

For the purpose of this project, we combined and adapted two assessment tools from Diversis' i-readiness™ Collection: i-readiness™ for Communities and i-readiness™ for Municipalities. This allowed us to assess the City's capacity to welcome, integrate and retain immigrants and identify the gaps to address in order to nurture an ecosystem where immigrants can succeed and stay.

Saint John received an i-readiness™ score of 75 per cent. This establishes a baseline metric to enable Saint John to track and assess its progress towards attraction and retention outcomes. The City is slightly above average, which is fine but not good enough if the City is to meet its aggressive population growth targets. We strongly encourage the City to take a deep dive into each indicator to identify timely ways to improve performance and service delivery. This is how the City will become a population growth high-achiever and put itself on an accelerated path to achieving its outcomes.

Appendix B defines the nature and the scope of the i-readiness™ tools and indicates the City's score for each of i-readiness' indicators.

The following table illustrates the score for Saint John across the i-readiness™ for Communities scale for each of the five criteria.



The City of Saint John has strong physical, social and human capital capacities; it's principal weaknesses lie within its political and economic capital. The following section presents the City's strengths and weaknesses according to each capital.

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# i-readiness™ FOR SAINT JOHN

## **ECONOMIC CAPITAL**

### **Primary economic strength: economic activity**

Most immigrants come to Saint John for economic reasons – to work or start a business. The unemployment rate is lower than the provincial rate (6.8 per cent versus 8 per cent) and the economy is expanding even as the population is contracting. However, the municipality's very public struggle with financial sustainability has a negative effect on immigrants' perceptions of the city's viability and their outlook on the potential for economic success in Saint John. Provincially-funded incentives for workers and investors are a positive economic input but do not necessarily provide an added value for Saint John.

### **Primary economic weakness: Ongoing communications and engagement related to workforce and business attraction and retention**

Saint John has a close-knit business and community network that works well when you are a part of it but can be difficult to access, particularly for immigrants. The community's business culture tends to hire people via word-of-mouth (it's also the common way to find housing, babysitters and find out about local cultural events). The new MAGNET program is supposed to address the workforce/business needs communications challenge. In addition to insufficient communications and engagement, the region also lacks a formal assessment process to determine immigrants' needs related to economic integration, a key determinant of retention.

Finally, Saint John lacks a signature attraction and promotion campaign, unlike other urban areas in the Maritimes. Over the past three years cities such as Moncton, Fredericton, Charlottetown and Halifax have developed multi-channel recruitment and integration campaigns and each are recording positive results. The lack of a similar big public push from Saint John could explain why Saint John recorded a significant immigrant intake drop in 2018 and 2019. Once the main employment sectors in need of international talent are identified, a targeted promotion and recruitment strategy will be necessary.

Of note, the high influx of government-assisted refugees (GAR) to Saint John in the last two years is often not reflected in data and statistics. The current and future economic situation of this particular group should be monitored closely.

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# i-readiness™ FOR SAINT JOHN

## **POLITICAL CAPITAL**

### **Primary political strength: the creation and launch of the Population Growth Framework**

City staff and community partners displayed leadership in the creation of the Framework, and the recognition that immigration will drive population growth.

### **Primary political weakness: An updated immigration strategy**

The Framework was a great first step but most of its action plans should now be completed. It's now time to develop a multi-year strategy, complete with expected outcomes and key performance indicators (KPI). An updated immigration strategy should focus on addressing the identified gaps and take a proactive approach that aligns attraction and retention activities with current population growth needs. The delivery of municipal services information/knowledge should also be adapted to meet the needs of immigrants. The under-representation of immigrants in decision-making positions at City Hall and in the community, outside of ISOs, is also a gap in need of consideration.

## **HUMAN CAPITAL**

### **Primary human capital strength: Presence of essential services for the development and integration of immigrants**

While this is listed as a strength, there are gaps related to accessibility and adaptation, which are presented in the 'Immigrant Services' section of this document.

### **Primary human capital weakness: Lack of health and social services adapted to immigrants' needs**

This is particularly problematic in the areas of primary health care and mental health care services.

## **SOCIAL CAPITAL**

### **Primary social capital strength: Presence of cultural programs and services**

There are many cultural organizations, social groups and networks that are open and welcoming. There is mutual trust between group members and newcomers, with the exception of employers. However, many immigrants and international students told us it's still hard to make friends with non-immigrant Saint Johners. Saint John is a safe place and the crime rate isn't an issue according to Saint John Police. The Saint John Local Immigration Partnership (SJLIP) is very active in engaging and bringing together immigrants and the local community to work on common goals. There are also a few examples of cultural groups working with local organizations for a common cause that is not specific to immigration.

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# i-readiness™ FOR SAINT JOHN

**Primary social capital weakness: None of note.**

While Saint John has high levels of social capital, there are two areas where improvements would be welcome: local employers' trust of immigrant credentials, experience and capacities; and greater social integration into the larger Saint John community. It's time for Saint John residents to reach out in a substantive way and develop meaningful friendships with newcomers.

**PHYSICAL CAPITAL**

All physical capital requirements are present in Saint John. However, there are many adaptations and improvements needed, particularly related to housing and public transit. These will be addressed in the next section.

# IMMIGRATION SERVICES

As already noted, Saint John has five immigrant-serving organizations (ISO) – two settlement agencies and three specialized ISOs – with a total of 90 employees, hundreds of volunteers and a cumulative annual budget of about \$4.5 million. An additional \$400,000 is invested in indirect immigration services. There are also many cultural organizations, refugee sponsorship organizations, post-secondary education institutions, schools, and municipal and provincial governments that play a primary role in immigration.

In general, immigrants and stakeholders identified similar service gaps. When asked to assess the ISO services in general, here is what they told us:

- There is confusion as to which ISO offers which service, who is admissible to which service, and how long the service is available post-arrival in Canada.
- The services are not tailored to the needs of different categories of immigrants. Economic immigrants feel most don't apply to them.
- ISOs are driven by funding and more preoccupied with administration and reporting than helping immigrants.
- The services should work more closely with employers.

Stakeholders and focus group participants agree significant improvements have been made to immigrant services in the past few years. However there are still the following gaps to address.

## **AWARENESS AND MOBILIZATION**

### **Information gaps**

- ISO and decision-makers lack reliable data on:
  - current local workforce needs;
  - needs specific to immigration pathway and situation to prevent a one-size fits all approach;
  - arrival and departures;
  - specific health needs;
  - housing demand; and,
  - use and need of public transportation.

### **Communication and coordination gaps**

- Whole-of-community engagement and support because immigration is a shared responsibility.
- ISO need to communicate and collaborate more in order to:
  - assure quality of services;
  - foster information and expertise sharing;

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# IMMIGRATION SERVICES

- prevent duplication and inconsistencies in services;
- better utilize assets; and,
- focus on outcomes not only process.
- Lack of a community long-term action plan.
- Communication between the City and other immigration stakeholders.
- Hotline (now email) to denounce incidents of discrimination and racism.
- Mobilize and engage the medical sector (e.g.: 1 immigrant family per family doctor).
- Use technology more effectively.

## **Public awareness gaps**

- Need to coordinate public awareness activities and measure impact.
- Need to enhance and better coordinate employers, including HR departments / decision makers awareness to help recognize talent and meet their needs.

## **PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT**

### **Branding and promotion gaps**

- Change the negative local narrative and have an attraction strategy that:
  - tells the truth to newcomers so they can manage expectations;
  - attracts international students; and,
  - employs local immigrants as recruiters to attract people from their extended families and home communities.
- Improve coordination of Francophone exploratory visits.

## **PRE-ARRIVAL**

### Pre-arrival information gaps

- Need to explore how external pre-arrival services present Saint John and how to better position itself and prepare immigrants prior to arrival; there is no formal roadmap/practice.

## **SETTLEMENT SERVICES**

### **Access gaps**

- Ways to help immigrants navigate the services, such as a one-stop-shop for services approach or one strong independent organization with autonomy like the Multicultural Association of Fredericton (MCAF).
- Assess needs and gaps for non-funded clients.

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# IMMIGRATION SERVICES

## Quality service gaps

- Better assessment and improvement settlement services.
- Volunteer availability.

## Service gaps

- Need for citizenship classes to be offered in French.

## LANGUAGE TRAINING, TRANSLATION, AND INTERPRETATION

### English classes gaps

- Gap between Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Practical English training and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Academic language training.
- LINC accessibility:
  - schedule classes outside office hours; and,
  - make it available to all immigrants.
- Professional English training that is affordable and available nights and weekends.
- Part-time English training programs.

### Translation and interpretation gaps

- Language line with certified interpreters for matters not currently covered by the existing health language line; will need to develop awareness of its existence and how to use it.
- Local certified Arabic and Somali interpreters, especially for legal and health matters.

## EDUCATION

### School gaps

- Programs for NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) immigrant youths 16 to 21 years of age,
- Resources and support for unschooled teens or those who have English language barriers to prevent them from dropping out.
- Program for Syrian teen girls who quit school at 16 to get married and have kids.
- Communication between employers and schools so the latter can prepare for an influx of students, particularly when a large employer hires a lot of people all at once.
- Adapted financial allocation throughout the year during high influx of students.
- After school transportation for extra-curricular activities.
- French language training for parents.

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# IMMIGRATION SERVICES

- More collaboration between Anglophone and Francophone school districts.
- Awareness about French school system as an education option.

## Post-secondary education gaps

- Need to engage students outside campus.
- Lack of off-campus services for international students.
- Immigrant services not available to international students post-graduation,
- Inclusive approach instead of the equality approach currently used,
- Resources to inform students of available services on a continuous basis,
- High costs of tuition and living; some students need multiple employers to make enough money to cover costs.
- Language support for students with language barriers.
- Canadian and New Brunswick cultural training for students.
- International transition life to college (ITLC) program.
- Need to train staff to know what to do in crisis situations.
- First week international students support.
- International student work permit for private institution graduates.
- Transportation for students to go on internships.
- Accessible, affordable and mandatory language classes for students.

## CHILDCARE

- Accessible and affordable childcare.
- On-campus childcare, especially for MBA students.

## HEALTH

- Accessible healthcare, especially primary care, and information on how to navigate and use the system and norms.
- Accessible and suitable health specialists, especially for mental health services.
- Cultural competency of staff working in health.
- Language line training for staff working in health who have access.
- List of services, especially those available after regular office hours.
- French services from Horizon and Department of Social Development.
- Mental health counsellor on-site in ISO.

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# IMMIGRATION SERVICES

## HOUSING

- Organization responsible for housing provides housing advice according to needs and resources available.
- Access to affordable and quality housing for students and economic immigrants.
- Communication with school districts as to the neighbourhoods where affordable housing for immigrants has been made available so schools are prepared to receive children.
- Subsidized housing should be in different areas of the city to prevent the ghettoization of refugees.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Public transit gaps

- Schedules and routes are not adapted to the needs (especially youths and students); there is often no bus after 6 p.m., mainline has a better frequency but transfers are much longer, underserved areas.
- Should advertise the phone app at the first point of entry for immigrants, such as airport and bus stations.
- Limited info about routes, schedule, and how to navigate the system; schedule only available online in English and French.
- Covered bus stop shelters.
- Coordination between the transit system and immigrant service locations and activities.

### Airport gaps

- Airport office, pick-up service upon arrival.

## RECREATION

- More recreational and affordable activities, especially for kids and youths, such as sport coaches, music and French classes, arts.
- International content at movies and theatre.

## PLACES OF FAITH

- Need space for gathering (e.g. Sunday School -Muslim Association).
- IRCC recognition for workload and funding of organizations who manage sponsorship programs.

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# IMMIGRATION SERVICES

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

- Canadian parenting and childcare norms to prevent putting kids in vulnerable situations.
- Canadian laws and rules awareness (e.g. car seats, no smoking).
- Services for 18-24 immigrant youth who are not in school to prevent them from getting into trouble.
- Refugee support programs limits and availability after hours.
- Language capacity and resources for the Police department.

## **ECONOMIC INTEGRATION**

### **Employment**

- Mismatched labour force and needs; jobs that match skills/education but also for low skills.
- More employment support and info about services available to help to find jobs:
  - on boarding limited, need best practices;
  - soft-skills for employment;
  - skills launch for +30; and,
  - better connection between employment and settlement services.
- Employer support and incentives such as:
  - support to update hiring practices; and,
  - employer compensation, subsidies, or incentives to hire immigrants to give them the time they need to meet expectations.

### **Foreign Credential Recognition (FDR)**

- Processes are unclear and costly.
- Gaps in the loan program offered by the New Brunswick Multicultural Council (NBMC).
- Translation of international diplomas services.

### **Entrepreneurship**

- Investment opportunities and openness of market.
- Most PNP/Business stream don't use business services and never start a business.
- Business financing.
- Retention of PNP/Business stream immigrants after two years.
- Perception that Saint John is for retirement, not for development.

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# IMMIGRATION SERVICES

## OTHER SERVICES

### City of Saint John gaps

- More diversity among City Hall employees.
- More cultural awareness for municipal employees.
- More funding to leverage settlement funding.
- More commitment and engagement of all employees in the immigration file.
- More communication on the advantages of living within the city limits.
- Access to Arabic-speaking employees in key positions.

### Service New Brunswick (SNB) and other services gaps

- Access to employees who speak other languages (e.g. Mandarin, Arabic, Korean, Ukrainian).
- Extended hours for provincial services (e.g. SNB, NB Power, &) especially at the beginning of university year.

## AREAS NEEDING COLLABORATION

The current services map shows all the areas needing and receiving attention. However, we believe that some considerable gaps exist within services in terms of:

- accessibility;
- immigrant diversified needs;
- efficiencies and resource sharing; and,
- areas that would benefit from greater collaboration.

We identified some providers offer similar services, which could be streamlined with collaboration. This happens because Saint John does not conduct a system-wide needs assessment. Data and information is fragmented among various stakeholders, and funding partners do not necessarily consult each other when awarding funding. This limits the impact of the interventions and innovation in the service offering.

*Before introducing these new services, an in-depth analysis of the needs of the targeted immigrant clientele is recommended.*

# GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Saint John has embarked on an all-of-community approach to population growth via immigration. That is commendable and as such the following recommendations are meant to refer to all community partners, unless otherwise stated. Addressing the following gaps and implementing our recommendations in the near term will help Saint John continue to build momentum and improve its performance in regards to the immigration file as a whole.

## **INFORMATION GAP**

Information and data is key to making informed decisions. UNB Saint John and other relevant research organizations can shed light on some of the information gaps identified in this document. Research needs to be disseminated and used by all key players.

### **Our recommendations:**

- Provide access to a communication mechanism with accurate, verifiable information about available services to immigrants who are coming to Saint John and those that are already here.
- Provide ISOs and cultural organizations with access to accurate data about the state of the local economy, workforce needs, cost of living, etc. to enable these organizations to share information with immigrants so they can make informed and timely decisions about moving to and staying in Saint John.
- Share and celebrate success stories about immigrants succeeding and staying in Saint John.

## **COLLABORATION GAP**

An immigration strategy with targets and key performance indicators (KPI) would help assure coherence, coordination, and an ecosystem driven by quality services at every level. The SJLIP can play an instrumental role in making sure information is shared and that all ISOs work towards a common goal.

### **Our recommendations:**

- Develop an immigration strategy that integrates Succeed and Stay research findings and outcomes of the Population Growth Framework action plan. The strategy should focus on addressing the identified gaps to increase attraction and retention results that align with critical population growth needs.
- Design and implement a one-stop shop for all immigrant service delivery. This would foster collaboration and enable ISOs to share resources and increase their capacity to meet the needs of all categories of immigrants and expand service hours.

---

# GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## **ATTRACTION GAP**

Saint John has much to offer immigrants but isn't capitalizing on its assets. The proportion of new immigrants settling in Saint John should be increasing, not decreasing.

### **Our recommendations:**

- Develop an attraction strategy that emphasizes the City's assets and attributes, attraction factors identified by our focus groups, labour market needs, and the community's international connections.
- Review and enhance information provided for exploratory visits and prearrival webinars to make sure it reflects the local reality.
- Institute better data collection via follow-up engagements and tracking from initial touch point to post-settlement outcomes for people who stay in Saint John and those who do not, including the reasons for people's settlement choices.

## **SERVICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT GAP**

Needs and services must be assessed on a regular basis and intervention should be adapted accordingly. The one-size-fits-all approach does not work.

### **Our recommendations:**

- Institute a proactive needs assessment to collect information regarding quality of services and then make the necessary improvements. More focus should be put on outcomes not only process.
- Promote a culture of process improvement within the immigrant-serving community that accepts constructive criticism and focuses on immigrant needs.

---

# GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## **EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT GAP**

Employers are key to attracting and retaining immigrants in Saint John. To engage them in this effort, employer needs must be assessed and addressed. It can't be a one-way street. They have to be able to recognize why they need immigrants and support should be provided to help them adapt their hiring practices so they may access immigrant talent and so immigrants can thrive within the organization.

### **Our recommendations:**

- Identify key employers that currently hire immigrants and that recognize international talent. The local designated employers for the AIPP could be a starting list. Assess their needs, challenges and best practices.
- Determine why employers aren't connecting and using the services already available and adapt those services accordingly.
- Promote a culture of process improvement within the immigrant-serving community that accepts constructive criticism and focuses on immigrant needs as it relates to employment growth.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TRANSITION TO RESIDENT GAP**

Most international students come to study in Canada with an immigration objective. They must be exposed to job opportunities available in their sector from the start and be able to keep close ties with the local job market throughout their study programs.

### **Our recommendations:**

- Develop a targeted international student recruitment strategy, with a special emphasis on in-demand employment fields. This would allow post-secondary institutions to recruit students who would have greater chances of integrating the local job market.
- Develop specific on-ramps into the local economy for international students via post-secondary education institutions. International students do not have local connections and will need coaching and mentoring to find opportunities for first-time employment in Saint John.

# CONCLUSION

Over the past few years the City of Saint John took major steps to address challenges related to immigrant retention. It must now accelerate its transition to an all-of-community approach to population growth via immigration. To do this, the municipality must lead by example, applying an immigrant-focused lens to all municipal operations and Council priorities, especially those that directly impact immigrants, such as public transit and emergency services. A culture of diversity must be reflected in City Hall hiring practices across all divisions and at levels, concrete proof that immigrants can succeed in Saint John, and that the City succeeds when it integrates the new perspectives and experiences immigrants offer.

Diversis Inc. would like to thank the City of Saint John for their confidence and support of this project. A special thanks to David Dobbelsteyn, Kate Wilcott and Omar Morad for their help in organizing the focus groups. We would also like to acknowledge the important contribution of the stakeholders and immigrants who participated in the interviews and focus groups as part of this mandate.

Our goal is for this gap analysis to complement the work of the Succeed and Stay Research team, helping to attract, integrate and retain immigrants who will be successful and stay in Saint John.

# APPENDIX A – LIST OF THE ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED

- PRUDE Inc.
- Saint John Newcomers Centre (SJNC)
- YMCA Newcomer Connections
- Anglophone School District South
- District Scolaire Francophone Sud
- New Brunswick Community College – Central and Saint John campus (NBCC)
- University of New Brunswick, Saint John Campus (UNB Saint John)
- Saint John College
- Eastern College
- Atlantic Human Services (AHS)
- Economic Development Greater Saint John (EDGSJ)
- Horizon Health Network
- City of Saint John
- Saint John Transit
- Saint John Police
- Government of NB (PETL and PGD)
- Greater Saint John Chinese Cultural Association
- Indo Canadian Society of Saint John
- Muslim Association of NB
- ARCF de Saint-Jean
- Local Immigration Partnership (SJLIP) / Human Development Council
- Crescent Valley Resource Centre
- Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada
- Diocese of Saint John

# APPENDIX B –

## i-readiness™ TOOL AND SAINT JOHN

### INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

For the purpose of this project, we combined and adapted two assessment tools from Diversis' i-readiness™ Collection: i-readiness™ for Communities and i-readiness™ for Municipalities. This allowed us to assess the Saint John community's capacity to welcome, integrate and retain immigrants and identify the gaps to address in order to nurture an ecosystem where immigrants can succeed and stay.

There are two objectives of the i-readiness™ for Communities/Municipalities measurement tool.

- 1 Decision makers and planners can assess a community's capacities to welcome and integrate immigrants.
- 2 Communities become self-aware of their welcoming and integration capacities and to assess their level of development, as well as to identify the gaps that need to be filled in order to improve them.

### MEASUREMENT TOOL DESCRIPTION

This tool is based on thirty-two (32) indicators covering the following five (5) areas important for the assessment of a community's capacity to welcome and integrate immigrants.

- **Economic Capital:** The economic conditions required to enable immigrants to integrate the workforce and contribute to community economic development.
- **Political Capital:** The level of representation and of participation of immigrants within governments, decision-making hierarchies and their power of pressure and influence.
- **Human Capital:** The knowledge, abilities, skills and other characteristics of immigrants<sup>5</sup> that facilitate settlement and integration in the community.
- **Social Capital:** Features of social life—networks, norms, and trust—that enable all community members to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives<sup>6</sup> and where they all feel included.
- **Physical Capital:** Physical infrastructure which allows immigrants to settle and meet their basic needs.

A set of indicators have been selected to assess each of these areas. Considering the nature of the information that we were able to collect when consulting some of the city's key stakeholders and immigrants, and during statistical research, a nominal scale was chosen (absence = 0, presence = +1) in order to give a value to each indicator. Each indicator receives a rating of +1 or 0, based on whether the process, the service, etc. is present or absent in the community at the time of the measurement.

<sup>5</sup> OECD, 1998, Human Capital Investment: An International Comparison, Paris, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

<sup>6</sup> Putnam, R., 1995, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital and Public Life", American Prospect, vol. 4, no 13, p.27-40. (<http://prospect.org/article/strange-disappearance-civic-america>)

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## APPENDIX B – i-readiness™ TOOL AND SAINT JOHN

### APPROACH

Considering the characteristics and the community's needs, the i-readiness™ for Communities / Municipalities measurement tool was based on a simple and practical approach while resting on theoretical foundations arising from numerous studies and concrete experiments. Although this approach provides an efficient, practical and affordable tool to communities, it obviously presents limitations. Three main drawbacks of this tool are:

- 1 The measurement relies on key informants' interpretation and assessment of the local situation. In order to compensate for this, the choice of key informants must be based on their knowledge of immigrants' local situation as a whole. When necessary, we sometimes ask key informants to suggest other people to answer specific questions they could not answer themselves. Diversis' team also carries out complementary research, particularly through Statistics Canada and local organizations' websites, in order to get a snapshot of the situation that is as accurate as possible.
- 2 The measurement tool checks the presence or the absence. This approach does not include a qualitative assessment. In theory, two communities may score the same level of i-readiness™ despite one of them being much more successful than the other. For this reason, it is important to carefully read the next section on results interpretation. The proposed recommendations also take this limitation in consideration. This is why "strengthening" may be recommended for an indicator even though it was already present at the time of our analysis.
- 3 Each of the 32 indicators are given the same proportional weight. Some indicators may be more important than others given the local situation. The section presenting the short, mid and long-term recommendations is designed to reduce the effects of this limitation.

### INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Using our approach, each indicator has equal significance. Hence, two communities may have the same level of i-readiness™ score when we compile the results for each indicator while providing different reception and integration capacities because the mix of indicators leads to the same result. This implies that beyond the level of i-readiness™ scored, a detailed analysis of the results for each area and indicator can identify the strengths and weaknesses for each community regarding their capacity to receive and integrate immigrants.

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## APPENDIX B – i-readiness™ TOOL AND SAINT JOHN

The questions that should be raised when noting the presence or the absence of a reality or a service (as per the 32 indicators) should usually include questions such as:

### **In case of absence (0):**

- Why is it absent?
- What may be done to fill the absence of this reality or service?
- Who could contribute?
- Is it possible to draw from the example of another community or to collaborate with a community that has managed to set the conditions required for this reality or service presence?
- At present, what are the priority indicators that require an investment?
- What resources (human, financial and technical) are available and deemed a priority, in order to create or change this reality or implement the absent services?

### **In case of presence (+1):**

- What are the reasons for the presence of the reality or services?
- Does this meet the existing needs of the host community and the immigrants or should they be strengthened?
- If there is a need for strengthening, is it possible to draw from the example of another community or to collaborate with a community that has managed to set the conditions required to adequately meet the needs?
- At present, what are the priority indicators that require strengthening?
- What resources (human, financial and technical) are available and deemed a priority, in order to change this reality or introduce missing services?

# APPENDIX B – i-readiness™ TOOL AND SAINT JOHN

## SAINTJOHN i-readiness™ LEVEL

Saint John	Score
<b>Economic Capital</b>	
Local economy	1
Local incentives for immigrant workers	1
Local incentives for immigrant investors	1
Immigrant recruitment that matches workforce and local market needs	0
Needs assessment for population growth	0
Needs assessment of immigrants	0
Promotion and recruitment strategy	0
<b>Political Capital</b>	
Immigration strategy	1
Local immigration policy	0
Adaptation of municipal services	0
Representation of immigrants in decision-making positions	0
<b>Human Capital</b>	
Settlement services for immigrants	1
Employment support	1
Business support	1
Support for the recognition of skills and experience	1
Support for the regularization of newcomer status	1
English language learning program	1
French language learning program	1
Access to a welcoming education environment adapted to immigrants	1
Access to adapted health and social services	0
<b>Social Capital</b>	
Groups and Network	
Local networks open to immigrants	1
Existing networks for immigrants	1
Trust and Solidarity	
Mutual trust (local population and immigrants)	1
Safety	1
Collective Action and Co-operation	
Immigration partnership and community engagement mechanism	1
Collective projects between immigrants and local community	1
Information and Communication	
Promotion of cultural diversity	1
Community awareness – Importance of immigration	1
Community education – Inclusion and cultural diversity	1
<b>Physical Capital</b>	
Housing availability	1
Public transportation	1
Municipal infrastructures	1
<b>i-readiness™ Level</b>	<b>24 / 32</b> <b>75%</b>

NOTE: While a presence of a reality or a service was noted (1), the ones presented in blue seem most fragile to us and we recommend that they further be looked into.

# APPENDIX C – ACRONYMS

Association Régionale de la Communauté Francophone de Saint-Jean Inc. (ARCf)  
Atlantic Human Services (AHS)  
Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program (AIPP)  
Blended Visa Office-Referral Program (BVOR)  
Canadian Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)  
Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)  
Economic Development Greater Saint John (EDGSJ)  
Foreign Credential Recognition (FDR)  
Government-Assisted Refugees (GAR)  
Government of New Brunswick (GNB)  
Immigrant Serving Organization (ISO)  
Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)  
International Transition Life to College (ITLC)  
Key Performance Indicators (KPI)  
Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)  
Multicultural Association of Fredericton (MCAF)  
New Brunswick (NB)  
New Brunswick Community College (NBCC)  
New Brunswick Multicultural Council (NBMC)  
Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET)  
Permanent residents (PR)  
Population Growth Division (PGD)  
Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL)  
Practical English training and English for Academic Purposes (EAP)  
Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR)  
Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)  
Saint John Local Immigration Partnership (SJLIP)  
Saint John Newcomers Centre (SJNC)  
Service New Brunswick (SNB)  
Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW)  
UNB University of New Brunswick (UNB)



# UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF GREATER SAINT JOHN'S IMMIGRANT POPULATION: FROM SETTLEMENT TO RETENTION

## **Report (2020)**

Prepared for  
Department of Growth and Community Services  
City of Saint John

Reported by  
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Duyen Thi Kim Nguyen, PhD (Principal Investigator)

A REPORT BY THE CITY OF SAINT JOHN AND  
THE SAINT JOHN LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

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# ABOUT THE SURVEY

The City of Saint John is experiencing growth among its newcomer population, and is dedicated to ensuring that this city is a warm and welcoming place for all. In collaboration with the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership (SJLIP), the City of Saint John conducted its first major immigrant study. The purpose of this survey was to gather timely, large-scale data to better understand local immigrant experiences relevant to settlement, integration, and retention. This data will help guide future actions regarding key challenges and barriers faced by immigrants today. This survey study was part of a larger, 3-pronged immigrant study conducted by the City of Saint John, which included 11 focus groups and 39 semi-structured interviews with local immigrants in the community. Successful settlement and integration requires work and commitment from both the immigrant and the community. It is essential for immigrants to learn to adapt and embrace their new life in Canada, and it is important that the community (e.g., organizations, employers, neighbours) provide a supportive and inclusive environment for new people and new cultures (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).

The immigrant population is large and diverse, and the needs of immigrants are unique and context-dependent. Many key factors have been identified as essential requirements for successful settlement and integration, including adequate and suitable housing, education, accessible healthcare, food security, immigrants fully participating and contributing to the labour market, accessible information and proper guidance, language training, and a clear understanding of Canadian culture (Brown<sup>2</sup>, 2016; Murphy<sup>3</sup>, 2010; Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).

The community organizations and municipal and provincial governments need to learn more about local immigrant experiences to properly address the needs of the immigrant population. This survey intends to address this knowledge gap. The responses from the survey are crucial for policy and decision-makers, as they will influence improvements in services, housing, and much more.

## **METHODS**

The City of Saint John's first Immigrant Survey was available online and open to all Greater Saint John residents 19 years or older and who were not born in Canada. Using Survey Monkey®, the survey included 81 questions targeting important issues around an immigrant's experience settling and integrating into Greater Saint John. Following the completion of this survey, participants had an opportunity to put their name in a draw to win 1 of 3 prizes.

---

## ABOUT THE SURVEY

Questions were developed, tested, and refined in consultation with the SJLIP Newcomer Advisory Panel and Council, as well as a Research Advisory Committee composed of faculty from the University of New Brunswick and a panel of immigrant residents in the community. The survey was provided in the five most spoken languages in Greater Saint John (i.e., English, French, Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish) from October to November 2019. On average, participants took approximately 21.5 minutes to complete the survey. The following results are based on the responses of 735 participants living in Saint John, Quispamsis, or Rothesay, New Brunswick<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Kaushik, V. & Drolet, J. (2018). *Settlement and integration needs of skilled immigrants in Canada*. *Social Sciences*, 7(5), 76.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, N.R. (2017). *Housing experiences of recent immigrants to Canada's small cities: The Case of North Bay, Ontario*. *International Migration & Integration*, 18, 719-747.

<sup>3</sup> Murphy, J. (2010). *The settlement and integration needs of immigrants: A literature review*. The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership.

<sup>4</sup> Due to confidentiality and small sample sizes, all other participants who were not living in Saint John, Quispamsis, and Rothesay were excluded from the analyses.

# SURVEY RESULTS

## *Who Participated in the Survey? A Sample of Greater Saint John's Immigrant Population*

To put into context the results of our survey,<sup>5</sup> we begin by presenting key demographic information regarding the responses of the 735 participants who participated in our survey, followed by data regarding the different ways immigrants provide value to our local community.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE ON INTERPRETING PERCENTAGES**

The total number of participants in the survey was 735 people. However, not all the participants gave answers to all the questions. The exact number of participants who have responded to each question is specified in the footnotes together with the exact wording of that question.

Please note that throughout this document the percentage figures are calculated in relation to the number of people who answered that particular question, and not in relation to the total number of participants in the survey.

This has important implications for interpreting the data. For example, a percentage figure “50%” mentioned in the text would not mean “half of all the participants of the survey” – it would mean “half of all the respondents who have answered that particular question”.

Since each question in the survey has been answered by a different number of people, another important implication is that you cannot compare percentage responses from different questions amongst themselves.

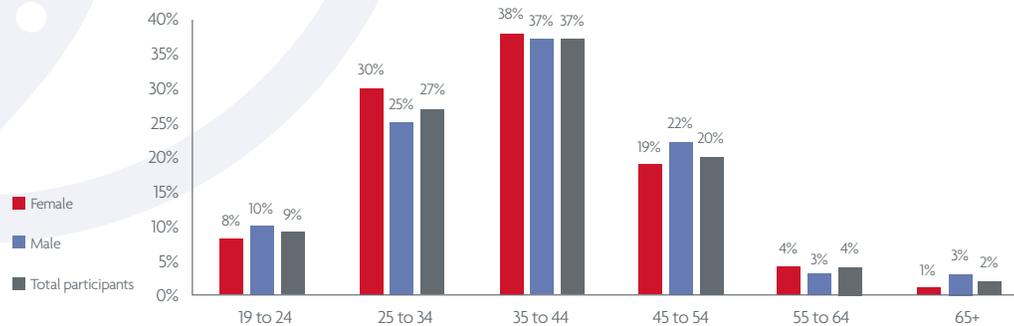
<sup>5</sup> Not all participants completed all 82 questions in the survey, thus, not all responses to each question added up to 735 participants.

# PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

## AGE, GENDER, AND RELATIONSHIP STATUS

In our survey sample, 46% of immigrants are female<sup>6</sup> and the largest<sup>7</sup> age group is 35-44 years of age (37%), followed by 25-34 year-old (27%) and 45-54 year-old (20%; see Figure 1). The majority of respondents are married (73%), and few are single (19%), common-law (4%) or divorced (3%)<sup>8</sup>.

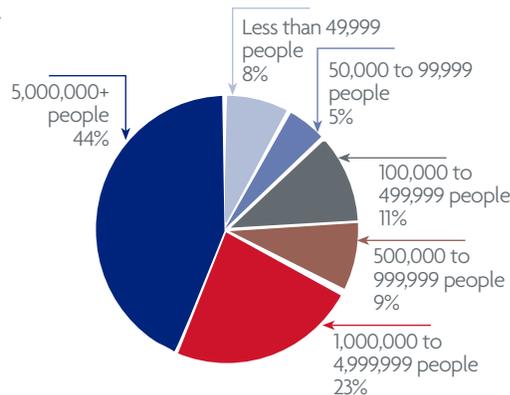
Figure 1: Gender, by Age



## SIZE OF PREVIOUS NON-CANADIAN CITY

When participants were asked the size of their city/community prior to moving to Canada,<sup>9</sup> 67% of respondents reportedly came from large metropolitan areas with 1 million or more people (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Size of Previous City



<sup>6</sup> Q2. What is your gender? (n=728)

<sup>7</sup> Q3. What is your age? (n=735)

<sup>8</sup> Q4. What is your relationship status? (n=722)

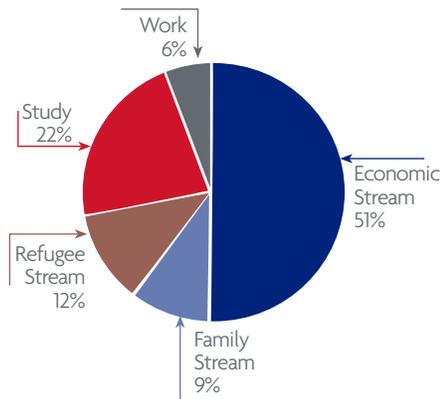
<sup>9</sup> Q10. Prior to moving to Canada, how big was your local city/community? (n=687)

# PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

## IMMIGRATION STREAM USED TO ENTER CANADA

When asked which immigration entry stream participants used to enter Canada,<sup>10</sup> more than half of respondents used the economic immigration stream (50%), which is a stream dedicated to people with specific skills that may be used to take part in the Canadian economy (see Figure 3). To qualify, people are assessed on various factors, including language fluency in English/French, education, and work experience.

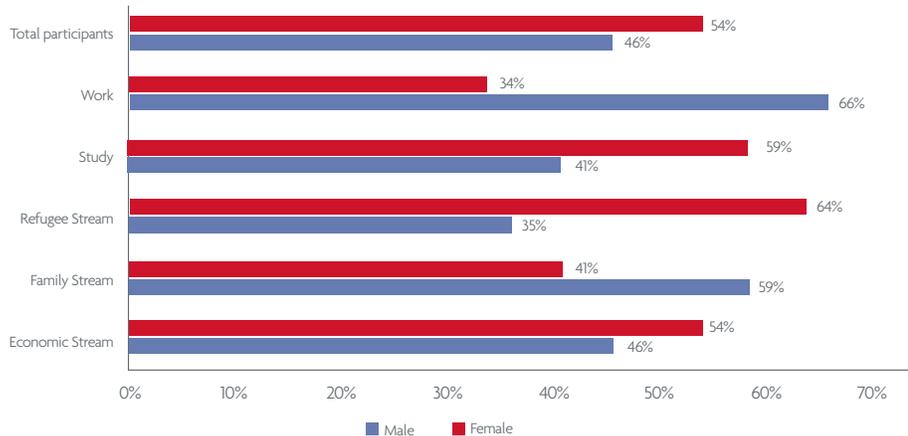
Figure 3: Immigration Stream



The second most common stream of entry reported by respondents was the study permit stream (22%), where a person is offered a temporary residency in Canada so they may complete their education. As the second-largest form of entry to Canada, this shows the importance of the University of New Brunswick and New Brunswick Community College, as a means to recruit, train, and potentially retain newcomers to Greater Saint John.

The third most common stream of entry is the refugee stream (12%), which is reserved for people who were forced to leave their country to escape war, persecution, or a natural disaster. In our survey, more males used the economic, study permit, and refugee streams; while females used the family reunification and work permit stream more often (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Immigration Entry Stream to Canada, by Gender



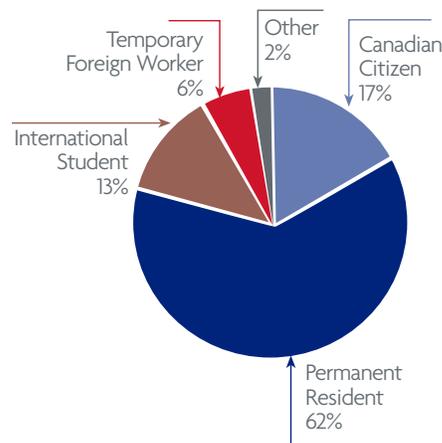
<sup>10</sup> Q13. Which immigration stream did you/your family use to come to Canada? (n=638)

# PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

## CITIZENSHIP STATUS

Currently, the majority of respondents are permanent residents (see Figure 5), and 21% of respondents have a limited residency in Canada, due to their temporary study permit, work permit, or other.<sup>11</sup>

Figure 5: Current Citizenship Status



## SOURCE OF INCOME & HOUSEHOLD INCOME (IN CANADA) BEFORE TAX

Participants reported a variety of different sources for their finances.<sup>12</sup> The primary source of income is jobs (64%) and savings (35%). Government supports such as social assistance (7%) and employment insurance (3%) were reported less frequently (see Table 1).

Table 1: Source of income in the past 12 months

Source of Income (check all that apply)	Total Respondents
Your job (full-time or part-time)	64%
Your savings	35%
Family or friends	22%
Your business	9%
Social assistance	7%
Employment insurance	3%
Grants/bursaries/scholarships	3%
Other (e.g., pension, investments)	2%
Total Responses	761
Total Respondents	530 (100%)

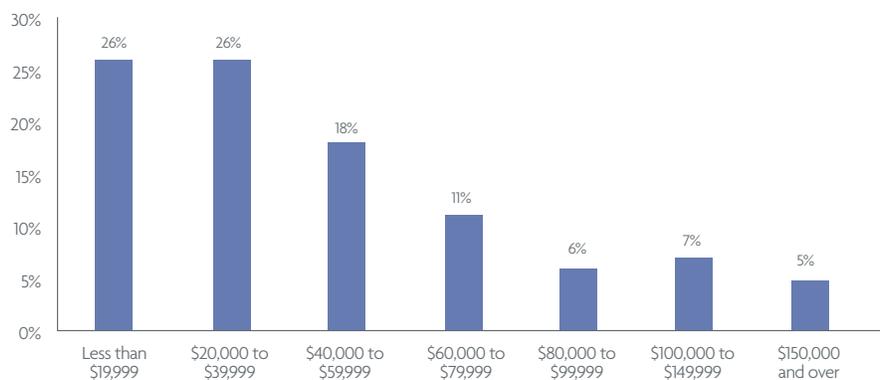
<sup>11</sup> Q9. Complete the following sentence: I am currently a... (n=733)

<sup>12</sup> Q47. What has been your source of income in the last 12 months? (Check all that apply) (total responses=761, n=530)

# PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

With respect to annual household income, 52% of respondents reported a household income of less than \$39,999 annual gross income and 29% of respondents reported a household income of \$60,000 or higher (see Figure 6).<sup>13</sup>

Figure 6: Household Income in Canada (before tax)



When comparing household incomes by year of arrival to Canada, there was a tendency that the longer an immigrant lived in Canada, the greater their household income; that is, once immigrants have become settled and established, their household income tends to increase (see Table 2). For example, 23% of respondents who arrived in Canada in 2015 or earlier reported an annual household income of \$100,000 or more; that is 11% greater than the overall sample, and 22% greater than respondents who arrived in 2018.

Table 2: Household Income, by Year of Arrival to Canada

Household Income	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015 or Earlier	Total Respondents
Less than \$19,999	51%	27%	24%	30%	10%	26%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	23%	32%	31%	35%	20%	26%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	13%	18%	15%	7%	26%	18%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	10%	18%	8%	6%	12%	11%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	1%	4%	12%	11%	7%	6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1%	1%	8%	9%	11%	7%
\$150,000 and over	1%	0%	2%	2%	12%	5%
Total Respondents	88	82	59	54	153	435

<sup>13</sup> Q46. What is your current household income (in Canada) before tax (i.e., gross income)? Family income is the combined income before tax of all family members living together in one household who are 15 years or older (in Canadian dollars). (n=435). Note: This question only referred to income incurred in Canada that would be filed for an income tax return, and does not refer to any sources of income from abroad (e.g., rental properties).

# PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

With respect to current citizenship status, we found participants with Canadian citizenship tended to report greater household incomes, followed by permanent residents, temporary foreign workers, and international students (see Table 3). Similar to the table above, the data suggests a relationship between income and length of stay in Canada; for example, respondents who have their citizenship tend to have lived in Canada longer due to the requirements needed to earn a Canadian citizenship status.

Table 3: Household Income, by Current Citizenship Status

Household Income	Canadian Citizen	Permanent Resident	International Student	Temporary Foreign Worker	Total Respondents
Less than \$19,999	12%	25%	64%	16%	26%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	15%	28%	26%	42%	27%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	16%	20%	8%	23%	18%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	15%	12%	3%	6%	11%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	4%	8%	0%	10%	7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	16%	6%	0%	3%	7%
\$150,000 and over	22%	2%	0%	0%	5%
Total Respondents	74	286	39	31	430

When examining household income by the immigration stream used to enter Canada, proportionately more respondents who arrived in Canada through the family reunification reported household incomes of \$80,000 or higher (36%), followed by respondents who entered Canada via a work permit (33%), and economic immigrants (18%; see Table 4). We suspect participants who entered Canada with a work permit reported high incomes because they had employment immediately upon arrival. However, this data should be interpreted with caution, as the sample size of temporary foreign workers is relatively small compared to the other immigration streams.

Table 4: Household Income, by Immigration Stream to Enter Canada

Household Income	Economic	Family Reunification	Refugee	Study Permit	Work Permit	Total Respondents
Less than \$19,999	24%	7%	50%	38%	13%	26%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	29%	11%	32%	26%	17%	26%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	17%	24%	14%	19%	25%	18%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	12%	22%	0%	6%	13%	11%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	7%	7%	0%	4%	17%	7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	6%	20%	0%	3%	8%	6%
\$150,000 and over	5%	9%	4%	5%	8%	5%
Total Respondents	241	45	28	80	24	418

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# PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

The immigration stream with the lowest reported incomes are participants who entered Canada through the study permit and refugee stream; the streams with proportionately the most recently arrived immigrants in our survey. Respondents with a study permit most likely reported low household incomes because based on their student status they are expected to concentrate on their studies, and they are limited by how much they are able to work. With respect to respondents entering as part of the refugee stream, they came to Canada under severe circumstances and faced several additional barriers compared to other immigrant streams; thus, immigrants entering Canada through the refugee stream may not have the opportunity to look for employment immediately upon arrival.

Finally, we compared household income by place of residence, and results showed that proportionately more Quispamsis respondents reported higher annual household incomes than Rothesay respondents, followed by Saint John respondents (see Table 5).

Table 5: Household Income, by Place of Residence

Household Income	Saint John	Quispamsis	Rothesay	Total Respondents
Less than \$19,999	27%	9%	30%	26%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	28%	21%	15%	26%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	19%	9%	15%	18%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	11%	15%	12%	11%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	5%	15%	9%	6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5%	24%	9%	7%
\$150,000 and over	5%	6%	9%	5%
Total Respondents	370	33	33	436

# IMMIGRANTS BRING VALUE TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

Immigrants bring so much value to our community. Not only do immigrants help grow our population, but they are also business-minded and create more diversity through their rich culture, foods, and traditions. Survey results show the majority of newcomers arrive in Canada highly skilled, with a variety of work experience and post-secondary educational training. Overall, newcomers are keen to build a new home in Canada, and many are ready to work and participate in the community soon upon arrival. Below, we highlight key assets immigrants bring to our community.

## COUNTRY OF BIRTH, ETHNICITY, AND FIRST LANGUAGE

The Greater Saint John immigrant population is diverse. In our survey, respondents reported 98 different countries of birth, spanning six continents (see Table 6).<sup>14</sup> The top six countries of birth accounted for 55% of the total respondents, including China (22%), India (15%), Syria (8%), Philippines (5%), Nigeria (5%), and Egypt (3%). Sixty-five percent of respondents originated from Asia alone.

Table 6: Country of Birth

Continent	Country	Total Respondents by Country	Total Respondents by Continent
North & South America			9%
	19 different American countries*	9%	
Europe			12%
	Ukraine	2%	
	28 other European countries	10%	
Africa			13%
	Egypt	3%	
	Nigeria	5%	
	17 other African countries	5%	
Asia			65%
	China	22%	
	India	15%	
	Palestine	2%	
	Philippines	5%	
	Syria	9%	
	24 other Asian countries	12%	
Oceania and other countries of birth			0%
	2 other countries	0%	
Total Respondents		716	716

\*Due to confidentiality, we do not report individual countries with sample sizes less than 15.

<sup>14</sup> Q7. What is your country of birth? (n=733; 17 participants chose the response: "prefer not to say")

# IMMIGRANTS BRING VALUE TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

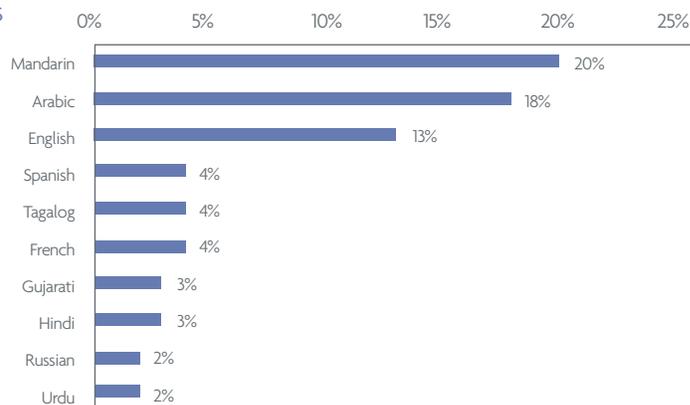
When asked about their ethnic background, the majority of respondents self-identified as Asian (53%), followed by White (17%), Arab (16%), Black (9%) and Latin America (5%).<sup>15</sup> When examining ethnicity by immigration stream, we found that respondents who self-identified as White tend to come to Canada through a work permit or family reunification stream, and less likely through a study permit (see Table 7). The majority of respondents who self-identified as Asians tend to enter Canada through the economic stream or a study permit, and were less likely to enter Canada through the family reunification or refugee stream. Many respondents who self-identified as Arabic entered Canada through the refugee stream. Overall, Asians represented 63% of the respondents who used the economic stream and 70% who used the study permit stream, and Arabic people represented 67% of the sample that used the refugee stream to enter Canada.

Table 7: Ethnicity, by Immigration Stream

Immigration Stream	White	Black	Asian	Latin American	Arab	Total Respondents
Economic	55%	42%	60%	17%	38%	52%
Family Reunification	19%	12%	7%	27%	5%	10%
Refugee	7%	15%	1%	10%	44%	10%
Study Permit	5%	29%	28%	33%	8%	21%
Work Permit	14%	2%	5%	13%	4%	6%
Total Respondents	91	52	323	30	91	587

Participants reported speaking 41 different first languages.<sup>16</sup> Figure 7 provides the top 10 mother tongues of immigrants who participated in this survey, with more than half of the respondents reporting their first language was either Mandarin, Arabic, or English.

Figure 7: Top 10 First Languages



<sup>15</sup> Q8. Which [ethnic group] best describes you? (n=726)

<sup>16</sup> Q1. What is your first language? (n=735)

# IMMIGRANTS BRING VALUE TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

## LANGUAGE FLUENCY IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH

Many immigrants have sufficient language fluency to be productive and conversant members of the community. Currently, 93% and 16% of respondents reported they are able to carry on a conversation in English or French, respectively;<sup>18</sup> and 16% of respondents are conversational in both official languages (see Table 8).

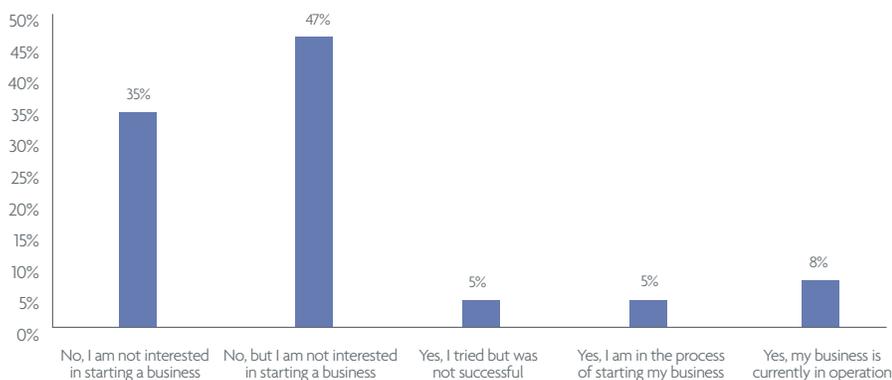
Table 8: Current Language Fluency

Current fluency in English	Total Respondents	Current fluency in French	Total Respondents
I speak no English	1%	I speak no French	59%
I speak a few English words	7%	I speak a few French words	26%
I can have a conversation in English	15%	I can have a conversation in French	7%
I have basic fluency in English	17%	I have basic fluency in French	2%
I can work professionally in English	61%	I can work professionally in French	7%
Total Respondents	595	Total Respondents	266

## STARTING A BUSINESS IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

Immigrants are known to bring innovative ideas to Saint John. Results show that the majority of immigrants are business-minded, with 65% of respondents indicating they have tried (18%) or are interested (47%) in starting a business (see Figure 8).<sup>19</sup> Economic immigrants reported being the most interested in starting a business or have already started a business (75%), followed by immigrants who had entered Canada on a study permit (64%).

Figure 8: Trying to Start a Business in Greater Saint John



<sup>18</sup> Q24. Rate your current fluency in Canada's official languages. (n=595; n=266)

<sup>19</sup> Q43. Have you tried to start a business in Greater Saint John? (n=545)

# IMMIGRANTS BRING VALUE TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

## PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE AND CURRENT JOB TITLE

Prior to coming to Canada, 85% of respondents were employed in their previous country (see Table 9) and thus arrived in Canada with prior work experience.<sup>20</sup> Fifty-five percent of previously employed respondents had skilled occupations stemming from national occupational classification (NOC) codes 0 through 2, including management, business, and natural and applied sciences.<sup>21</sup>

When comparing job titles before and after arrival to Canada, we found a drop in management occupations (NOC 0) from 24% to 16%, and an increase in sales and service occupations (NOC 6) from 8% to 30% (see Table 9).<sup>22</sup> Thus, suggesting that immigrants are able and willing to adjust their occupations to help fit the labour market; a significant contribution to the community.

Table 9: Work Experience

Work Experience prior to Arrival in Canada	Prior to Canada	Current Job Title <sup>23</sup>
<b>Have Pre-Arrival Working Experience</b>	<b>85%</b>	
<b>NOC Code - Broad Occupational Category</b>		
0 - Management occupations	24%	16%
1 - Business, finance and administration occupations	17%	15%
2 - Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	14%	11%
3 - Health occupations	4%	2%
4 - Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	9%	15%
5 - Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	2%	1%
6 - Sales and service occupations	8%	30%
7 - Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	3%	6%
8 - Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	1%	0%
9 - Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	2%	2%
<b>No Pre-Arrival Working Experience</b>	<b>15%</b>	
Students	8%	
Housewife / Stay-at-home mom	2%	
Teenagers / Kid	1%	
No work / Unemployed	4%	
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>314</b>

<sup>20</sup> Q12. What was your employment (i.e., job/job title) prior to coming to Canada? (n=584)

<sup>21</sup> For more information regarding NOC codes, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/noc.html>

<sup>22</sup> Q34. What is your current employment/job title? (n=314)

<sup>23</sup> Q34. What is your current employment/job title? (n=314)

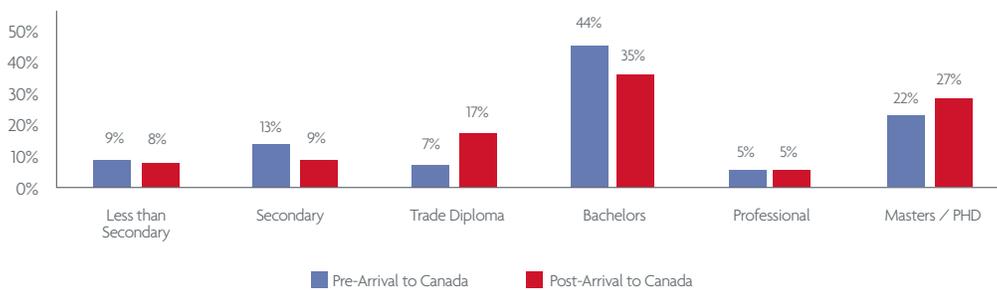
# IMMIGRANTS BRING VALUE TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

## HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED PRE- AND POST-ARRIVAL TO CANADA

In addition to work experience, many participants arrived in Canada with post-secondary education, with over 78% of respondents reporting they had a trades certificate or higher (see Figure 9).<sup>24</sup> When we asked participants their highest level of education to date, we found a 5% increase in the proportion of participants who had a trades diploma or a Masters or Doctorate degree, with 83% of participants achieving some level of post-secondary education.<sup>25</sup>

It is interesting to note that due to the wording of the question, the highest level of education after arriving in Canada does not capture the participants who completed an identical degree in Canada. For example, some participants have arrived in Canada with a Master in Business Administration (i.e., MBA), and they completed another MBA in a Canadian university. Overall, we conclude that participants arrive in Canada well-educated and are willing to become more educated in order to improve their chances of attaining meaningful employment.

Figure 9: Highest Level of Education Completed Pre- and Post-Arrival to Canada



<sup>24</sup> Q11. What was your highest level of education completed before coming to Canada? (n=698)

<sup>25</sup> Q 16. What is the highest level of education you have completed after coming to Canada? (n=648)

# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

## *Settlement and Integration Experiences in Greater Saint John*

In this section, we describe our results regarding immigrant experiences of settling and integrating into Greater Saint John. Settlement and integration are essential processes for immigrants, and success is dependent on a two-way street model between the immigrant and host community – the immigrant must learn to adapt and embrace their new life in Canada, and the community (e.g., organizations, employers, neighbours) must provide a supportive and inclusive environment for new people and new cultures (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).<sup>26</sup> An immigrant's settlement and integration experience significantly impacts their decision on whether or not to stay in their current community. Following several consultations with local immigrant residents, we framed our survey questions around the main barriers and challenges to settlement and integration.

In the following sections, we share results regarding various aspects of settlement and integration, such as what was most helpful within the first two years of arrival, accessing local settlement service agencies, reasons for not using settlement services, and the helpfulness of each settlement service used, as well as ratings and experiences about general, everyday activities.

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<sup>26</sup> Kaushik, V. & Drolet, J. (2018). Settlement and integration needs of skilled immigrants in Canada, *Social Sciences*, 7(5), 76.

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# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

## YEAR OF ARRIVAL TO CANADA AND GREATER SAINT JOHN

When comparing the date of arrival to Canada<sup>27</sup> to the date of arrival to Greater Saint John,<sup>28</sup> we observed that 80% of respondents reported the same year of arrival; thus, showing Greater Saint John is the first point of contact in Canada for many local immigrants, and Saint John is typically not a secondary migratory city (see Table 11).

In our survey more than half of the survey respondents arrived in Canada within the last 3 years (56%) (see Table 11), and about one quarter (28%) of respondents have been in Canada for 5 or more years (i.e., pre-2015).

Table 11: Year of Arrival to Canada and Greater Saint John

Year of Arrival	Arrival to Canada	Arrival to Greater Saint John
2019	24%	28%
2018	20%	23%
2017	12%	11%
2011 to 2016	26%	26%
2016	11%	11%
2015	5%	4%
2014	5%	4%
2013	2%	3%
2012	2%	2%
2011	1%	1%
2001 to 2010	11%	9%
1991 to 2000	3%	1%
1981 to 1990	1%	1%
Before 1981	2%	1%
Total Respondents	668	669

<sup>27</sup> Q14. When did you move to Canada? (n=670)

<sup>28</sup> Q17. When did you move to Greater Saint John? (n=669)

# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

To better understand which immigrants have been retained in Greater Saint John for five or more years, we found the largest number of people were immigrants who entered Canada via the Economic stream (19%; see Table 12); which is not surprising given the economic stream was the largest subgroup and represented nearly 50% of the total respondents.

When we examined retention by proportion for each immigration stream, we found that those who have arrived through the family reunification stream had the largest proportion of respondents who stayed in Greater Saint John (56%), followed by respondents who entered Canada via a work permit (39%; see Table 12). These results should be viewed with caution, as our sample size for family reunification and work permit are small relative to the other immigration streams.

Table 12: Immigrant Stream, by Date of Arrival to Saint John

Year of Arrival to Saint John	Economic Stream	Family Reunification	Refugee Stream	Study Permit	Work Permit	I prefer not to answer	Total Respondents
2019	33%	8%	21%	33%	24%	14%	28%
2018	21%	7%	22%	34%	24%	17%	23%
2017	13%	11%	8%	8%	8%	21%	11%
2016	8%	15%	34%	6%	5%	10%	11%
2015	6%	3%	0%	4%	0%	3%	4%
Before 2015	19%	56%	14%	16%	39%	34%	23%
Total Respondents	324	61	76	138	38	29	670

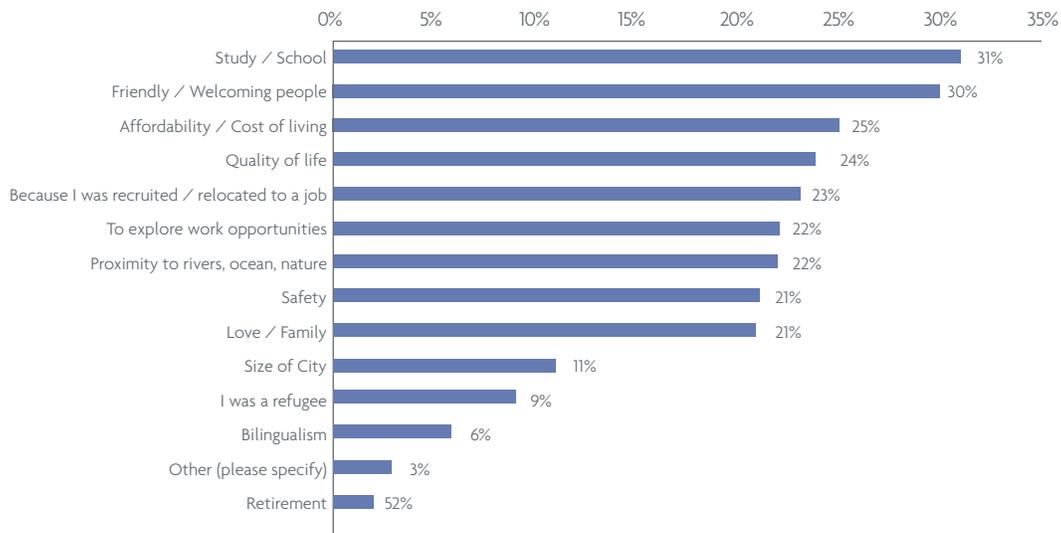
## REASONS WHY IMMIGRANTS CHOSE TO LIVE IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

The majority of immigrants have the choice of where they can move in New Brunswick. When asked why participants chose to move to Greater Saint John, there was a mixture of responses (see Figure 11). The most common reasons were school (31%), friendliness/welcoming (30%), affordability (25%), and quality of life (24%).<sup>29</sup> “Other” responses included, to be closer to my cultural community, location of a place of worship, friends, and provincial nominee program requirement.

<sup>29</sup> Q18. Why did you move to Greater Saint John? (check all that apply) (n=664; total responses=1,660)

# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

Figure 11: Reasons for Moving to Greater Saint John

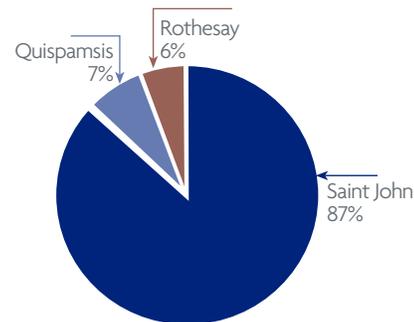


## WHERE IMMIGRANTS ARE LIVING IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

The majority of settlement services required by newcomers (e.g., Service New Brunswick, settlement agencies) are located in the City of Saint John, so it may not be surprising that Saint John is home to 87% of our respondents (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Place of Residence

Results showed that Saint John has a largely young immigrant population, with 41% of its immigrant residents 19 to 34 years of age, compared to 6% in Quispamsis and 10% in Rothesay (see Table 13).<sup>30</sup> The majority of respondents who live in Quispamsis or Rothesay are between the ages of 35 to 54 years of age, predominantly of White or Asian ethnicity (see Table 14), and typically entered Canada via the Economic or Family Reunification stream (see Table 15). Very few who entered Canada through the refugee stream or with a study or work permit live in Quispamsis or Rothesay; the majority live in Saint John. Similarly, in regards to citizenship status, the majority of respondents who have their Canadian citizenship, permanent resident status, international students, and temporary foreign workers primarily live in Saint John (see Table 16).



<sup>30</sup> Q5. Where are you currently living? (n=735)

# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

Table 13: Place of Residence, by Age

Age (years)	Saint John	Quispamsis	Rothesay	Total Respondents
19 to 24	11%	0%	0%	9%
25 to 34	30%	6%	10%	27%
35 to 44	37%	42%	40%	37%
45 to 54	17%	40%	45%	20%
55 to 64	4%	8%	2%	4%
65 or older	2%	2%	2%	2%
Total Respondents	640	53	42	735

Table 14: Place of Residence, by Ethnicity

Ethnic Background	Saint John	Quispamsis	Rothesay	Total Respondents
White	14%	42%	24%	17%
Black	9%	17%	0%	9%
Asian	53%	31%	74%	53%
Latin American	6%	4%	0%	5%
Arab	18%	6%	2%	16%
Total Respondents	582	48	42	672

Table 15: Place of Residence, by Immigration Stream

Immigration Stream	Saint John	Quispamsis	Rothesay	Total Respondents
Economic	47%	74%	75%	51%
Family Reunification	9%	16%	15%	10%
Refugee	14%	2%	0%	12%
Study Permit	24%	4%	5%	22%
Work Permit	6%	4%	5%	6%
Total Respondents	549	50	39	638

# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

Table 16: Place of Residence, by Citizenship Status

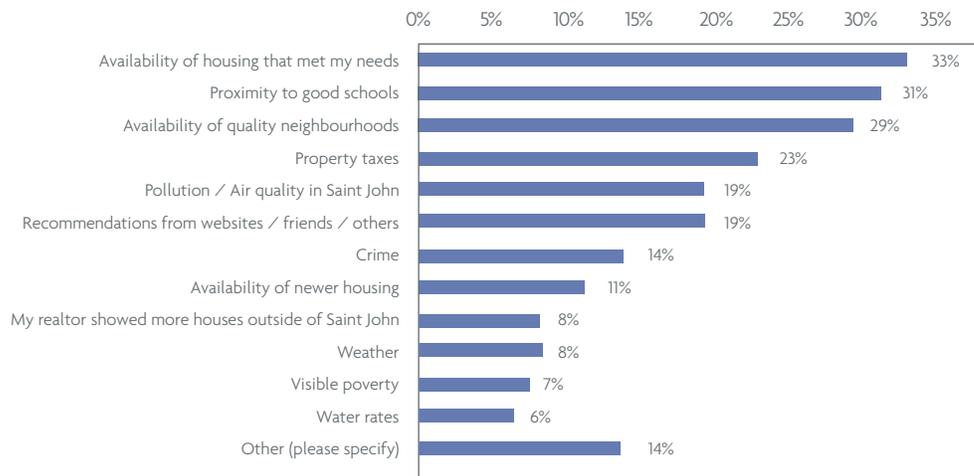
Citizenship Status	Saint John	Quispamsis	Rothsay	Total Respondents
Canadian Citizen	83%	10%	7%	122
Permanent Resident	85%	9%	7%	458
International Student	99%	0%	1%	96
Temporary Foreign Worker	86%	0%	4%	46
Other	91%	9%	0%	15

## REASONS FOR CHOOSING SAINT JOHN, QUISPAMISIS, OR ROTHESAY AS THEIR HOME

In our survey, we asked participants who did not live in Saint John, what greatly influenced their decision to live in one of the outlying communities instead of the City of Saint John (see Figure 13)<sup>31</sup>.

Of the 109 respondents that answered to this question, the primary reasons for living outside of Saint John were the affordability of houses that met their needs (33%), proximity to good schools (31%), availability of quality neighbourhoods (29%), and property taxes (23%).

Figure 13: Factors Influencing Decision to Live Outside of Saint John

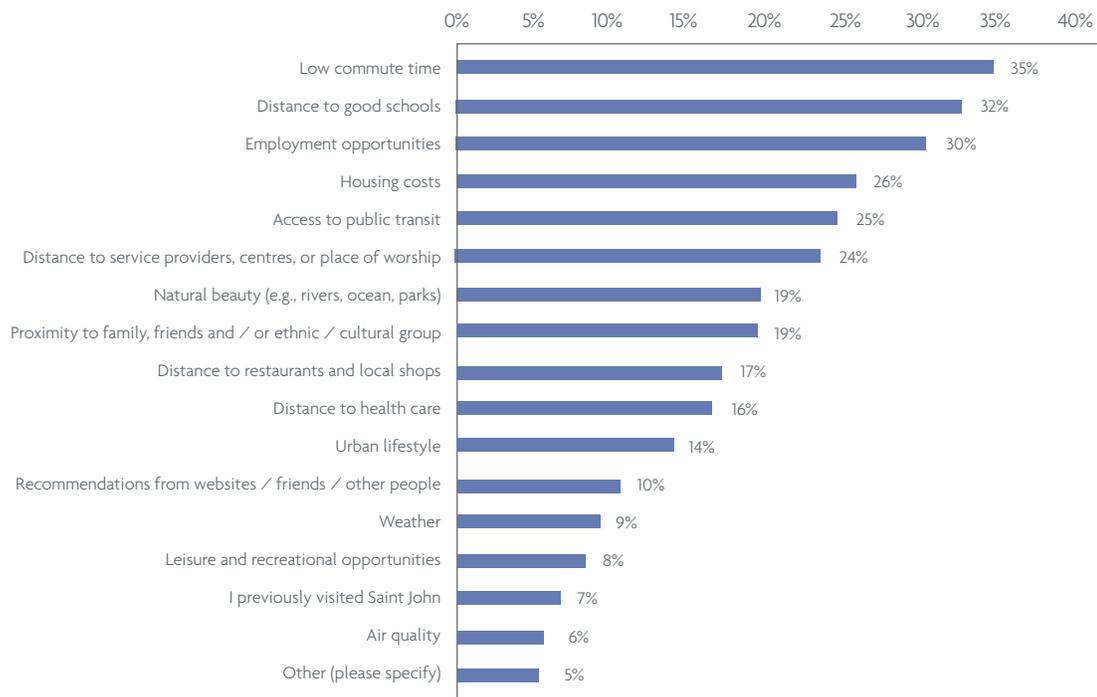


<sup>31</sup> Q57. Which of the following factors greatly influenced your decision to live in one of the outlying communities instead of the City of Saint John? (check up to 3 boxes) (n=109; total responses = 244)

# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

In our survey, we asked participants who lived in Saint John, what greatly influenced their decision to live in Saint John instead of the outlying community (see Figure 14). The most popular factors that influenced respondents' decision to live in Saint John include low commute time (35%), distance to good schools (32%), employment opportunities (30%), housing costs (26%), access to public transit (25%), and distance to service providers, centres, or place of worship (24%).

Figure 14: Factors Influencing Decision to Live Within Saint John

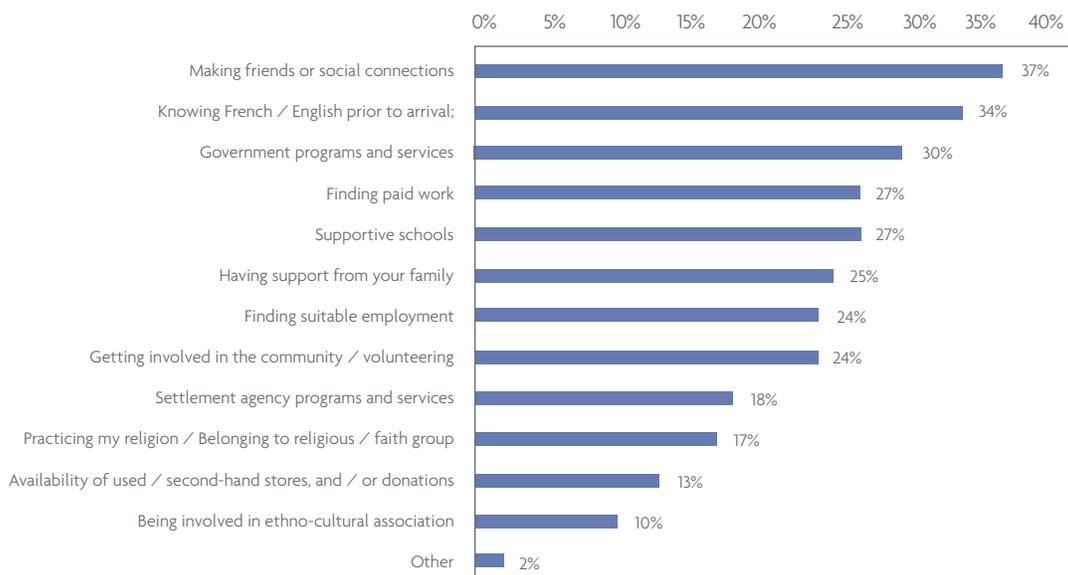


# IMMIGRATION JOURNEY TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

## MOST HELPFUL WHEN FIRST MOVING TO GREATER SAINT JOHN

When first arriving in Greater Saint John (i.e., within the first 2 years of arrival), respondents identified several major factors that helped them most during their settlement (see Figure 15).<sup>32</sup> The most helpful factor was having a strong social support system, including friends (37%), schools (27%), and family (25%). The second most helpful factor was attaining paid (27%) and suitable employment (24%). The third most helpful factor was knowing French/English prior to arrival (34%). Another helpful factor identified by 30% of respondents was government programs and services, which include organizations such as settlement agencies (18%).

Figure 15: Most Helpful When Moving to Greater Saint John



<sup>32</sup> Q20. What was most helpful when you moved to Greater Saint John (i.e., within the first two years of arrival)? (check all that apply) (n = 612; total responses = 1,769)

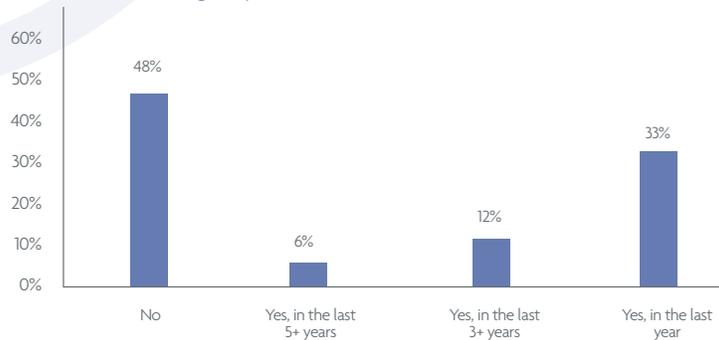
# SETTLEMENT SERVICES

## USE OF LOCAL SETTLEMENT AGENCY SERVICES

To assist newcomers in getting settled in a new city, Saint John offers two dedicated settlement agencies (i.e., the Saint John Newcomers Centre and the YMCA Newcomer Connections) and one organization focused on diversity and inclusion (i.e., PRUDE Inc.).

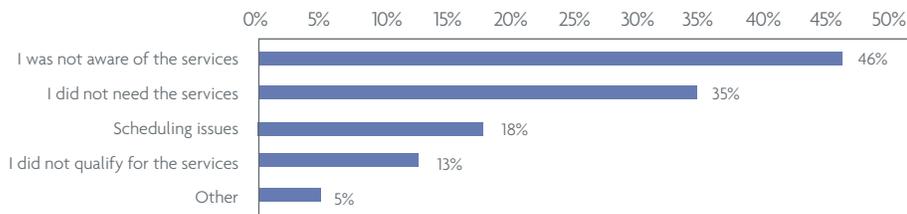
When asked if participants have used a settlement agency in Saint John, just over half of respondents reported they have (52% see Figure 16).<sup>33</sup> Of the respondents that have used settlement services, we found 65% (205) used it within the last year (i.e., 2018-2019).

Figure 16: Usage of Settlement Agency Services



Of those that did not use a settlement agency, the main reasons were lack of awareness of the services (46%) and they did not need the service (35%; see Figure 17). ‘Other’ reasons included recent arrival, they did not think they could help, and these services were not available when they arrived.<sup>34</sup>

Figure 17: Reasons for Not Using Settlement Agency



Respondents who stated they did not qualify for the services (11%), included participants from all immigration streams who arrived in Canada between 1994 and 2019. Over the years, eligibility for settlement services has evolved. Currently, the majority of services are targeted towards permanent residents, but there are a growing number of services for people living in Greater Saint John with a study or work permit.

<sup>33</sup> Q21. Since moving to Greater Saint John, have you used any services of a settlement agency? (n=612)

<sup>34</sup> Q22. Why did you not use the service of a settlement agency? (This question was only presented to those who responded “no” for Q21) (check all that apply) (n=293; total observations = 343)

# SETTLEMENT SERVICES

## RATED HELPFULNESS OF EACH SETTLEMENT-RELATED SERVICE

Of participants who have used settlement services, we asked them to rate the helpfulness of the key services they provide (see Table 17).<sup>35</sup> When analyzing the responses on a Likert scale with from 1 (Not at all helpful) to 5 (Extremely helpful), we found that classes on Canadian Culture were rated the best (average score 3.76 out of 5), followed by Citizenship test preparation classes (average score 3.57). The lowest rated services included Translation/Interpretation (average score 3.30) and Finding a house (average score 3.12).

Table 17: Rated Helpfulness of Settlement Services

Helpfulness Rating	Classes on Canadian Culture	Citizenship Preparation Classes	Youth Programs/ Services	Canadian Paperwork/ Filing Taxes	Translation/ Interpretation Services	Finding a House
Not at all helpful	4%	8%	6%	8%	16%	15%
Not so helpful	4%	8%	10%	10%	9%	13%
Somewhat helpful	27%	23%	32%	33%	32%	32%
Very helpful	43%	44%	35%	31%	31%	25%
Extremely helpful	22%	18%	17%	19%	12%	15%
Total Respondents	165	79	143	160	111	138
Average rating*	3.76	3.57	3.47	3.44	3.30	3.12

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=Not at all helpful to 5=Extremely helpful), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses.

When reviewing the helpfulness ratings by the time the service was received, we found the highest ratings were made by those who received settlement services within the last year (see Table 18). Thus, the data suggests the quality of the services offered by settlement agencies has improved over the years.

<sup>35</sup> Q23. How helpful was each service(s) you used? (n=varies)

# SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Table 18: Helpful of Each Settlement Service, by Year of Receiving Settlement Service

Local Settlement for Newcomers	Services helpful	Not at all helpful	Not so helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very Extremely Helpful	Total Respondents
<b>Classes on Canadian culture</b>						
Yes, in the last year	3%	4%	25%	43%	25%	96
Yes, in the last 3 years	7%	5%	24%	45%	19%	42
Yes, in the last 5 years	0%	4%	38%	38%	19%	26
<b>Citizenship test preparation classes</b>						
Yes, in the last year	5%	7%	19%	57%	12%	42
Yes, in the last 3 years	12%	8%	28%	32%	20%	25
Yes, in the last 5 years	9%	9%	18%	27%	36%	11
<b>Youth specific programs / services</b>						
Yes, in the last year	7%	13%	25%	36%	19%	88
Yes, in the last 3 years	6%	9%	36%	36%	12%	33
Yes, in the last 5 years	0%	5%	52%	29%	14%	21
<b>Support with Canadian papers/filing taxes</b>						
Yes, in the last year	6%	11%	32%	31%	20%	98
Yes, in the last 3 years	11%	6%	32%	34%	17%	47
Yes, in the last 5 years	7%	7%	43%	29%	14%	14
<b>Transportation/ Interpretation service</b>						
Yes, in the last year	12%	11%	23%	40%	14%	65
Yes, in the last 3 years	29%	4%	50%	14%	4%	28
Yes, in the last 5 years	6%	12%	41%	24%	18%	17
<b>Finding housing</b>						
Yes, in the last year	13%	13%	30%	26%	17%	89
Yes, in the last 3 years	26%	11%	34%	17%	11%	35
Yes, in the last 5 years	0%	8%	38%	38%	15%	13

# DAILY LIVING

In this section, we examine participant feedback and experiences regarding general services and everyday activities that are commonly encountered by immigrants, including experiences and ratings surrounding medical care, child care, education, public transit, practicing one’s religion, amenities and activities, affordability, and feelings of safety. Further research would be valuable in determining the reasons behind the survey ratings, and what could be done to help improve these services.

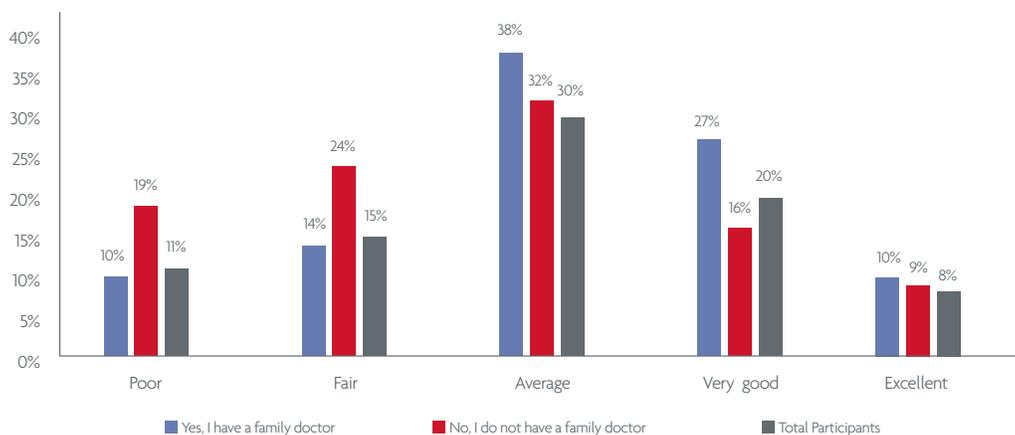
## MEDICAL CARE

Survey results showed 46% of respondents did not have a family doctor.<sup>36</sup> When asked to rate health care in Greater Saint John on a Likert Scale from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent), 28% of all respondents rated it as above average and 26% rated it as fair or poor (see Figure 18).<sup>37</sup> We found that the proportion of respondents that rated health care in Greater Saint John as poor or fair was nearly double for those who did not have a family doctor compared to those that did have a family doctor (43% vs 24%, respectively).

Of the 414 respondents who had sought health care services in the last two years, 77% stated they had no difficulty communicating with a health care professional.<sup>38</sup> Of those that stated they had difficulty communicating with a health care professional, they tended to rate health care services lower than those who did not have difficulty communicating.

Overall, poor health care ratings tended to be lower for those who did not have a family doctor and/or have had difficulty communicating with a healthcare professional in the last two years.

Figure 18: Rating of Overall Health Care, by Having a Family Doctor



<sup>36</sup> Q61. Do you have a family doctor? (n=524)

<sup>37</sup> Q63. Overall, how would you rate Health Care in Greater Saint John? (n=516)

<sup>38</sup> Q62. Have you had difficulty communicating with a health care professional in the last 2 years due to a language barrier? (n=527)

# DAILY LIVING

## CHILD CARE & EDUCATION

To better understand immigrants' perception of our local services related to child care and education, we asked participants to rate the quality of service from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent). Overall, respondents rated colleges most favourable (average rating 3.74 out of 5), and 62% rated it as 'very good' or 'excellent' (see Tables 19).<sup>39</sup> The service that provided the least favourable ratings was after-school care (average rating 2.99 out of 5), with 32% rating it as 'poor' or 'fair'.

Table 19: Quality Rating of Daycare, After School Care, Elementary School, and Junior High School

Rate the Quality of the following:	Daycare	After School Care	Elementary	Junior High	High School	College	University
Poor	12%	16%	4%	5%	4%	2%	4%
Fair	15%	16%	10%	9%	7%	5%	9%
Average	28%	29%	24%	33%	30%	32%	37%
Very Good	31%	30%	45%	37%	40%	42%	32%
Excellent	14%	8%	18%	15%	19%	20%	18%
Total Respondents	205	237	287	228	211	184	209
Average rating*	3.20	2.99	3.63	3.49	3.63	3.74	3.51

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=Poor to 5=Excellent), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

When asked if participants used the Saint John Transit, 58% of respondents stated they have used it (see Table 20).<sup>39</sup> Of the participants that used the transit, the majority of respondents used it either four or more times per week or only a few times per year. When examining transit use by citizenship status, we found public transit is most frequently used among international students, with 82% stating they use it four or more times per week; suggesting local transit is their primary mode of transportation.

Table 20: Citizenship Status, by Frequency of Transit Use

Saint John Transit use	Canadian citizen	Permanent resident	International student	Temporary foreign worker	Total Respondents
4+ times per week	6%	15%	82%	33%	23%
2-3 times per week	2%	8%	0%	3%	6%
1-5 times per month	7%	10%	3%	17%	9%
A few times per year	22%	23%	5%	23%	20%
I do not use transit	62%	45%	11%	23%	42%
Total Respondents	81	330	65	30	506

<sup>39</sup> Q60. Please rate the quality of each of the following in Greater Saint John.

<sup>40</sup> Q64. How frequently do you use Saint John Transit? (n=516)

## DAILY LIVING

When asked the primary reasons why participants did not use transit, the primary reasons were:

- they have alternative means for transportation (33%);
- the bus route(s) take too long to reach their destination or low frequency of buses (26%);
- there are no available routes to go where they need to go (19%);
- transit is too expensive (12%);
- transit is confusing (e.g., don't understand the bus drive and/or route system; 5%);<sup>41</sup>
- “Other” concerns noted by participants were that bus stops are not displayed properly, bus drivers are not nice, and buses are unreliable.

When asked to rate Saint John Transit overall, on a scale from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent), the average rating was 2.47 (see Table 21). The most common rating by 34% of respondents was ‘average’, and 31% of respondents rated it below average.<sup>42</sup>

Table 21: Overall Rating of Saint John Transit

Overall Rating of Saint John Transit	Total Respondents
Poor	13%
Fair	18%
Average	33%
Good	28%
Excellent	5%
Total Respondents	482
Average rating*	2.47

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=Poor to 5=Excellent), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses.

### RELIGION / BELIEF SYSTEM

Respondents identified various religious backgrounds (see Figure 19),<sup>43</sup> with the majority indicating they were either Christian (31%), Muslim (22%), or did not have a religious background (24%).

Of those who were practicing their religion, 36% stated they did not have a regular place of worship.<sup>44</sup> We also found 21% of respondents reported having difficulty practicing their religion, compared to 64% (207) of respondents who stated it was easy to practice their religion.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Q65. Do you and your family have any concerns with, or reasons not to use Saint John Transit? (check all that apply) (n=472; total responses=702)

<sup>42</sup> Q66. Overall, how would you rate Saint John Transit? (n=482)

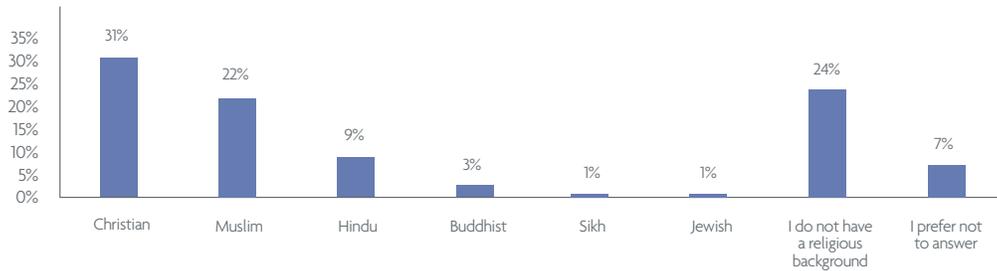
<sup>43</sup> Q69. Which best describes your religious background? (n=507)

<sup>44</sup> Q70. Do you have a regular place of worship in Greater Saint John? (n=362)

<sup>45</sup> Q71. Is it easy/difficult to practice your religion in Greater Saint John? (n=327)

# DAILY LIVING

Figure 19: Religious Background

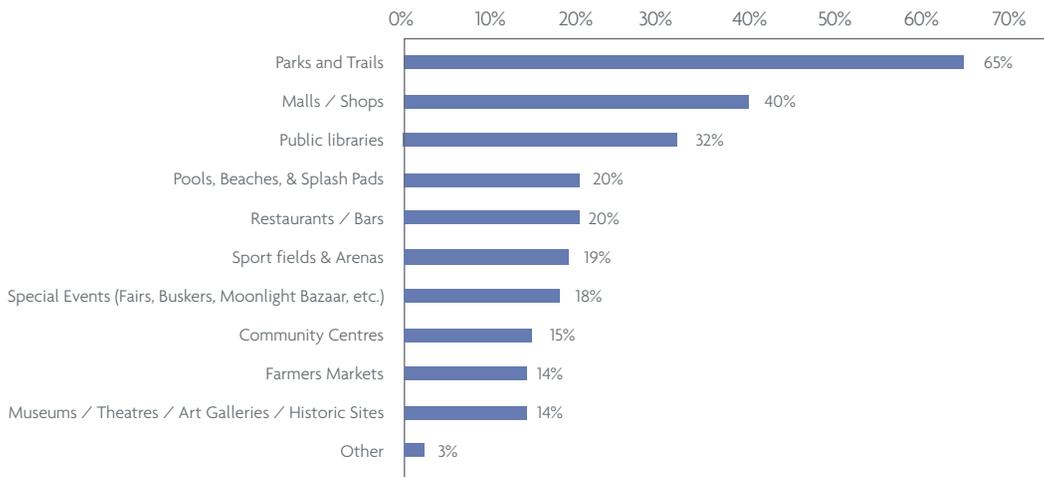


## AMENITIES AND ACTIVITIES IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

When asked about Greater Saint John’s most important amenities to immigrants, the top three choices included Parks/Trails (25%), Malls/Shops (15%), and Public libraries (12%; see Figure 20).<sup>46</sup>

The top three most important amenities were the same across all age groups, and very similar to all immigration streams. When we examined the most important amenities by immigration stream, we found that Parks / Trails were the most popular for all five immigration streams and Malls / Shops were the second most popular amenity for all immigration streams, except the Refugee stream, which ranked Splash Pads as second Public Libraries as third. Public libraries were ranked third for four of five immigration streams.

Figure 20: Most Important Amenities in Greater Saint John

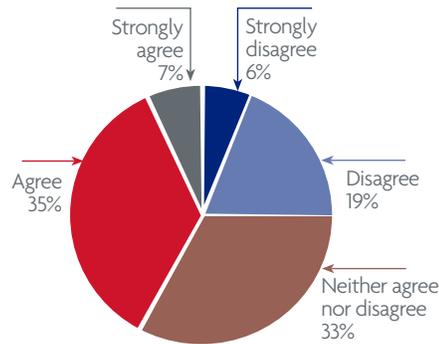


<sup>46</sup> Q67. What are the most important amenities

# DAILY LIVING

When asked if participants thought, “There are many activities in Greater Saint John for me and/or my family”, 42% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while 25% disagreed or strongly disagreed (see Figure 21).<sup>467</sup>

Figure 21: Perception of Activities in Greater Saint John



## AFFORDABILITY OF DAILY LIVING EXPENSES

Participants were asked to rate the affordability of various expenses on a 5-point Likert scale from 1=Not at all affordable, to 5=Extremely affordable (see Table 22).<sup>48</sup> Results show groceries were rated on average as the most affordable (average rating of 2.97 out of 5), and public transit was rated the least affordable (average rating 2.47).

Table 22: Affordability of Daily Living Related Expenses

Affordability	Groceries	Entertainment	Taxis	Public transit
Not at all	4%	8%	21%	10%
Not very	19%	26%	27%	17%
Somewhat	56%	46%	33%	46%
Very	18%	17%	13%	20%
Extremely	3%	4%	6%	7%
Total Respondents	508	454	392	409
Average rating*	2.97	2.82	2.55	2.47

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=Not at all affordable to 5=Extremely affordable), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses.

<sup>47</sup> Q68. Do you agree/disagree with the following statement: There are many activities in Greater Saint John for me and/or my family? (n=511)

<sup>48</sup> Q59. Please rate how affordable you consider each of the following costs in your area. (n=varies)

<sup>49</sup> Q72. How safe do you feel in the City of Saint John? (n=509)

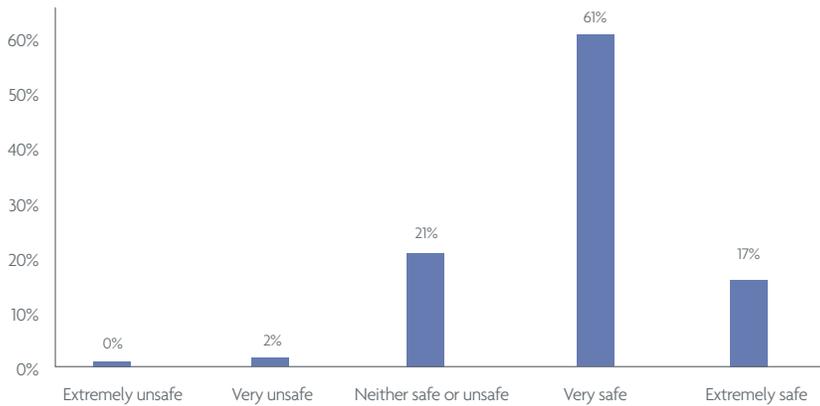
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# DAILY LIVING

## FEELINGS OF SAFETY

When asked about feelings of safety in the City of Saint John, participants provided an overwhelmingly positive response. Nearly 80% of respondents reported they feel very/extremely safe in the City of Saint John, and only 2% of respondents thought it was very or extremely unsafe (see Figure 22).<sup>49</sup> Perceptions were consistent with the overall sample across gender and age groups.

Figure 22: Feelings of Safety in City of Saint John



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<sup>49</sup> Q72. How safe do you feel in the City of Saint John? (n=509)

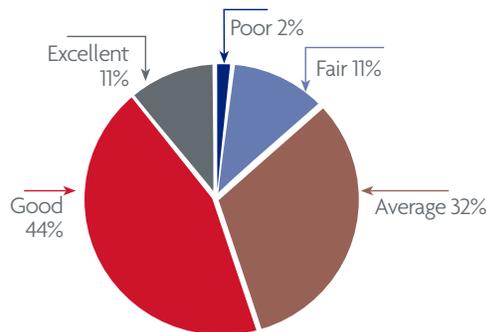
# RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

In this section, we examine feedback relating to immigrant's intention to stay in Saint John and retention overall. In particular, we examine participant responses relating to the overall quality of life, their intention to stay, the recommendation for others to move to Greater Saint John, the most challenging issues faced by immigrants today, and suggested actions to improve supports for immigrants.

## QUALITY OF LIFE IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

Quality of life is an important factor to examine because it is an overall indicator of life satisfaction. When participants were asked why they chose to live in Greater Saint John, quality of life was highly ranked by 24% of respondents. When asked to rate their quality of life in Greater Saint John, 55% of respondents rated it above average, and only 14% rated it as poor or fair (see Figure 23).<sup>50</sup>

Figure 23: Quality of Life Rating



When comparing the quality of life ratings to ethnicity, age, and immigration stream of entry, we found the largest ethnic group that rated their quality of life above average were Latin American (77%), Black (68%), and White respondents (67%), respondents 35 years and older, and those who entered Canada through the following streams: work permit (60%); study permit (56%), family reunification (55%), and economic stream (55%). The largest groups that rated their quality of life as poor or fair were Arab (20%) and Asian (13%) respondents (see Figure 24), as well as respondents 19 to 34 years old (24%; see Figure 25) and respondents that entered Canada through the refugee stream (23%; Figure 26).

<sup>50</sup> Q79. How would you rate your quality of life in Greater Saint John? (n=503)

# RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

Figure 24: Quality of Life, by Ethnicity

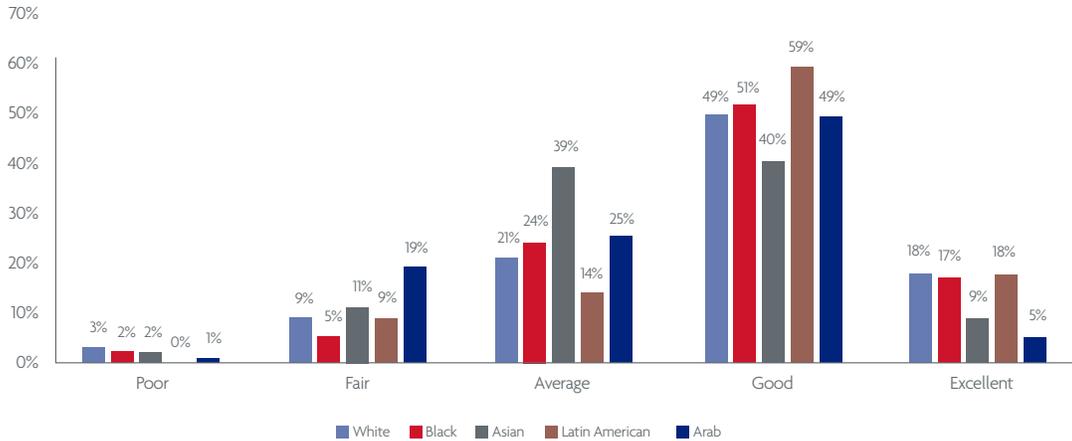
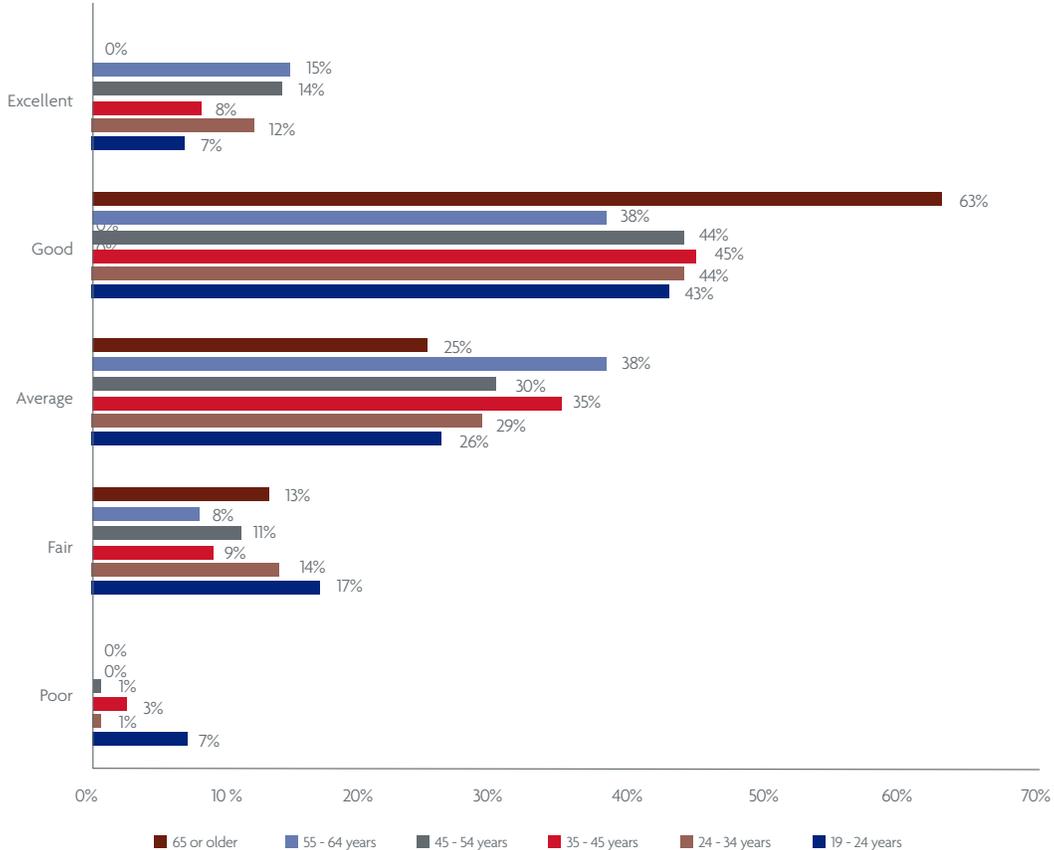
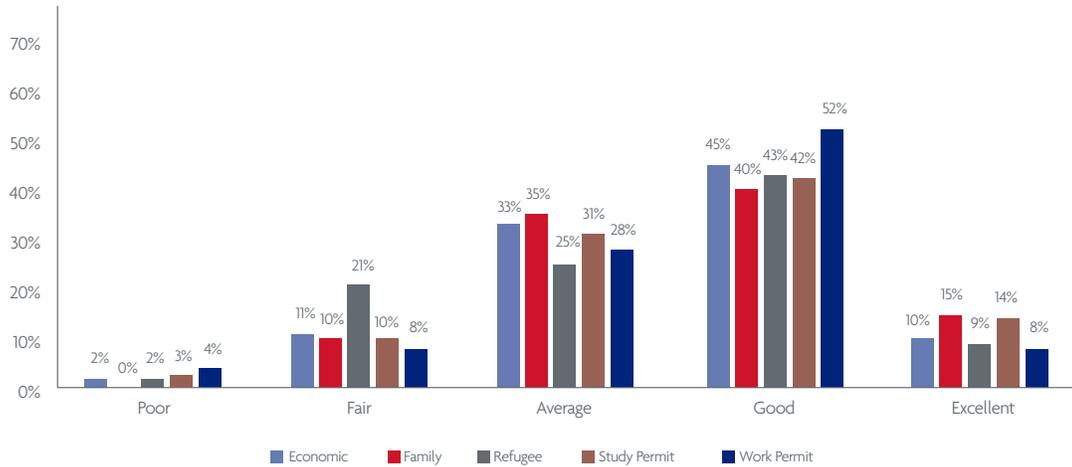


Figure 25: Quality of Life, by Age



# RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

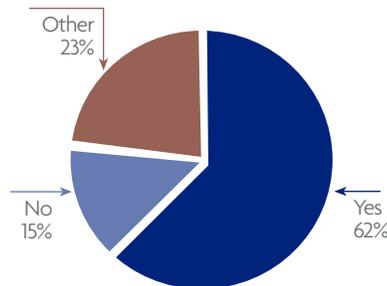
Figure 26: Quality of Life, by Immigration Stream



## DO YOU INTEND TO STAY IN GREATER SAINT JOHN PERMANENTLY?

When asked if participants intend to stay permanently in Greater Saint John, 62% of respondents stated 'yes'. Twenty-three percent of respondents responded 'other', with the majority of responses stating they would stay at least 10 years, they are staying because family is here, staying until children are grown, still settling, and their stay is dependent on whether they find employment (see Figure 27).<sup>51</sup> These results are promising, as it shows that the majority of immigrants want to stay in Greater Saint John, and we have the ability to help retain more if we, for example, are able to help immigrants feel more settled, attain suitable employment, and continue to be a great place to raise a family.

Figure 27: Intention to Stay Permanently

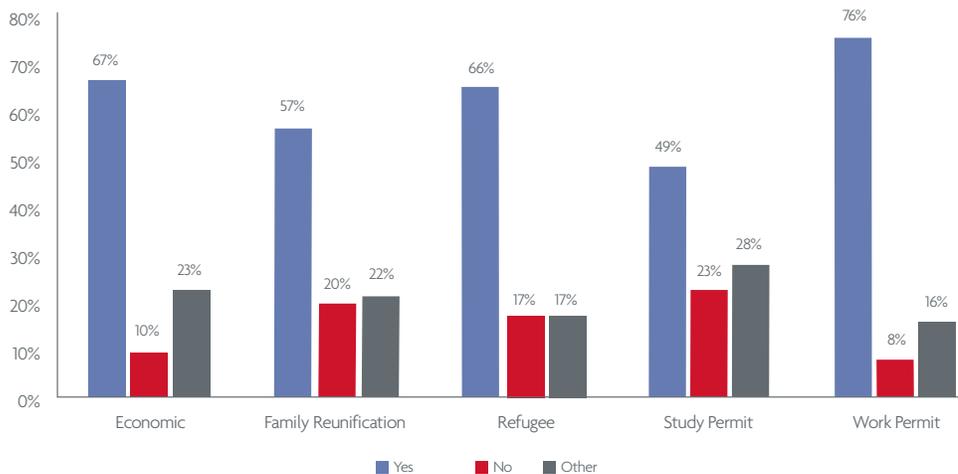


<sup>51</sup> Q80. Do you intend to stay in Greater Saint John permanently? (n=506)

## RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

When examining intention to stay by immigration stream (see Figure 28), we found that those who arrived in Canada via a work permit had the highest proportion who reported an intention to stay (76%), followed by respondents entering Canada via the economic stream (67%) and refugee stream (66%). Those with the least intention to stay are respondents who arrive in Canada with a study permit (49%).

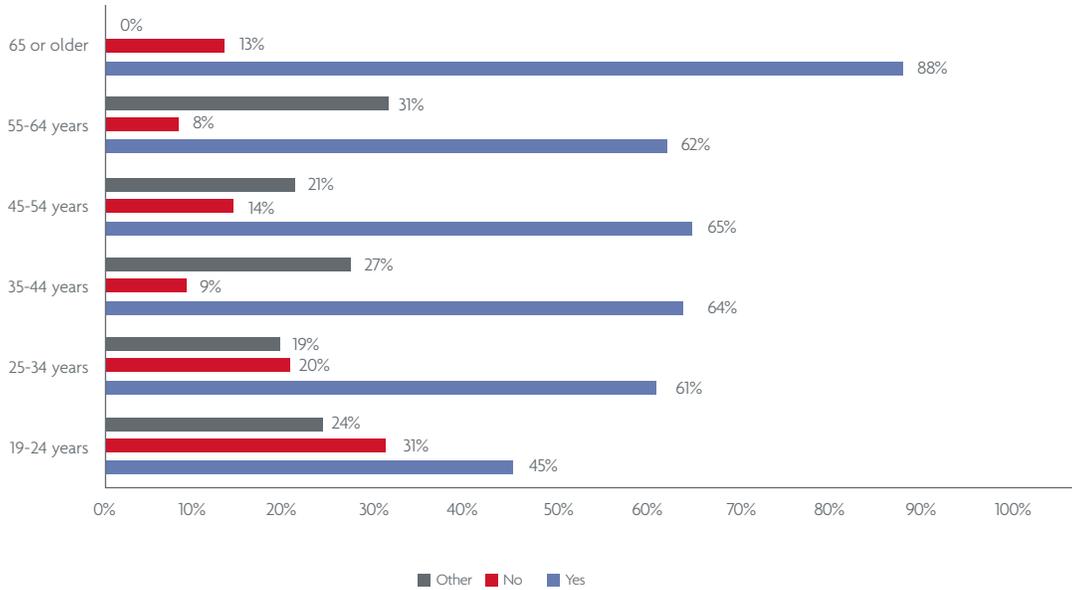
Figure 28: Intention to Stay Permanently, by Immigration Stream



When comparing intentions to stay across various age groups, we found 31% of respondents aged 19 to 24 years responded they were not intending to stay in Greater Saint John (see Figure 29). All other age groups had 60% or more that stated they had intentions to stay in Greater Saint John; suggesting that Greater Saint John is less desirable to the younger immigrant population.

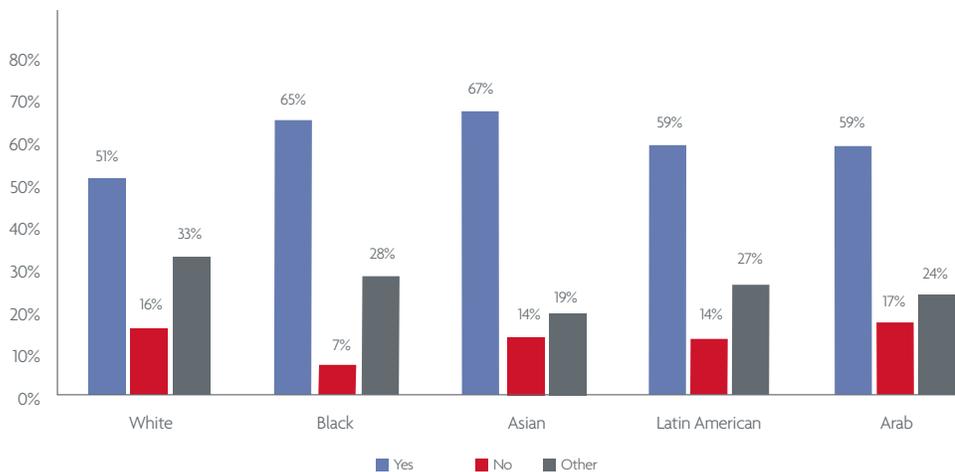
# RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

Figure 29: Intention to Stay, by Age



Among the various ethnic groups, we found Asian (67%) and Black (65%) respondents were the most likely to state they had intentions of staying permanently in Greater Saint John (see Figure 30).

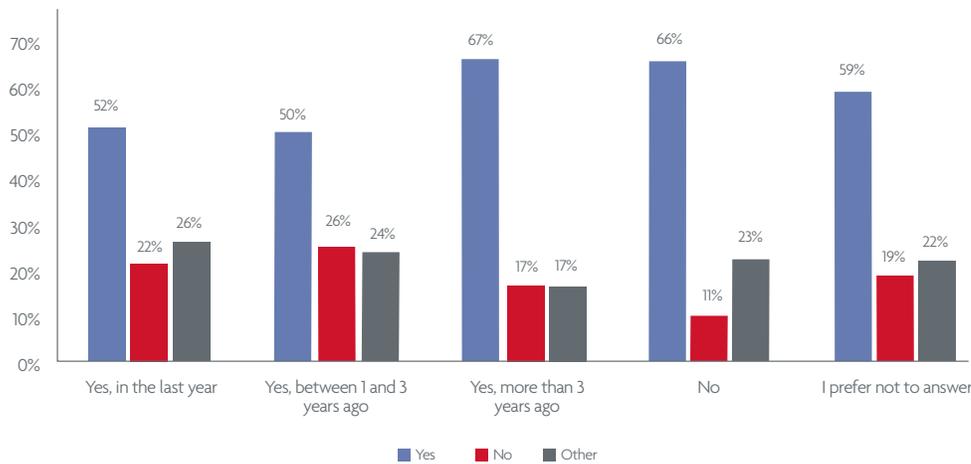
Figure 30: Intention to Stay, by Ethnicity



## RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

When comparing intention to stay response by the experience of discrimination, we found that respondents were more likely to intend to stay in Greater Saint John permanently when they did not experience discrimination in Greater Saint John, or if they experienced discrimination more than 3 years ago (see Figure 31). Of the respondents that had experience discrimination less than 3 years ago, roughly 50% stated they had intentions of staying in Greater Saint John permanently. Thus, the data suggests that experiences of discrimination could be a ‘push’ factor, leading people to want to move away from Greater Saint John.

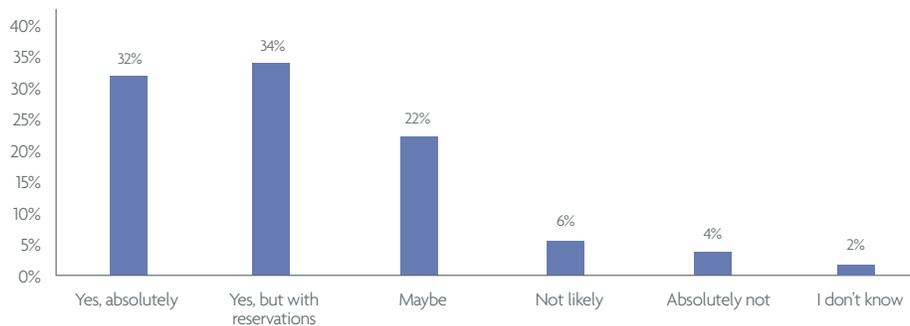
Figure 31: Intention to Stay, by Experience of Discrimination



### WOULD YOU RECOMMEND OTHERS TO MOVE TO GREATER SAINT JOHN?

When asked if respondents would recommend living in Greater Saint John to others, 64% stated yes, 24% stated maybe or I don't know, while 10% reported no (see Figure 32).<sup>52</sup>

Figure 32: Recommendation to Move to Greater Saint John



<sup>52</sup> Q81. Would you recommend others to move to greater Saint John? (n=508)

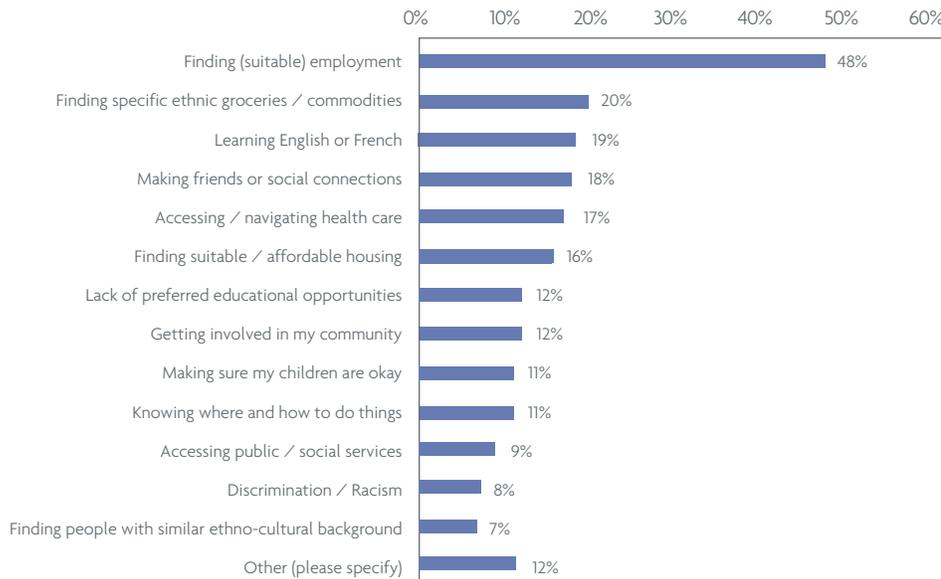
# RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

## MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES FACED BY IMMIGRANTS

Immigrants are faced with many challenges when moving to a new country. All immigrants must find a new place to live, learn a new culture, adapt to new surroundings, make new friends, find employment, and for many, learn a new language. Thus, it is important to ask participants directly, what are the most pressing issues they currently face.

The top challenge reported by 1 in 5 respondents was finding suitable employment (22%; see Figure 33).<sup>53</sup> Other key challenges reported by 100 or more respondents include finding specific ethnic groceries/commodities (9%), learning English or French (8%), making friends or social connections (8%), accessing/navigating health care (8%), and finding suitable/ affordable housing (7%). These top challenges look very familiar, as they mirror the factors that were identified by participants as most helpful when moving to Greater Saint John. These near-identical findings provide strong evidence that these factors are of primary concern for newcomers, and should be considered a top priority as we move forward as a community to help support newcomers.

Figure 33: Most Challenging Issues Currently Faced by Immigrants (check up to 3 boxes)



<sup>53</sup> Q19. Currently, what are your most challenging issues? (check up to 3 boxes) (n=645; total responses = 1,416)

## RETENTION / INTENTION TO STAY

It is also worth reiterating that for 80% of our respondents, Greater Saint John is their first exposure to life in Canada, as Greater Saint John is rarely a secondary migration city. Thus, when we serve newcomers, we are reminded that any new immigrant to Saint John is also likely new to Canada in general; thus, there is a steep learning curve of how to adapt to their new culture. It is best if we strip away assumptions of what we already know, and have the newcomer perspective in mind as we try to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for our immigrant population.

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO BETTER SUPPORT IMMIGRANTS

When asked to provide three suggestions that could be made to better support immigrants to settle, work, and feel a greater sense of belonging in Greater Saint John, participants chose actions that would help address their main challenges (see Table 23).<sup>54</sup> The most commonly chosen suggestion was to educate employers regarding hiring and retaining immigrant employees (59%). The second most common suggestion was to provide more affordable and suitable housing options (37%). These suggestions were followed closely by more second language learning options (31%), improved social connectedness between newcomers and the community (29%), a central location where immigrants can receive settlement and other services (23%, e.g., a one-stop-shop), and action for a more welcoming and inclusive community (22%).

Table 23: Top Changes in Greater Saint John

Which top 3 changes could be made to better support immigrants to settle, work, and feel sense of belonging in Greater Saint John? (check up to 3 boxes)	% of Respondents
<b>Arrival to Canada</b>	
Educate employers on the values and ways of hiring and retaining immigrant employees	59%
More affordable and suitable housing options	37%
More second language learning opportunities to help improve English/French skills	31%
Actions to improve the social connectedness of newcomers with the community	29%
A central location (i.e., place) where immigrants can receive settlement and other services	23%
Actions to have a more welcoming and inclusive community	22%
More efforts by community services to better serve immigrants	19%
Better coordination between the provincial and local government	19%
Better coordination between service agencies	17%
Funding for interpretation and translation	9%
Other (please specify)	12%
Total Responses	1,379
Total Respondents	500 (100%)

<sup>54</sup> Q77. Which top 3 changes could be made to better support immigrants to settle, work, and feel a sense of belonging in Greater Saint John? (check up to 3 boxes) (n = 500; total responses = 1,379)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR

## *Opportunities for Improving Immigrant Success and Retention in Greater Saint John*

In this section, we will discuss five essential factors that could significantly improve the lives of immigrants and assist with immigrant retention in Saint John:

- Sense of belonging and social support
- Gainful employment
- Suitable accommodation/housing
- Language fluency
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion

These five essential factors were identified based on our survey results, with particular attention regarding the demographic characteristics of our immigrant population and what participants identified as: i) most helpful factors during the first two years of arriving in Greater Saint John; ii) most challenging issues; and iii) suggestions about how to better support newcomers.

To ensure that our analyses truly represented the voices of our immigrant sample, we paneled a group of local immigrants regarding these essential factors. The panelists confirmed that these five factors accurately reflected the main challenges faced by newcomers; however, the ranking of importance may vary from newcomer to newcomer. For example, a newcomer who has low language fluency may rank language very high because language is essential for finding a house, building their social support, and finding gainful employment. Other immigrants may deem employment as most important as they are having difficulty attaining a job in their area of expertise due to barriers of credential recognition and lack of social connections. Meanwhile, another immigrant who came from a city with over 5 million people would consider safety to be most important to them. Therefore, we chose not to rank the essential factors, but instead, highlight their primary importance to our larger immigrant population.

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## ESSENTIAL FACTOR

The essential factors are not independent, and they can influence one another and overlap in concept. For example, discrimination can affect a person's ability to find accommodation, make friends, or to get hired; thus, discrimination was examined under the essential factors Sense of Belonging and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. We caution not to view these essential factors in isolation, but understand they can impact an immigrant's life in many different ways.

It is also important to note to the community that we have the ability to improve the conditions of these essential factors, through existing policies, programs, and services on an organizational, municipal, or provincial level. To ensure meaningful, systemic change, it is important that we work WITH our immigrant population and provide them with the space to have their voices heard and be involved in the process of change and improvement.

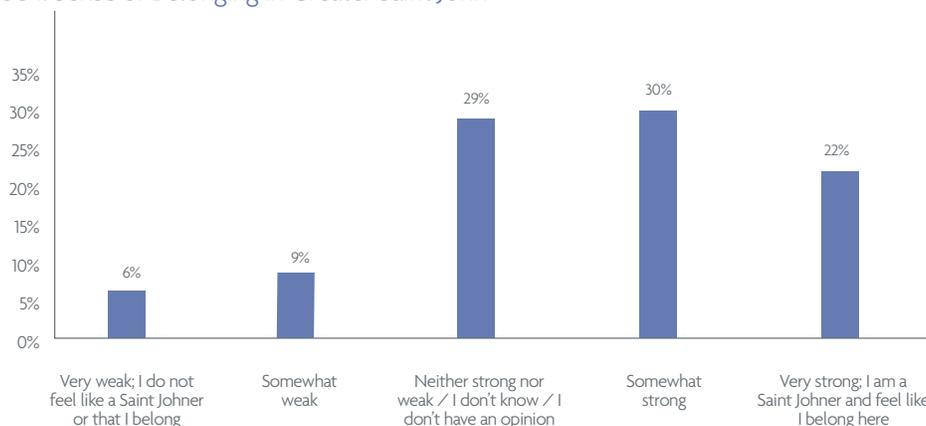
# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SENSE OF BELONGING & SOCIAL

Sense of belonging and social support can be a defining factor that influences whether a person stays or leaves a city, regardless if they have gainful employment and suitable housing. Below we describe survey results that will help improve our understanding of an immigrant's sense of belonging and social support in Greater Saint John.

## SENSE OF BELONGING IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

Sense of belonging was relatively positive among participants, with 22% of respondents stating they had a 'very strong sense of belonging' in Greater Saint John and 30% of respondents reported a 'somewhat strong' sense of belonging (see Figure 34). Twenty-nine percent of respondents reported a sense of belonging that was neither strong nor weak. Few participants indicated a low sense of belonging, with 15% of respondents stating they had a somewhat weak (9%) or very weak (6%) sense of belonging.<sup>55</sup>

Figure 34: Sense of Belonging in Greater Saint John



## PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY

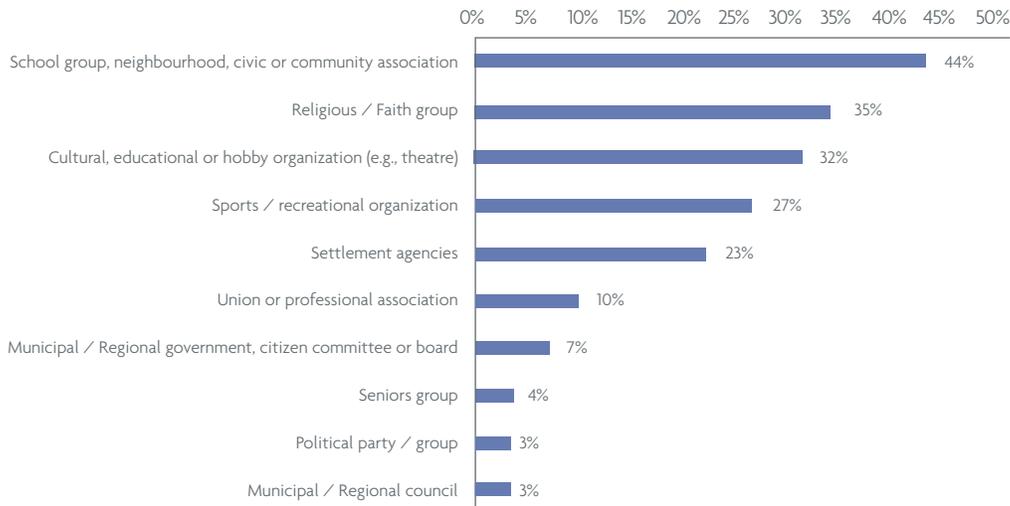
We found that many immigrants are active members of the community (see Figure 35).<sup>56</sup> The most popular areas of participation in the community are in school groups, neighbourhoods, and/or civic/community associations (44%); religious or faith groups (35%); and cultural, educational, or hobby groups/organizations (32%). Other places immigrants are active in their community included sports or recreational organizations (27%) and settlement agencies (23%). Respondents are least involved with municipal or regional councils (3%), political groups (3%), and senior groups (4%).

<sup>55</sup> Q75. How would you rate your sense of belonging in Greater Saint John? (n=518)

<sup>56</sup> Q28. Have you participated (e.g., volunteered, attended) in any of the following in Greater Saint John? (Check all that apply) (n=435; total responses = 810)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SENSE OF BELONGING & SOCIAL

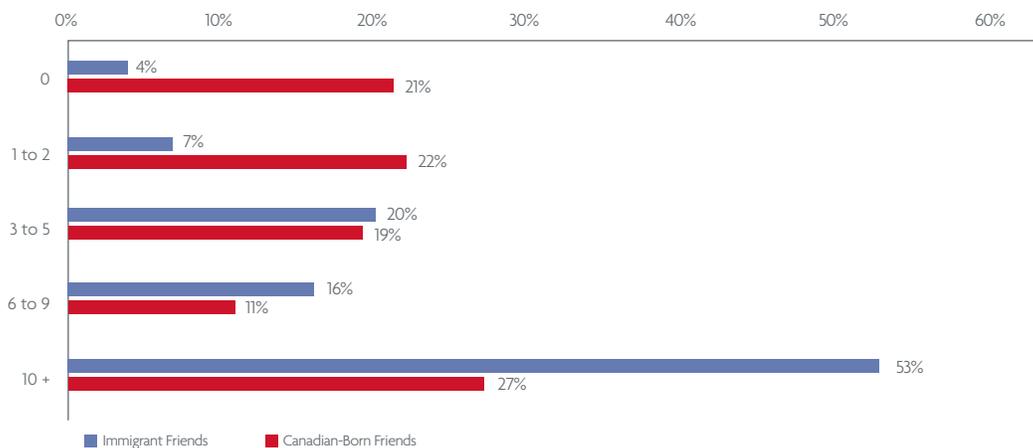
Figure 35: Areas of Participation in Greater Saint John



## NUMBER OF IMMIGRANT AND CANADIAN-BORN FRIENDS

Ninety-eight percent of respondents reportedly had at least 1 or more friends in Greater Saint John. The percentage of people who did not have a Canadian-born friend was 5 times greater than respondents who reportedly had no immigrant friends (21% vs 4%; see Figure 36).<sup>57</sup> Nearly twice as many respondents had 10 or more immigrant friends than respondents with 10 or more Canadian friends (53% vs 27%). Overall, immigrants tend to have more immigrant than Canadian-born friends.

Figure 36: Number of Friends



<sup>57</sup> Q29. How many friends do you have in Greater Saint John? (n=559 (immigrant friends); n=558 (Canadian friends))

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SENSE OF BELONGING & SOCIAL

When we examined the number of friends by year of arrival to Greater Saint John, we found that participants reported having more friends the longer they stayed in the community (see Table 24). For example, 28% of respondents reportedly had no Canadian-born friends if they arrived in Saint John in 2018-2019, but the percentage of participants with no Canadian-born friends decreases the longer the participant reports being in the community. This declining trend is also observed with immigrant friends. Thus, while participants may have a small social network when first arriving in Greater Saint John, they tend to gain more friends the longer they live here.

Table 24: Year of Arrival to Greater Saint John, by Number of Immigrant and Canadian Friends

Number of Friends	2018-2019	2015-2017	pre-2015	Total Respondents
<b>Number of Immigrant Friends</b>				
0	5%	4%	3%	4%
1 to 2	8%	8%	2%	7%
3 to 5	22%	18%	13%	20%
6 to 9	19%	11%	13%	16%
10+	44%	54%	65%	53%
Total Respondents	288	157	134	559
<b>Number of Canadian Friends</b>				
0	28%	17%	8%	21%
1 to 2	28%	22%	9%	22%
3 to 5	18%	21%	19%	19%
6 to 9	10%	12%	9%	11%
10+	15%	25%	51%	27%
Total Respondents	281	155	136	558

### FEELINGS OF ISOLATION IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

When asked if participants had felt alone or isolated in the past 12 months, 68% of respondents stated they have felt little to no feelings of isolation (see Figure 37).<sup>57</sup>

To better understand feelings of isolation, we compared responses to participants' age, ethnicity, and immigration stream of entry. When examining isolation responses by age, we found responses were relatively consistent across age groups, with slightly less isolation experienced by respondents 55 years and older (see Figure 38).

<sup>58</sup> Q30. In the past 12 months, have you felt isolated or alone in the Greater Saint John area? (n=592)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SENSE OF BELONGING & SOCIAL

Figure 37: Feelings of Isolation in the Past 12 Months

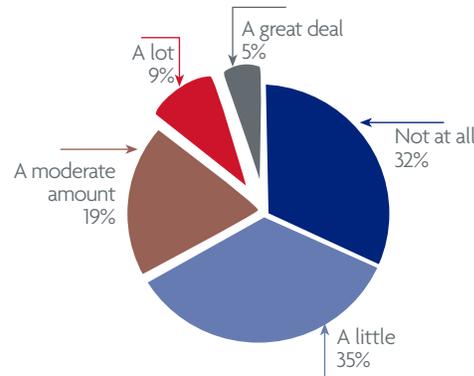
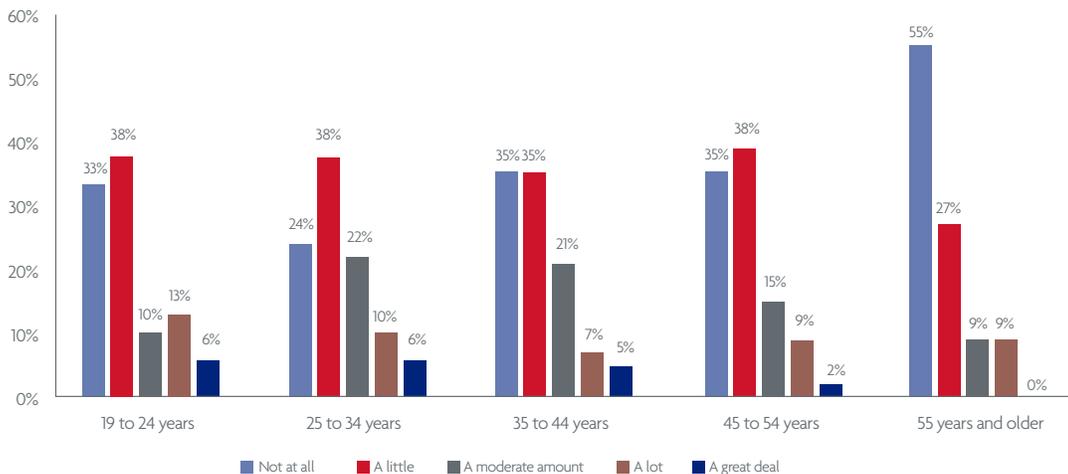


Figure 38: Feelings of isolation, by Age



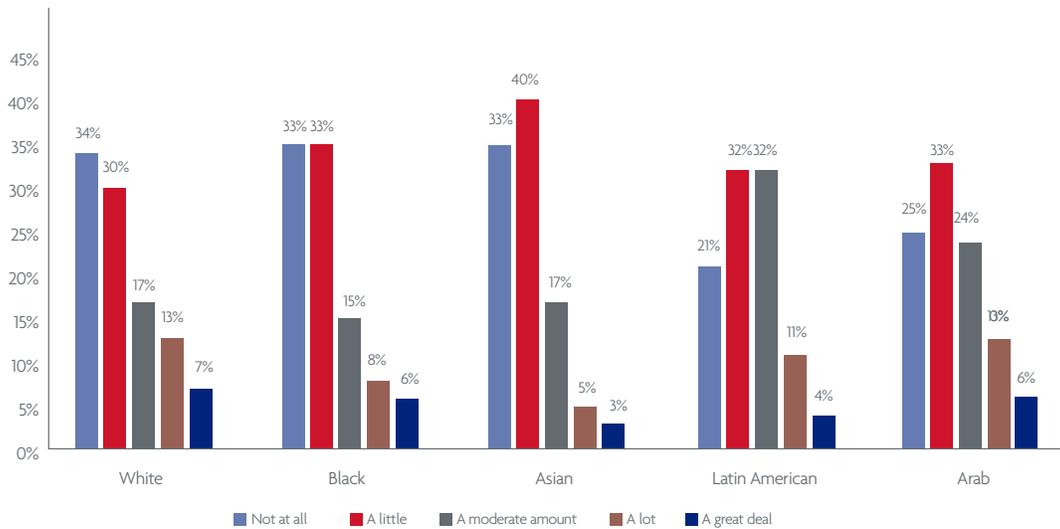
Those who most often reported little to no feelings of isolation included Asian (75%), Black (70%), and White (64%) respondents. White respondents (20%) had the highest proportion of respondents that felt a lot or a great deal of isolation, followed by Arab (19%), Latin American (15%), and Black (14%) respondents (see Figure 39).

The lack of loneliness among Asian participants may be due to the fact that 65% of respondents were born in an Asian country and 53% of respondents self-identified as Asian; thus, due to a large critical mass of Asian immigrants, they reported loneliness the least often among all ethnic groups.

<sup>58</sup> Q30. In the past 12 months, have you felt isolated or alone in the Greater Saint John area? (n=592)

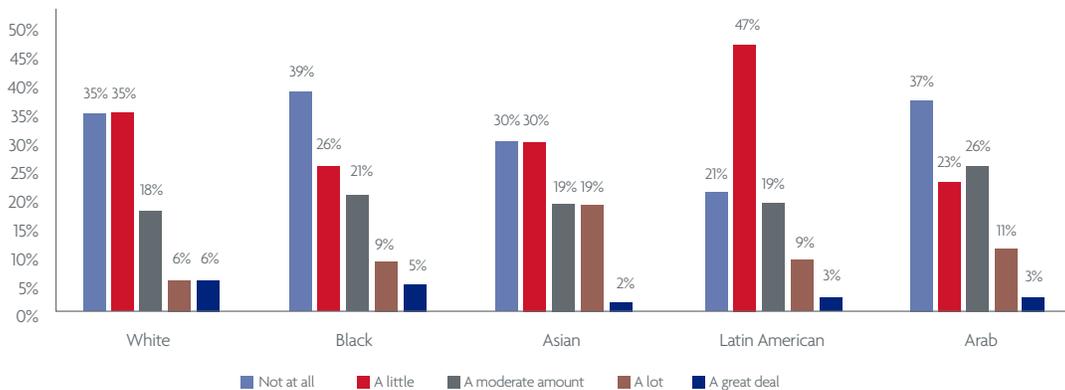
# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SENSE OF BELONGING & SOCIAL

Figure 39: Feelings of isolation, by Ethnicity



Finally, when comparing feelings of isolation by immigration streams, we found those who entered Canada through the refugee stream (21%) had the highest proportion of respondents that felt a lot or a great deal of isolation (see Figure 40). In contrast, respondents who entered Canada through the economic (70%), study permit (68%), and family reunification stream (65%) had the highest proportion of people who felt little to no feelings of isolation.

Figure 40: Feelings of Isolation, by Immigrant Stream

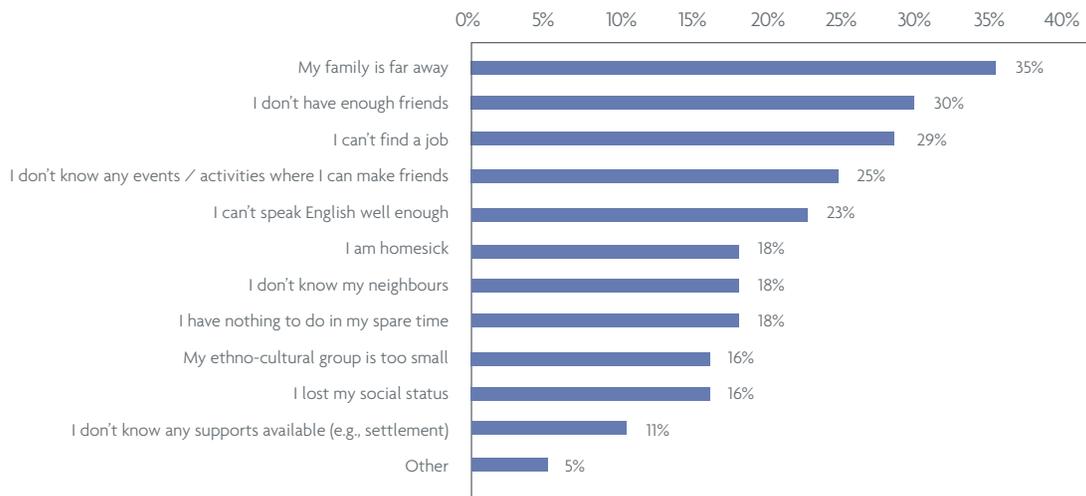


# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SENSE OF BELONGING & SOCIAL

## REASONS WHY IMMIGRANTS FEEL ISOLATED

When asked the top 3 reasons for feeling isolate, the most common reasons were: their family is far away (35%), not having enough friends (30%), and not being able to find a job (29%; see Figure 41).<sup>59</sup> ‘Other’ responses participants provided included, the difference in culture, recent arrival, too busy with work, staying at home with kids, difficulty to get around because they only have 1 car, and locals are unfriendly.

Figure 41: Reasons Why Immigrants Feel Isolated (check all that apply)



<sup>59</sup> Q31. Why do you feel isolated? (check all that apply) (n=399; total responses = 970)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

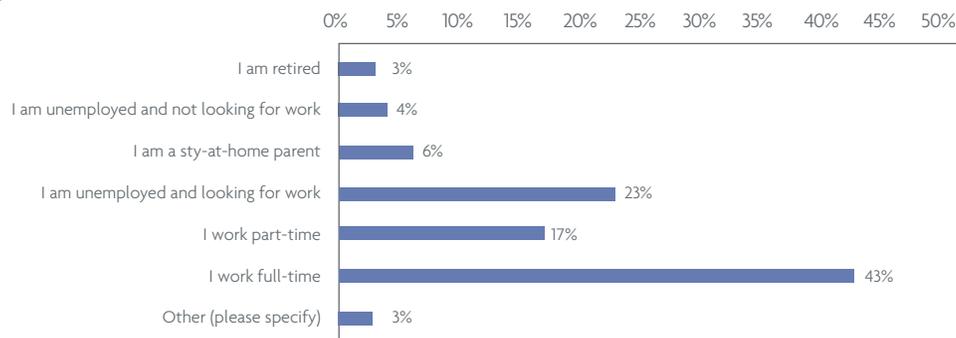
Employment has been echoed throughout the survey responses as one of the top challenges currently faced by our local immigrants, the most helpful factor when first settling in Greater Saint John, and is the top recommendation that needs to be addressed to help immigrants.

The challenge of employment can be viewed as a great opportunity for Saint John to significantly and effectively assist newcomers in attaining gainful employment that will fit their needs and skillsets, which will lead them to feel valued, and want to stay and grow in Saint John. With our ageing population and growing job vacancies, we can align our labour gaps with the skills and talents offered by our immigrant population. To help us get to this stage, it is important to understand the current circumstance from an immigrant perspective. Some notable barriers that we learned from previous sections of this report include the fact that for many immigrants, Saint John is the first Canadian city they have ever lived in; therefore, we must be mindful that many newcomers lack exposure to Canadian culture and customs, Canadian work experience, and have a small social network. To take advantage of the talent that is being poured in by our immigrant population, it is critical that we re-evaluate our hiring process, and better understand how we can cultivate the talent that is within our community. There are several key barriers faced by immigrants when it comes to employment, which we will discuss further below.

## CURRENT WORKING STATUS

When asked if participants have tried to look for a job, 77% of respondents said yes.<sup>60</sup> More than half of respondents indicated they are employed (17% part-time; 43% full-time) and about 25% of respondents are currently looking unemployed and are looking for work (see Figure 42).<sup>61</sup> ‘Other’ responses include contract work, rental property owner / landlord, independent contractor, trying to become an entrepreneur, and yet to start work.

Figure 42: Work Status



<sup>60</sup> Q37. Have you tried to look for a job in Greater Saint John? (n=581)

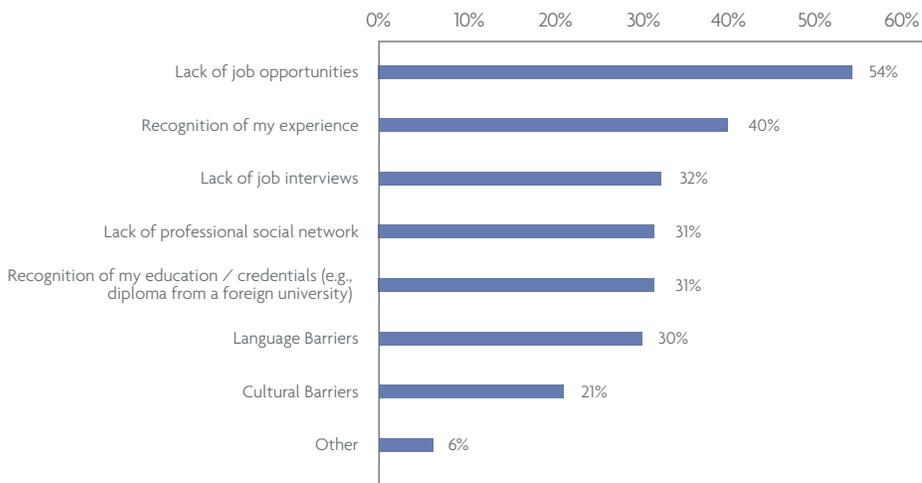
<sup>61</sup> Q33. What is your current working status? (n=580)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

## BIGGEST EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGE(S)

The three primary challenges of attaining a job for many immigrants include lack of job opportunities 22%, recognition of experience (16%), and lack of job interviews (13%), professional social networks (13%), and credential/education recognition (13%; Figure 43).<sup>62</sup> These challenges are key drivers towards employment success for the majority of local immigrants.

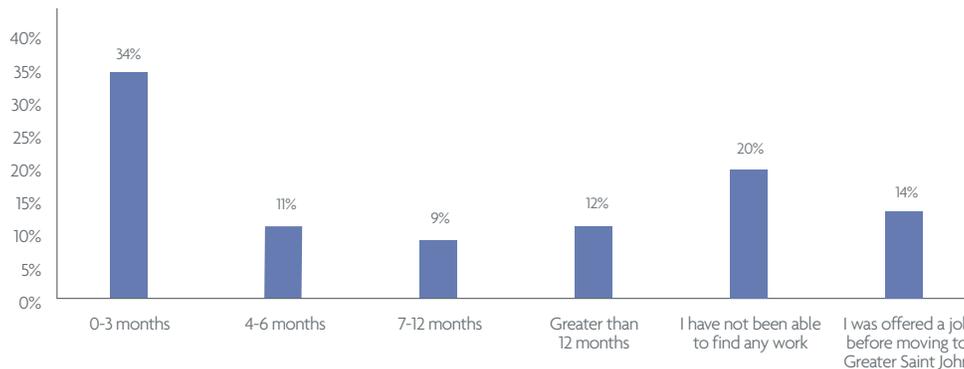
Figure 43: Biggest Challenge(s) when Trying to Attain a Job in Saint John (check all that apply)



## LENGTH OF TIME TO ATTAIN PAID WORK

When searching for a job, the length of time taken to find a job varied. Thirty-four percent of respondents were able to find a paid job within three months of their job search, while 20% have not yet been able to find work (see Figure 44).<sup>63</sup>

Figure 44: Length of Time to Find a Paid Job



<sup>62</sup> Q38. What is/was your biggest challenge(s) when trying to attain a job in Saint John? (check all that apply) (n=446; total responses=1098)

<sup>63</sup> Q39. When you first started looking for work in Greater Saint John, how long did it take you to find a paid job? (n=401)

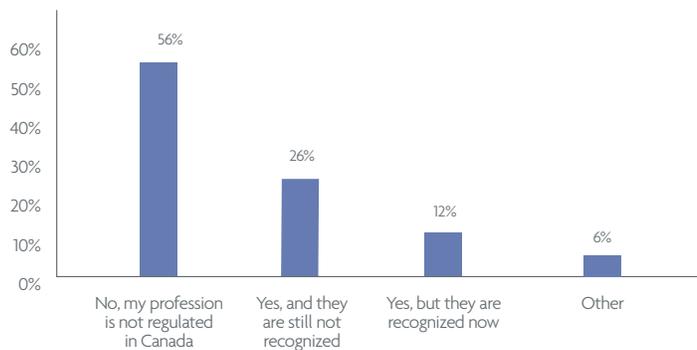
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# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

## RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN CREDENTIALS

Results showed the majority of respondents (56%) did not have a regulated profession that required their foreign credentials to be formally recognized in Canada (see Figure 45).<sup>64</sup> Of the 206 respondents that did report issues when trying to get their foreign credentials recognized in Canada, 31% now have their credentials recognized, while 69% have not yet been successful. With respect to those that responded ‘other’, the most common responses were: they did not have problems when applying, and they have not yet tried to get their credential recognized. Credential recognition appears to be a significant issue for many immigrants, as lack of recognition of foreign credentials was identified as the third biggest challenge for immigrants when trying to attain a job in Saint John.

Figure 45: Issues Regarding Foreign Credential Recognition in Canada



## UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Underemployment refers to people working in a lower capacity than they are qualified for (including a lower-paid job), or for working fewer hours than desired. When asked if participants were underemployed, 44% of respondents stated they were not (see Figure 46).<sup>65</sup> Of the 213 participants that reported they were underemployed, 68% reported being underemployed under one category, 26% were underemployed under two categories, and 6% under all three categories: lower capacity, lower-paid job, and fewer hours.

The most commonly reported category of underemployment experienced by respondents was that they were working in a lower-skilled job than what they are trained/qualified for (32%), followed by being underpaid their worth (23%), and working fewer hours than desired (8%). There was no statistical evidence that underemployment is linked to gender, place of residence, immigration

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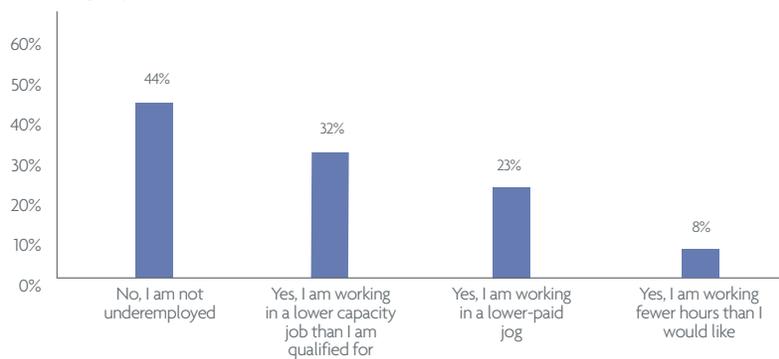
<sup>64</sup> Q36. Have you had problems getting your foreign credentials recognized in Canada? (n=536)

<sup>65</sup> Q35. Are you currently underemployed? (check all that apply) (n=379; total responses=460)

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

stream, or highest education attained. However, there was a statistically significant relationship between reports of underemployment and lack of credential recognition ( $p < 0.05$ ); that is, those who reported being underemployed tended to not have their credentials recognized.

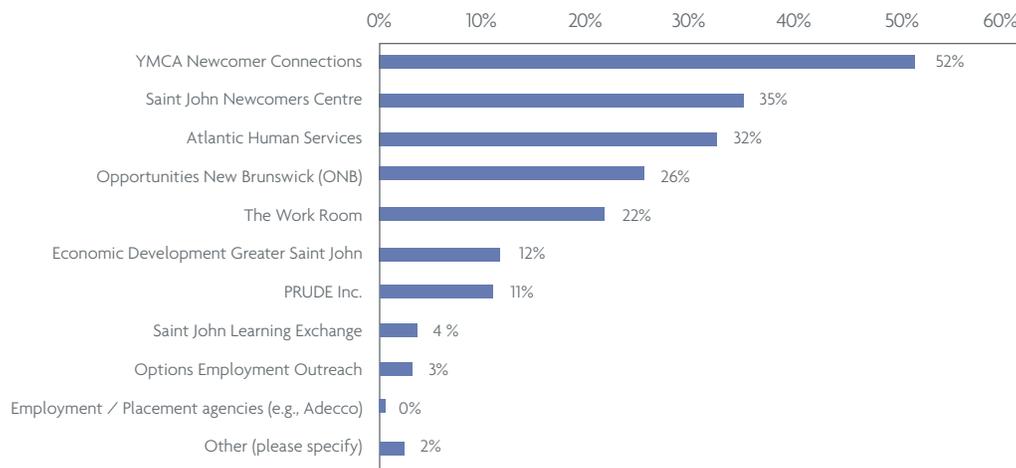
Figure 46: Underemployment



### LOCAL EMPLOYMENT / CAREER SERVICES USED AND RATING OF HELPFULNESS

There are numerous local employment services available for immigrants. To better understand the usage of such services, we asked participants to check all the services they have used to try to find a job (see Figure 47).<sup>66</sup> The top three organizations identified were all immigrant-specific serving organizations, including the YMCA Newcomer Connections (52%), Saint John Newcomers Centre (35%), and Atlantic Human Services<sup>67</sup> (32%).

Figure 47: Usage of Employment Service Providers



<sup>66</sup> Q42. Which service provider(s) did you use to try to find a job? (check all that apply) (n=253; total responses=511)

<sup>67</sup> At the time of the survey, the Atlantic Human Services was the only local organization dedicated to service newcomers and their employment needs; since then, this organization has closed and their employment services are now available under the Government of New Brunswick and WorkingNB.

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

To better understand the employment-seeking experience of immigrants, we asked participants to rank the helpfulness of each service they used on a scale from 1 (Not at all helpful) to 5 (Extremely helpful).<sup>68</sup> We found that on average, services for resume building were top rated, followed closely by professional networking, skills/vocation/bridging training, and internships (see Table 26).

Table 26: Helpfulness Rating for Resume Building, Professional Networking, Training, and Internships

Rate helpfulness of each in helping you get a job	Resume Building	Professional Networking	Skills / Vocational / Bridging Training	Internships
Not at all helpful	7%	11%	14%	19%
Not very helpful	12%	15%	8%	14%
Somewhat helpful	39%	32%	35%	23%
Very helpful	29%	21%	28%	23%
Extremely helpful	13%	20%	15%	21%
Total Respondents	274	334	171	151
Average Rating*	3.30	3.25	3.21	3.13

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=Not at all helpful to 5=Extremely helpful), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses. The employment service with the poorest average rating was job fairs, followed by career counselling, and support for credentials recognition (see Table 27). Further research is necessary to better understand why participants ranked these services as such.

Table 27: Helpfulness Rating for Job Banks, Social Media, Support for Credential Recognition, Career

Rate helpfulness of each in helping you get a job	Job Banks	Social Media (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook)	Support for Credentials Recognition	Career Counseling	Job Fairs
Not at all helpful	14%	17%	23%	19%	28%
Not very helpful	19%	19%	17%	22%	28%
Somewhat helpful	41%	38%	28%	37%	29%
Very helpful	17%	17%	19%	11%	10%
Extremely helpful	9%	10%	12%	12%	4%
Total Respondents	350	313	144	178	246
Average Rating*	2.89	2.84	2.80	2.74	2.33

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=Not at all helpful to 5=Extremely helpful), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses.

<sup>68</sup> Q40-41. Please rate how helpful were each of the following programs in helping you get a job? (n=varies)

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# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

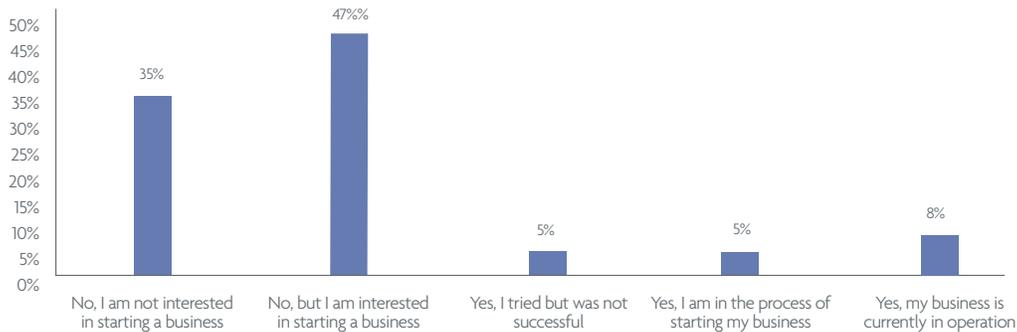
## BUSINESS / ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In this section, we discuss how many immigrants are interested in starting a business, and their experience trying to start and run a business while living in Greater Saint John.

### STARTING A BUSINESS IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

Results show that the majority of immigrants are business-minded, with 65% of respondents indicating they have tried (18%) or are interested (47%) in starting a business (see Figure 48).<sup>69</sup> When comparing responses by immigration stream, we found that economic immigrants reported being the most interested in starting a business or have already started a business (75%), followed by immigrants who had Canada on a study permit (64%).

Figure 48: Trying to Start a Business in Greater Saint John



### Barriers to Open a Business

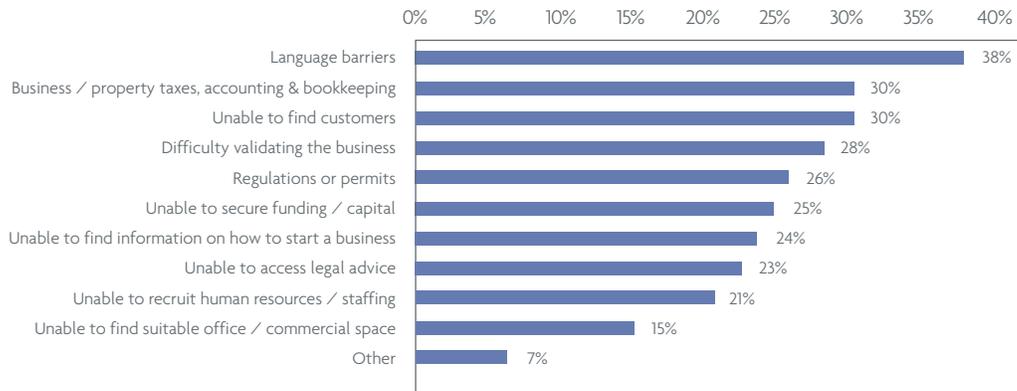
When asked about barriers faced when trying to open a business, participants reported an average of 2 to 3 barriers (see Figure 49). For those who have tried to start a business, the most common barriers to opening a business included language barriers (38%), taxes, accounting and bookkeeping (30%), unable to find customers (30%), and difficulty validating a business idea (28%).<sup>70</sup> “Other” barriers identified by participants included lack of tax or custom fee breaks, permits, lack of suppliers, and competition.

<sup>69</sup> Q43. Have you tried to start a business in Greater Saint John? (n=545)

<sup>70</sup> Q44. Have you experienced any barriers when trying to open a business? (check all that apply) (n=92; total responses = 246)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

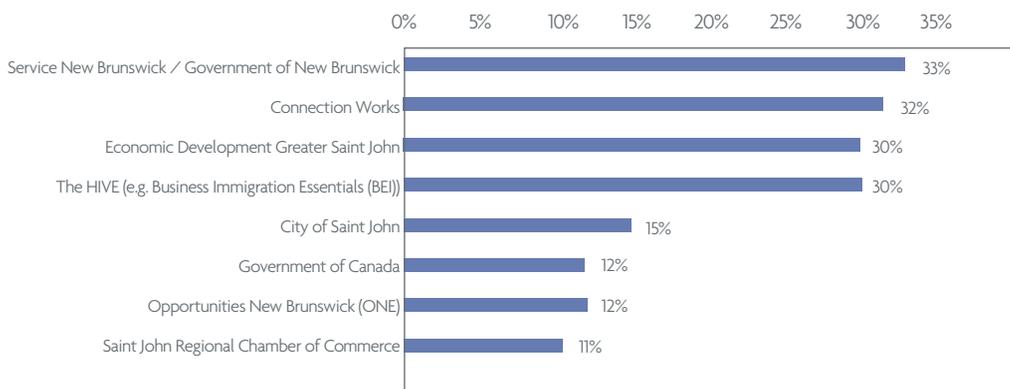
Figure 49: Barriers to Opening a Business



## Organizations to Help Start a Business

To better understand where participants sought assistance to start a business, we asked them to check the organizations they have used (see Figure 50).<sup>71</sup> The top organizations used to start a business included Service New Brunswick (33%), Connexion Works (32%), Economic Development Greater Saint John (30%) and The HIVE (30%). The organization that was used the least was the Saint John Regional Chamber of Commerce (11%).

Figure 50: Organizations to Help Start a Business



<sup>71</sup> Q45. Did you use any of the following organizations to help start your business? (check all that apply) (n=66; total responses = 116)

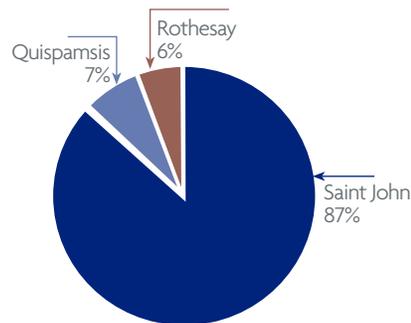
# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

Housing was identified as a major challenge and reported as one of the worst-ranked service provided by settlement agencies. Finding suitable accommodation is an essential need for all immigrants when first arriving to Greater Saint John, and has a high impact on one's life, including its cost, location, and daily living routine. In this section, we describe survey responses regarding various aspects of housing. It is important to note that comparisons made between Saint John, Quispamsis, and Rothesay should be interpreted with caution, as the sample sizes are substantially smaller in Quispamsis and Rothesay compared to the City of Saint John. Saint John, and is the top recommendation that needs to be addressed to help immigrants.

## LOCATION OF HOUSING

To help better understand how we may help immigrants find suitable housing that will help meet their needs, we compared responses between participants living in the City of Saint John versus Quispamsis and Rothesay. In our survey, results showed an overwhelming proportion of respondents reported living in Saint John (87%; see Figure 51).<sup>72</sup>

Figure 51: Location of Housing



## HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND COMPOSITION

The average household reported by respondents was 3.4 people. The most common household size is 4 people (26%), followed by 3 people (24%), 2 people (21%), 5 people (13%), and 1 person (9%; see Table 28).<sup>73</sup> In Saint John, the most common household size was 2 to 4-person households; whereas nearly half of respondents living in Quispamsis and Rothesay had a 4-person household (46%).

<sup>72</sup> Q5. Where are you currently living? (n=735)

<sup>73</sup> Q50. In your household, how many people do you have in the following age groups (including yourself)? (n=519; total people in households=735)

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

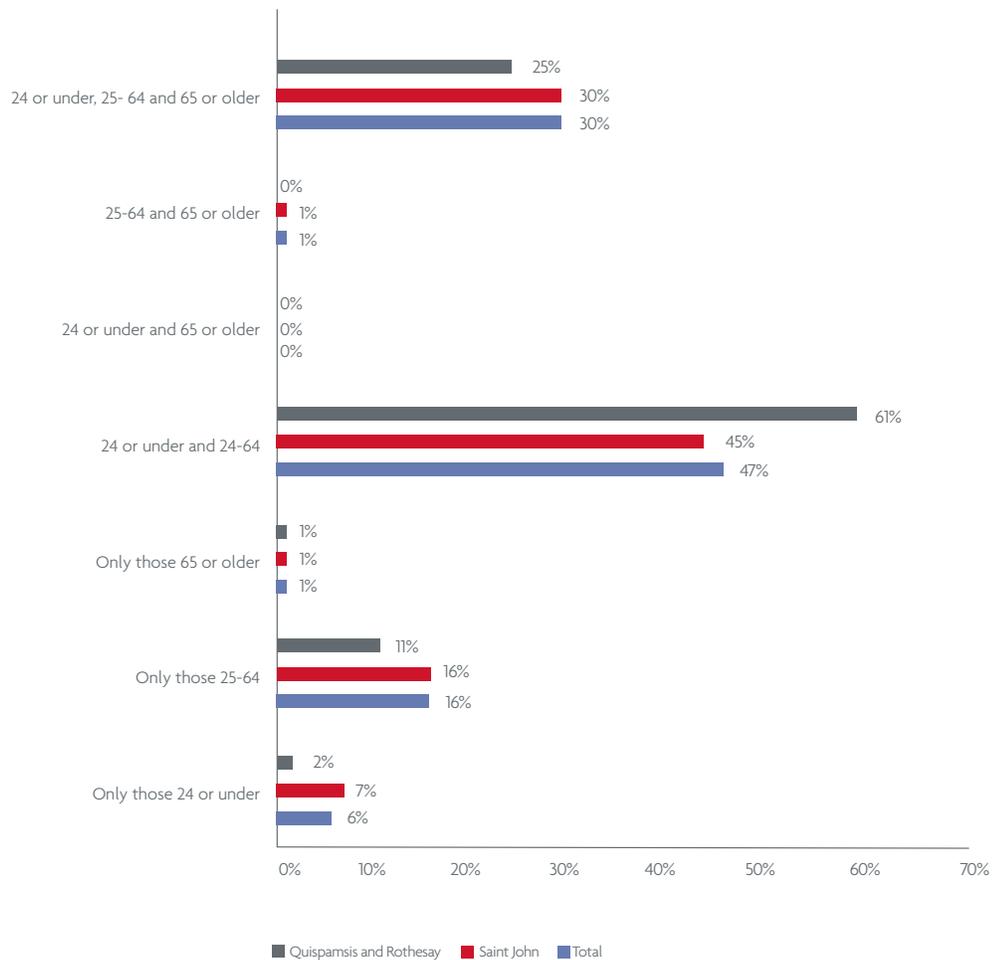
Table 28: Household Size, by Place of Residence

Number of People per Household	Saint John	Quispamsis & Rothesay	Total Respondents
One	10%	7%	9%
Two	22%	15%	21%
Three	25%	15%	24%
Four	22%	46%	26%
Five	13%	15%	13%
Six	6%	3%	5%
Seven	2%	0%	1%
Eight	0%	0%	0%
Nine	1%	0%	1%
Total Respondents	445	74	519

To better understand the household composition, we asked for the age ranges of each person living in the household (see Figure 52). Overall, 47% of respondents stated their households included people 24 years or under and 25-64 years old; thus, suggesting a nuclear family of parents and children. Thirty percent of newcomer households included people 24-years of age or under, 25-64 years of age, and 65 years of age or older; thus, suggesting a multi-generational family. The household compositions in Saint John are very similar to the total sample. In Quispamsis and Rothesay, there is a higher proportion of newcomer nuclear families (61%; i.e., 24 years or under and 25-64 years old) and fewer adult-only households (12%) than Saint John.

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

Figure 52: Household Composition, by Place of Residence



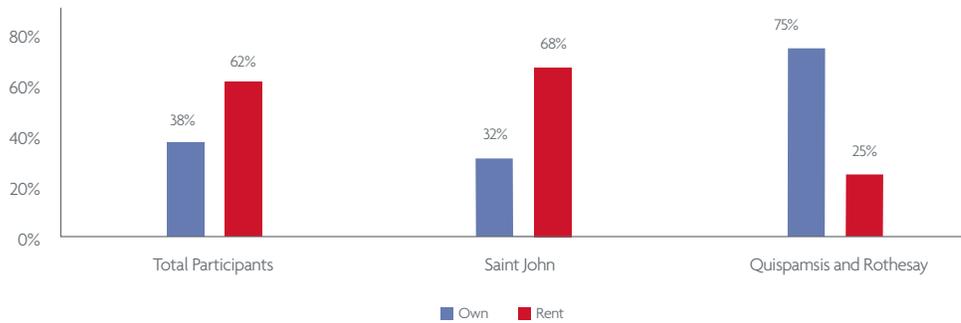
## HOME OWNERSHIP, NUMBER OF BEDROOMS, & LENGTH OF TIME TO FIND A HOME

The majority of respondents living in Greater Saint John were renting their homes (62%; see Figure 53). Sixty-eight percent of respondents living in Saint John rented their home, compared to 25% of respondents living in Quispamsis and Rothesay.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Q48. Do you currently own your home? (n=547)

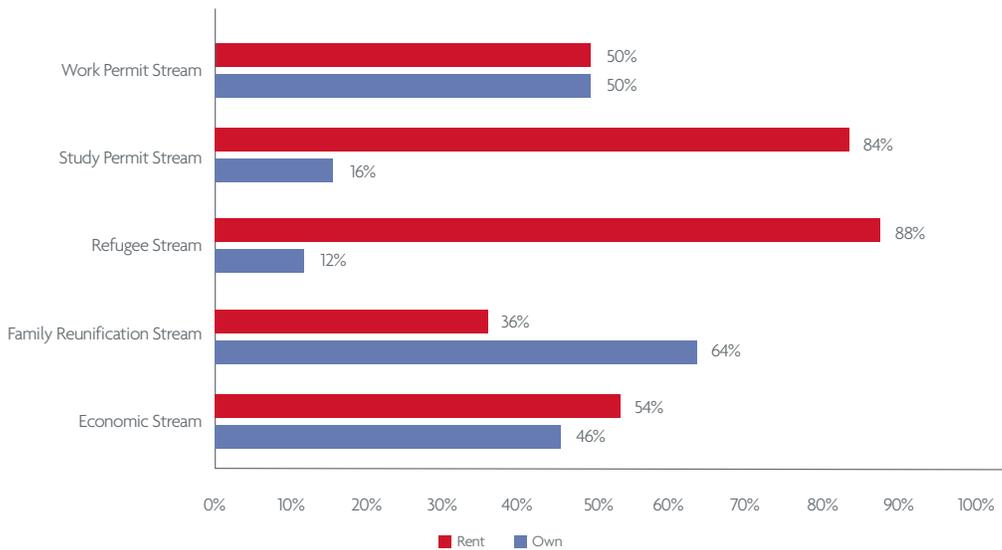
# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

Figure 53: Home Ownership, by Place of Residence



When examining participants by immigration streams, we found that very few respondents that arrived as a refugee or with a temporary resident permit owned a home (see Figure 54).

Figure 54: Home Ownership, by Immigration Stream



## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

Findings show that home ownership is attainable, even for those in the lower-income bracket (see Table 29). The results also suggest that the majority of immigrants with a household income of \$100,000 or more have purchased their homes.

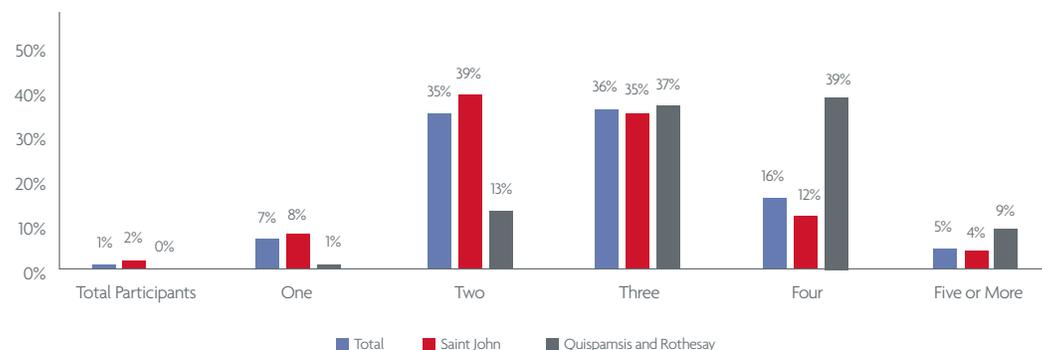
Table 29: Home Ownership, by Household Income

Home Ownership	<\$20k	\$20-\$40k	\$40-\$60k	\$60-\$80k	\$80-\$100k	\$100-\$150k	>\$150k	Total
Yes	28%	31%	41%	56%	46%	76%	77%	38%
No	72%	69%	59%	44%	54%	24%	23%	62%
Total								
Respondents	114	113	79	50	28	29	22	547

The number of bedrooms per home varied for participants, ranging from a bachelor/studio to 5+ bedrooms (see Figure 55).<sup>75</sup> Very few respondents reportedly lived in a one-bedroom (7%) or bachelor/studio (1%) homes. The majority of respondents lived in two- or three-bedroom homes (190, 35% and 194, 36%, respectively). Sixteen percent of respondents lived in a four-bedroom home, and 5% lived in a five+ bedroom home.

Eighty-five percent of respondents living in Quispamsis or Rothesay lived in homes that had 3-bedrooms or more. Whereas the majority of respondents living in Saint John lived in a 2- or 3-bedroom home (74%). This is likely due to the larger student population that lives in Saint John (99%) compared to Quispamsis and Rothesay (1%; see Table 16 on page 21).

Figure 55: Number of Bedrooms per Home, by Place of Residence



<sup>75</sup> Q49. How many bedrooms are in your home? (n=542)

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

When comparing home ownership to the number of bedrooms in the home, we found that owning a 2-bedroom home or less was unpopular, and the majority of respondents who owned homes had a 3- or 4-bedroom home (see Table 30).

Table 30: Home Ownership, by Number of Bedrooms per Household

Home Ownership	Bachelor / Studio	1	2	3	4	5+	Total Respondents
Yes	0%	3%	9%	56%	72%	63%	38%
No	100%	97%	91%	44%	28%	37%	62%
Total							
Respondents	8	38	190	194	85	27	542

Rothesay (see Table 31).<sup>76</sup> To better understand the experience of recently arrived participants, we examined those who came to Greater Saint John in the last four years, and we found that the search time was slightly lower, with about 60% of respondents who arrived in the last two years were able to find their current home within a month.

Table 31: Length of Time to Find Current Home, by Year of Arrival to Greater Saint John (2016-2019)

Find Current Home	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total Respondents
Less than 1 week	7%	18%	19%	21%	15%
Less than 1 month	37%	31%	40%	38%	31%
1-3 months	37%	27%	25%	36%	32%
4-6 months	7%	10%	10%	4%	9%
7-12 months	5%	5%	5%	1%	6%
13+ months	8%	10%	1%	1%	7%
Total Respondents	60	62	116	149	533

### HOUSING TYPE & AGE OF HOME

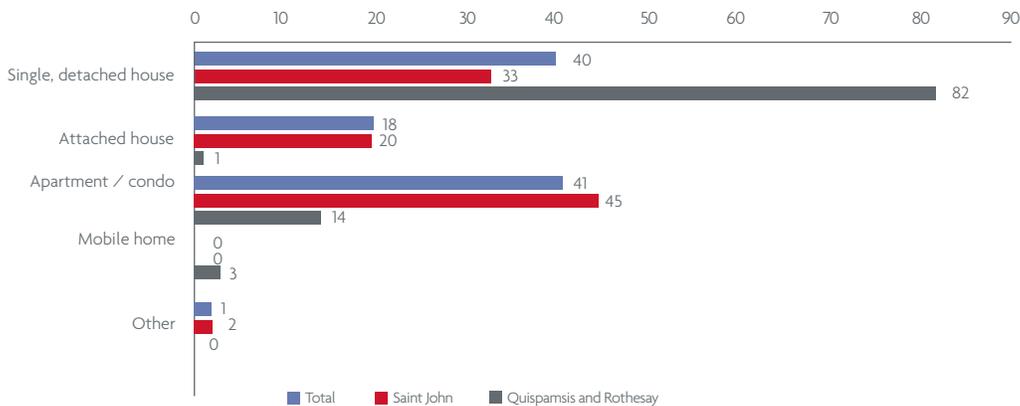
The majority of respondents either live in a single, detached home (40%) or an apartment/condo (41%) (see Figure 56).<sup>77</sup> Respondents living in Quispamsis and Rothesay primarily live in a single, detached house (82%). In Saint John, most respondents live in apartments/condos (45%), followed closely by dwellings in single, detached homes (33%), and attached homes (20%).

<sup>76</sup> Q54. How long did it take you to find your (current) home? (n=533)

<sup>77</sup> Q51. What is your housing type? (n=537)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

Figure 56: Housing Type, by Place of Residence



Respondents tended to live in homes that were 50-years-old or less (75%), especially participants living in Quispamsis and Rothesay. Most of the older homes (i.e., 50+ years) respondents lived in were located in Saint John (96%).<sup>78</sup>

## HOUSING JOURNEY

When asked about their housing journey within Greater Saint John, 79% of respondents reported they have only lived in the City of Saint John (see Table 32).<sup>78</sup> There is roughly an equal number of people who have lived in the City of Saint John and have since moved to Quispamsis or Rothesay (6%) or vice versa (7%). Seven percent of respondents have never lived in Saint John and have only lived in the outlying communities of the City.

Table 32: Housing Journey within Greater Saint John

Which statement best describes your housing journey in the Greater Saint John area?	Total Respondents
I have only lived in the City of Saint John	79%
I have never lived in Saint John, and have only lived in the outlying communities	7%
I currently live in the City of Saint John, but used to live in the outlying communities (e.g., Quispamsis, Rothesay, Grand Bay, Kingston Peninsula, etc.)	7%
I used to live in the City of Saint John, but have since moved to the outlying communities (e.g., Quispamsis, Rothesay, Grand Bay, Kingston Peninsula, etc.)	6%
Total Respondents	533

<sup>78</sup> Q52. How old is the building of your home (in years)? (n=543)

<sup>79</sup> Q56. Which statement best describes your housing journey in the Greater Saint John area? (n=538)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

## HOUSING SATISFACTION

Housing has been identified by participants as a major challenge to effectively settle and integrate into Greater Saint John. To examine this concern, we asked participants whether their current accommodation satisfies their needs and meets their expectations.<sup>80</sup> To better understand the possible reasons behind participants' responses, we examined respondents' housing satisfaction by home ownership, place of residence, and the number of bedrooms per household.

Overall, 73% of respondents reported their housing fit their needs; with more home owners satisfied with their housing situation than renters (see Table 33).

Table 33: Housing Fits my Needs, by Housing ownership

Housing Situation	Own	Rent	Live in a home owned or rented by someone else	Total Respondents
Fits my needs / Meets my expectation	88%	62%	78%	73%
Does not fit my needs / Does not meet my expectation	12%	38%	22%	27%
Total Respondents	202	301	32	535

When examining home ownership and satisfaction by place of residence, we found that respondents owning a home in Quispamsis reported the highest proportion of satisfaction, especially compared to renters in Quispamsis (see Table 34). In contrast, proportionately more Saint John respondents reported housing satisfaction if they were renters (43%) compared to home owners (27%).

Table 34: Home Ownership and Housing Situation, by Place of Residence

Housing Ownership & Housing Situation	Saint John	Quispamsis	Rothesay
<b>Owners</b>			
Fits my needs / Meets my expectation	27%	83%	56%
Does not fit my needs / Does not meet my expectation	5%	0%	12%
<b>Non-owners</b>			
Fits my needs / Meets my expectation	43%	13%	26%
Does not fit my needs / Does not meet my expectation	26%	5%	6%
Total Respondents	461	40	34

<sup>80</sup> Q53. My housing situation... (n=535)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

When examining home satisfaction with the number of bedrooms, we found that more home owners were satisfied with their housing when their housing had 3 (52%) or 4 (31%) bedrooms and most renters were satisfied when their housing included 2 bedrooms (Table 35).

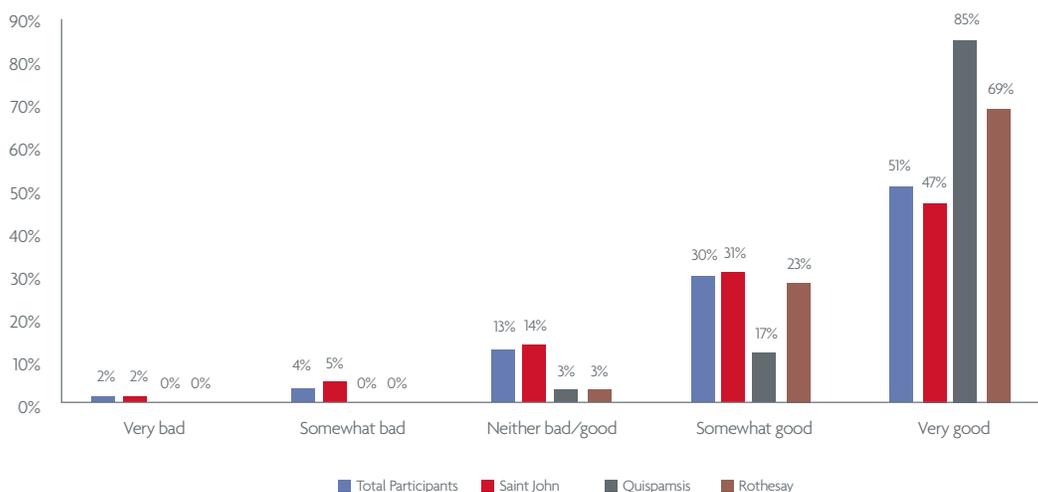
Table 35: Home Ownership, by Satisfaction, by Number of Bedrooms per Household

Housing Ownership & Housing Situation	Number of Bedrooms						Total Respondents
	Bachelor / Studio	1	2	3	4	5+	
<b>Owners</b>							
Fits my needs / Meets my expectation	0%	0%	8%	52%	31%	9%	176
Does not fit my needs / Does not meet my expectation	0%	4%	16%	56%	16%	8%	25
<b>Non-owners</b>							
Fits my needs / Meets my expectation	2%	9%	53%	25%	7%	3%	211
Does not fit my needs / Does not meet my expectation	2%	14%	47%	26%	7%	2%	121

## NEIGHBOURHOOD RATING

When asked to rate the quality of their neighbourhood, 51% of respondents rated it as 'very good' (see Figure 59).<sup>81</sup> Proportionately more Quispamsis and Rothesay respondents rated their neighbourhoods 'very good' than Saint John respondents.

Figure 59: Neighbourhood Rating, by Place of Residence



<sup>81</sup> Q55. How would you rate your neighbourhood? (n=523)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: SUITABLE HOUSING / ACCOMMODATIONS

## AFFORDABILITY OF ACCOMMODATIONS

When rating the affordability of accommodations and related expenses in Greater Saint John from 1 (Not at all affordable) to 5 (Extremely affordable), respondents rated housing favourably (average rating 3.07 out of 5), with 29% of respondents stating housing is very/extremely affordable (see Table 36).<sup>82</sup> The next most favourable ratings were for water and energy rates, with roughly 25% rating them as very/extremely affordable.

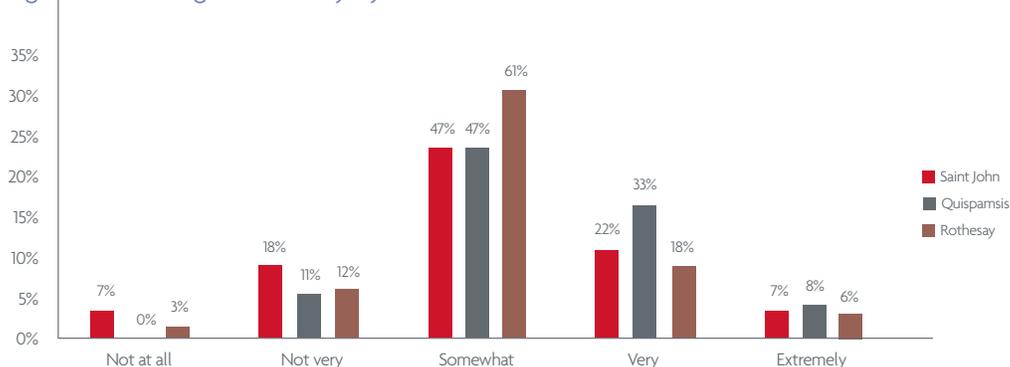
Table 36: Affordability of Accommodation Related Expenses

Affordability	Housing	Water rates	Energy rates	Property tax
Not at all	6%	14%	9%	21%
Not very	17%	15%	23%	27%
Somewhat	48%	44%	45%	31%
Very	22%	19%	16%	15%
Extremely	7%	9%	7%	7%
Total Respondents	501	386	476	376
Average Rating*	3.07	2.94	2.90	2.60

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=Not at all affordable to 5=Extremely affordable), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses

When examining responses regarding the affordability of housing, the rating 'not at all' and 'not very affordable' for housing was proportionately higher for houses in Saint John (25%) compared to Quispamsis and Rothesay (see Figure 60). These results should be interpreted with caution, as the perception of affordability is partially dependent on one's annual household income, and survey results showed that proportionately more Quispamsis respondents reported higher annual household incomes than Rothesay respondents, followed by Saint John respondents (see Table 5 on page 11).

Figure 60: Housing Affordability, by Place of Residence



<sup>82</sup> Q59. Please rate how affordable you consider each of the following costs in your area. (n=varies)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: LANGUAGE FLUENCY

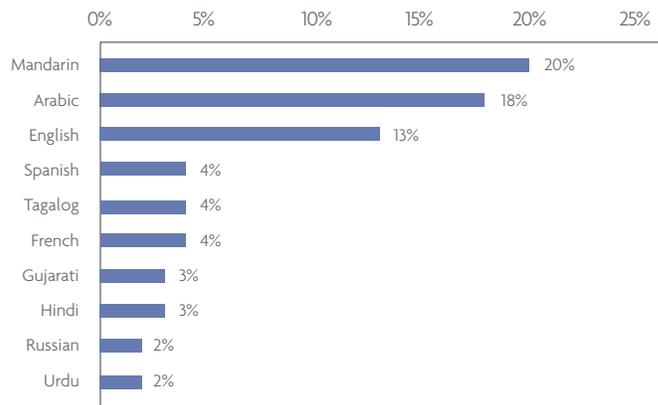
Another major challenge identified by participants is language fluency. While the majority of respondents reported they were conversational in English or French, for those who have low language fluency, improving their speaking in English or French can significantly improve an immigrant's experience as they try to settle and integrate in Saint John.

There are a large number of language learning services offered for newcomers; with more services available for English learning than French. In this section, we examine the variety of languages spoken by participants, as well as language services provided, rating of language services, and language learning improvements.

## MOTHER TONGUE

Participants reported 41 different first languages.<sup>83</sup> Figure 61 provides the top 10 mother tongues of immigrants who participated in this survey, with more than half of the respondents reporting their mother tongue is either Mandarin, Arabic, or English.

Figure 61: Top 10 First Languages



<sup>83</sup> Q1. What is your first language? (n=735)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: LANGUAGE FLUENCY

## LANGUAGE SERVICE PROVIDERS IN GREATER SAINT JOHN (Q27)

There are many organizations in Greater Saint John that offer language training. Respondents reported that the most commonly used language service provider was the YMCA Newcomer Connections (77%), followed by the Saint John Newcomers Centre (28%) and our local public libraries (21%; see Table 37).<sup>84</sup> The YMCA and Saint John Newcomers Centre are likely popular because they offer free services that are mainly targeted to immigrants.

Table 37: Service Provider for English / French Skills

Service Provider used to Improve English / French Skills (check all that apply)	% of Respondents
YMCA Newcomer Connections	77%
Saint John Newcomers Centre	28%
Public libraries	21%
PRUDE Inc.	15%
Saint John College / University of New Brunswick	14%
New Brunswick Community College	7%
College communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick with NBCC	4%
Anglophone School District	4%
Francophone School District	1%
Association Regionale de la Communauté francophone de Saint-Jean Inc (ARCf)	1%
Crescent Valley Resource Centre	1%
Total Responses	370
Total Respondents	213 (100%)

## RATINGS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM / TRAINING

To better understand the effectiveness of each service, we asked participants to rate how well their English improved after taking a specific English language program or training (see Table 38).<sup>85</sup> Ratings were placed on a scale from 1 (My English did not improve) to 5 (My English improved a lot). The service with the greatest average rating was employment specific classes (average rating 3.77 out of 5), with 32% reporting their English improved a lot. The service with the lowest average rating was conversation groups at 3.33 out of 5, with 27% of respondents reporting their English improved a lot (see Table 38).

<sup>84</sup> Q27. Which local service provider did you use to try to improve your English/French skill? (check all that apply) (n=213; total responses=370)

<sup>85</sup> Q26. Please rate how much each of the following language program/training helped improve your English. (n=varies)

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: LANGUAGE FLUENCY

Table 38: Ratings of English Language Learning Programs

Language Program / Training Rating	Employment Specific Classes	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC)	Pre-University English Course	Other language classes	Conversation Groups
My English did not improve	4%	4%	10%	6%	5%
My English improved a little	14%	17%	17%	19%	27%
My English improved somewhat	16%	23%	15%	25%	25%
My English improved quite a bit	30%	20%	19%	19%	16%
My English improved a lot	35%	36%	38%	32%	27%
Total Respondents	91	186	52	102	137
Average rating*	3.77	3.67	3.60	3.53	3.33

\*Average rating was gathered by providing weights to each response (e.g., 1=My English did not improve to 5=My English improved a lot), summing all ratings and dividing by the total number of responses.

### IMPROVEMENT OF LANGUAGE FLUENCY SINCE ARRIVING IN CANADA

Language fluency is very helpful upon arriving in Canada because it allows immigrants to search and navigate the services they need when they first settle in Greater Saint John. This can be challenging for people who have low levels of English fluency, and more difficult for those who are only able to speak French as the availability of information in French is limited in Greater Saint John in comparison to English.

Upon arrival to Canada, 84% of respondents responded they were able to have a conversation in English, with more than half stating they could speak English in a professional capacity (51%; see Table 39).<sup>86</sup> In contrast, 65% of respondents responded they could speak no French upon arrival to Canada, and 6% of respondents reported they could speak French in a professional capacity.

When comparing language fluency upon arrival to Canada to the present,<sup>87</sup> the percentage of immigrants who are currently conversational or better in English increased 9%, from 84% to 93%. In contrast, participants' French fluency level of conversational or better had only increased 3%, from 12% to 16%.

<sup>86</sup> Q15. Rate your fluency in Canada's official languages when you first arrived to Canada. (n=663, 292)

<sup>87</sup> Q24. Rate your current fluency in Canada's official languages (n=595, 266)

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: LANGUAGE FLUENCY

Table 39: English Fluency and French Fluency Upon Arrival to Canada and Current Fluency

English Fluency	Upon Arrival to Canada	Current Fluency	French Fluency	Upon Arrival to Canada	Current Fluency
I spoke no English	4%	1%	I spoke no French	65%	59%
I spoke a few English words	12%	7%	I spoke a few French words	22%	26%
I could have a conversation in English	15%	15%	I could have a conversation in French	5%	7%
I had basic fluency in English	18%	17%	I had basic fluency in French	1%	2%
I could work professionally in English	51%	61%	I could work professionally in French	6%	7%
Total Respondents	663	595	Total Respondents	292	266

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The final essential factor identified is diversity, equity, and inclusion for immigrants. Immigrants have chosen to leave their home country for a better life in Greater Saint John, both for themselves and their family. To help ensure that immigrants reach their full potential and maximize their life satisfaction, maintaining a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion is imperative.

**Diversity** refers to the differences and wide ranges that may be found in important characteristics of immigrants, including immigration stream of entry, age, gender, ethnic background, religion/belief system, socioeconomic status, language fluency, culture, work experience, and many more.

**Equity** acknowledges the disproportionate society we currently live in, including racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Equity attempts to correct this imbalance by providing fairness and justice for resources and opportunities, such as new employment opportunities, access to health care, access to information, and participation in committees, to name a few.

Finally, **inclusion** refers to the practice of supporting diversity and equity, and creating and maintaining a welcoming and safe space for the diversity that exists among our immigrant population. An inclusive environment allows people to fully be themselves without fear of backlash or exclusion, due to their differences or others. When in a truly inclusive space, a person builds a sense of belonging, where they feel unique, respected, and valued.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion underly and impact nearly all facets of life for the entire community, not just immigrants. The improvement of diversity, equity, and inclusion requires systemic change and a new perspective of how we view solutions and future actions. Diversity, equity, and inclusion require us to have a broad perspective of how our actions will have differential impacts on our diverse community members. Next, we will share results relevant to equity and inclusion.

## **DIVERSITY (Differences and Variety)**

As we have shown under the section “Who Participated in the Survey?,” results show immigrants in Greater Saint John represent great diversity on a variety of factors, such as:

- a wide age range;
- arrived in Canada using various streams of entry;
- from 98 different countries, across 6 continents;
- speak 41 different languages; and
- have a wide range of educational training, work experience, and skillsets.

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

## EQUITY (Fairness and Justice)

In this section, we discuss results relevant to understanding how equitable Greater Saint John is for immigrants, including access to a family doctor, ability to communicate with a healthcare professional, ability to practice your religion, and employment. Overall, results in this section provide baseline data, in efforts to examine possible areas of improvement and where further research will be required.

### ACCESS TO A FAMILY DOCTOR

Access to a family doctor is foundational to receiving appropriate and consistent health care. We found that 54% of respondents had a family doctor (see Table 40).<sup>88</sup> To better understand if having a family doctor was consistent across groups, we compared this response to immigration stream, ethnicity, age, place of residence, and annual household income. Results in the aforementioned categories highlight the differential access to a family doctor.

With respect to the immigration stream of entry to Canada, a higher proportion of respondents who came to Canada via the family reunification (76%), refugee (68%), or work permit stream (63%) reported they have a family doctor. Respondents who entered Canada via a study permit (21%) had the lowest proportion with a family doctor, well below the sample average of 54% (see Table 40).

Table 40: Family Doctor, by Immigration Stream

Family Doctor	Economic	Family Reunification	Refugee	Study Permit	Work Permit	Total Respondents
Yes	59%	76%	68%	21%	63%	54%
No	41%	24%	32%	79%	37%	46%
Total respondents	259	51	57	110	27	504

Regarding age, results show that as age increased, so do the proportion indicating they have a family doctor; thus, younger participants tend not to report having a family doctor (see Table 41). These results correspond to participants who entered Canada via a study permit, as most who are studying internationally are within the 19 to 34 years age range.

<sup>88</sup> Q61. Do you have a family doctor? (n=524)

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Table 41: Family Doctor, by Age

Family Doctor	19-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 or older	Total Respondents
Yes	32%	41%	56%	68%	93%	100%	54%
No	68%	59%	44%	32%	7%	0%	46%
Total respondents	44	143	193	116	15	9	520

When examining ethnicity, we found the highest proportion with a family doctor were among White (74%) and Arab (67%) respondents, and the ethnic group with the lowest proportion with a family doctor were Black (37%), Latin American (46%), and Asian (47%) respondents (see Table 42)

Table 42: Family Doctor, by Ethnicity

Family Doctor	White	Black	Asian	Latin American	Arab	Total Respondents
Yes	74%	37%	47%	46%	67%	54%
No	26%	63%	53%	54%	33%	46%
Total respondents	81	43	257	24	78	483

When comparing place of residence, we found respondents living in Quispamsis reported the highest proportion with a family doctor (90%), followed by respondents living in Rothesay (76%), and Saint John (49%).

Table 43: Family Doctor, by Place of Residence

Family Doctor	Saint John	Quispamsis	Rothesay	Total Respondents
Yes	49%	90%	76%	54%
No	51%	10%	24%	46%
Total respondents	451	39	34	524

Finally, we examined annual household income and found a positive trend with household income and the likelihood of having a family doctor; that is, as household income increased, so did the proportion reporting they had a family doctor (see Table 44). Thus, showing that those in a lower socioeconomic status were less likely to have a family doctor

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Table 44: Family Doctor, by Annual Household Income

Annual household income	Yes, I have a family doctor	No, I do not have a family doctor	Total Respondents
Less than \$20k	38%	62%	108
\$20,000-\$39,999	48%	52%	109
\$40,000-\$59,999	63%	37%	79
\$60,000 to \$79,999	71%	29%	45
\$80,000 to \$99,999	77%	23%	26
\$100,000 to \$149,999	100%	0%	28
\$150,000 or more	77%	23%	22
Total respondents	58%	42%	417

### ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL (IN THE LAST 2 YEARS)

Communicating with a health care professional is crucial for getting the proper service and care. We asked participants if they had difficulty communicating with a health care professional, and of the 414 participants who have communicated with a health care professional, 23% reported communication difficulties.<sup>88</sup> We examined further, if difficulty in communication differed among immigration streams, ethnicity, age, and gender.

Figure 62: Difficulty Communicating with a Health Care Professional in the Last 2 Years Due to Language Barrier

When examining communication difficulty by immigration stream, we found that respondents who entered Canada through the refugee stream reported the highest proportion of difficulty at 34%, which is 11% greater than the overall average (see Table 45).

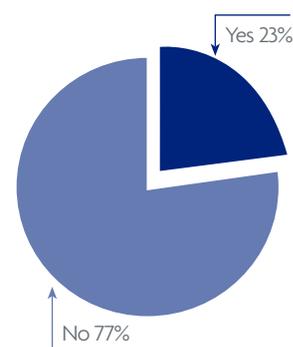


Table 45: Communication Difficulty, by Immigration Stream

Communication Difficulty	Economic	Family Reunification	Refugee	Study Permit	Work Permit	Total Respondents
Yes	27%	14%	34%	13%	24%	23%
No	73%	86%	66%	87%	76%	77%
Total respondents	211	44	47	71	25	398

<sup>89</sup> Q62. Have you had difficulty communicating with a health care professional in the last 2 years due to a language barrier? (n=527)

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

With respect to ethnicity, results showed that Asian respondents (30%) reported the greatest proportion of difficulty, followed by Arab respondents (23%; see Table 46).

Table 46: Communication Difficulty, by Ethnicity

Communication Difficulty	White	Black	Asian	Latin American	Arab	Total Respondents
Yes	10%	6%	30%	17%	23%	22%
No	90%	94%	70%	83%	77%	78%
Total respondents	77	33	188	18	70	386

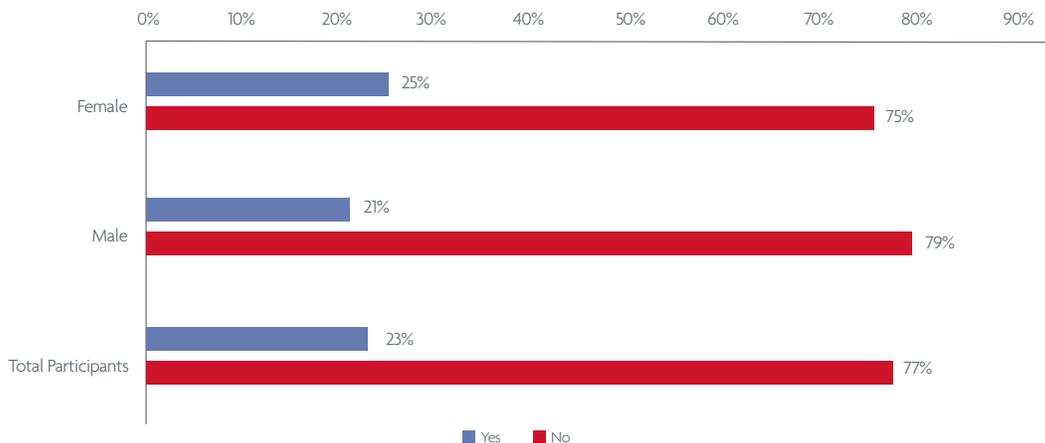
Regarding age, we found respondents aged 45 to 54 years (25%) reported the highest proportion with difficulty communicating with a health care professional (see Table 47).

Table 47: Communication Difficulty, by Age

Communication Difficulty	19-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 or older	Total Respondents
Yes	14%	23%	20%	35%	7%	0%	23%
No	86%	77%	80%	65%	93%	100%	77%
Total respondents	28	103	159	96	15	9	410

Results showed that slightly more females (25%) reported difficulty communicating with a health care professional than males (21%; see Figure 63).

Figure 63: Communication Difficulty, by Gender



# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

## ABILITY TO PRACTICE YOUR RELIGION

We asked participants whether they had difficulty practicing their religion in Greater Saint John (see Figure 64).<sup>90</sup> Of the respondents who practiced their religion, 21% stated they found it somewhat or very difficult, and 36% stated they did not have a regular place of worship.<sup>91</sup>

Figure 64: Ability to Practice Your Religion

When examining the ability to practice one's religion by immigration stream, we found participants who entered Canada via the economic, family reunification, or study permit stream, reported having the most difficulty practicing their religion (see Table 48). The group that reported the most ease of practicing their religion were respondents who entered Canada through the refugee stream.

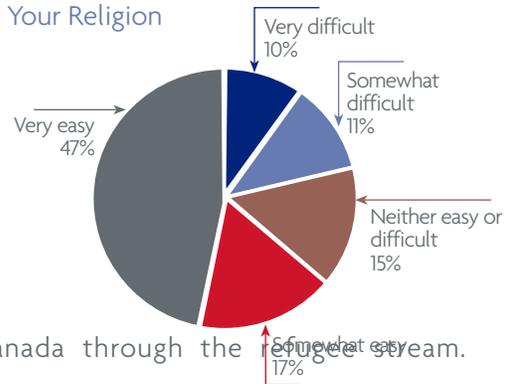


Table 48: Ease of Practicing Your Religion, by Immigration Stream

Ease of Practicing Your Religion	Economic	Family Reunification	Refugee	Study Permit	Work Permit	Total Respondents
Very difficult	13%	3%	6%	13%	7%	10%
Somewhat difficult	12%	19%	0%	14%	7%	11%
Neither easy or hard	15%	9%	10%	19%	13%	15%
Somewhat easy	13%	22%	14%	19%	20%	16%
Very easy	46%	47%	70%	35%	53%	48%
Total Respondents	142	32	50	72	15	311

with respect to ethnicity, Asian respondents reported the most difficulty in practicing their religion, followed by White respondents, and Arab respondents (see Table 49). Black respondents reported the least difficulty to practice their religion.

<sup>90</sup> Q71. Is it easy/difficult to practice your religion in Greater Saint John? (n=327)

<sup>91</sup> Q70. Do you have a regular place of worship in Greater Saint John? (n=362)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

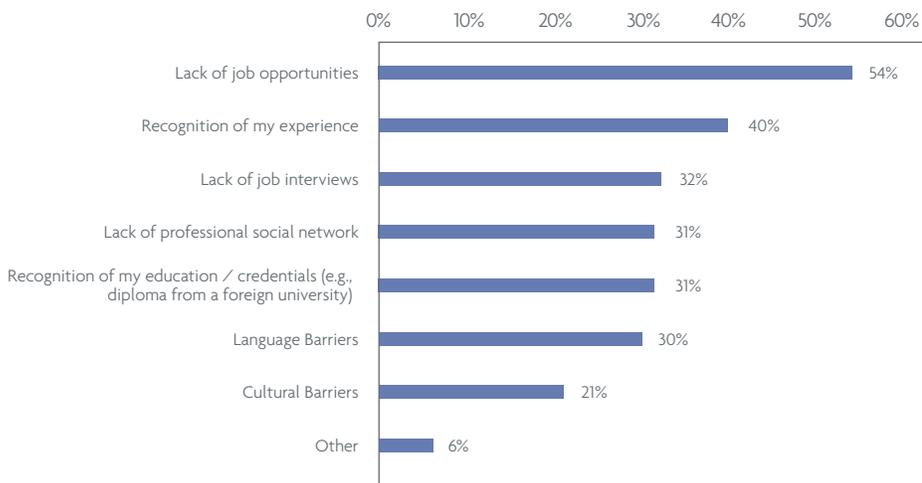
Table 49: Ease of Practicing Your Religion, by Ethnicity

Ease of Practicing Your Religion	White	Black	Asian	Latin American	Arab	Total Respondents
Very difficult	6%	3%	17%	0%	4%	10%
Somewhat difficult	14%	0%	13%	14%	12%	11%
Neither easy or hard	14%	3%	21%	7%	18%	16%
Somewhat easy	17%	16%	12%	14%	26%	16%
Very easy	49%	79%	38%	64%	40%	46%
Total Respondents	35	38	138	14	73	298

## EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

There are several major challenges of attaining a job for many immigrants, including lack of job opportunities (54%), recognition of experience (40%), lack of job interviews (32%), professional social networks (31%), credential/education recognition (31%), and language barriers (30%; see Figure 65).<sup>92</sup> These challenges are key drivers towards employment success for the majority of local immigrants.

Figure 65: Biggest Challenge(s) when trying to attain a job in Saint John (check all that apply).



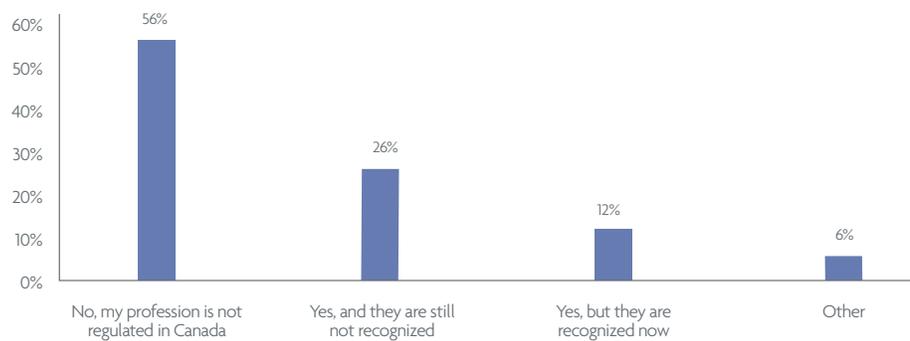
<sup>92</sup> Q38. What is/was your biggest challenge(s) when trying to attain a job in Saint John? (check all that apply) (n=446; total responses=1098)

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## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The two main factors to help a person find employment are job experience and educational/skills training. For many immigrants, Saint John is the first Canadian city they ever lived in, thus the lack of recognition for their previous job experience and credentials (see Figure 66), places them at a significant disadvantage for attaining employment. These barriers are then compounded with a lack of a social network and language fluency, creating an enormous burden to an immigrant's job search. To help support immigrants and their search for employment, it will be critical to develop resources and services to address the aforementioned major barriers.

Figure 66: Issues Regarding Foreign Credential Recognition



With respect to age, we found that full-time work was most common among respondents aged 25 to 64 years of age (see Table 50). The low full-time employment reported by 19 to 24 year-olds may be partially attributable to the fact that 79% of 19 to 24 year-olds reported they are attending a post-secondary institution (see Table 51). Of those that are unemployed and looking for work, results show that respondents aged 25 to 34 years of age reported the highest proportion (33%), followed closely by 35 to 44 year-olds (22%), 45 to 54 year-olds (21%), and 19 to 24 year-olds (20%).

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Table 50: Working Status, by Age

Work Status	19-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 or older	Total Respondents
I work full-time	11%	47%	50%	46%	50%	8%	44%
I work part-time	51%	12%	16%	17%	25%	0%	18%
I am unemployed and looking for work	20%	33%	22%	21%	15%	0%	24%
I am unemployed and not looking for work	16%	3%	3%	6%	5%	0%	4%
I am a stay-at-home parent	2%	6%	9%	5%	0%	0%	6%
I am retired	0%	0%	0%	4%	5%	92%	3%
Total Respondents	45	156	210	121	20	12	564

Table 51: Student Status, by Age

Student Status	19-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 or older	Total Respondents
Yes, full-time	69%	19%	9%	5%	0%	0%	15%
Yes, part-time	10%	2%	2%	2%	5%	0%	3%
No	21%	78%	89%	94%	95%	100%	82%
Total Respondents	48	162	215	127	21	12	585

## INCLUSION (Safe, Welcoming, and Respectful Environment)

In this section, we discuss results relevant to understanding how inclusive Greater Saint John is for immigrants, including welcoming, discrimination, and safety.

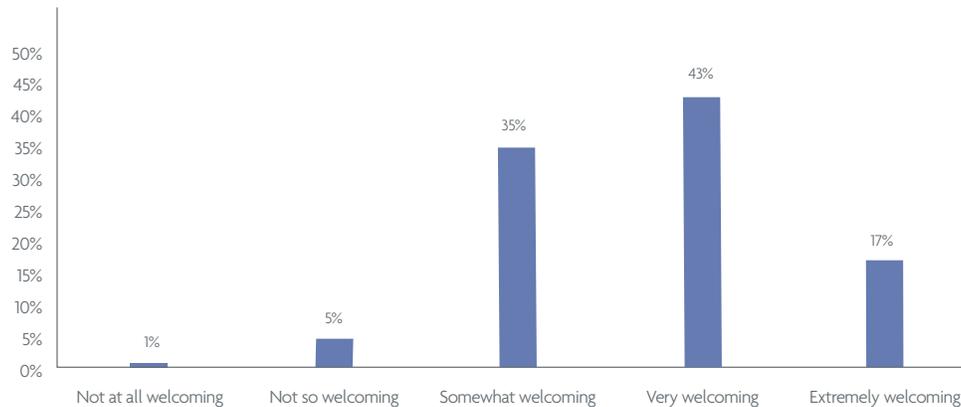
### WELCOMING RATING

When asked how welcoming Saint John is towards immigrants, 60% of respondents stated the people of Greater Saint John are very or extremely welcoming towards immigrants, 35% of respondents stated locals are somewhat welcoming, and less than 10% stated they were not so (or not at all) welcoming (see Figure 67).<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Q76. How welcoming are the people of Greater Saint John towards immigrants? (n=518)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Figure 67: Welcoming Rating



We examined if there are any differences in ratings between ethnicities (see Table 52), and we found that proportionately Black, Arab, and Asian respondents provided the most favourable welcoming ratings, with over 60% in each group reporting the people of Greater Saint John were very or extremely welcoming towards immigrants (see Table 52). Latin American respondents had the highest proportion with the least favourable ratings, with 13% stating the people of Greater Saint John were not so welcoming (13%) or not at all welcoming (4%) towards immigrants. These ethnic differences should be interpreted with some caution due to the differences in sample sizes between each group.

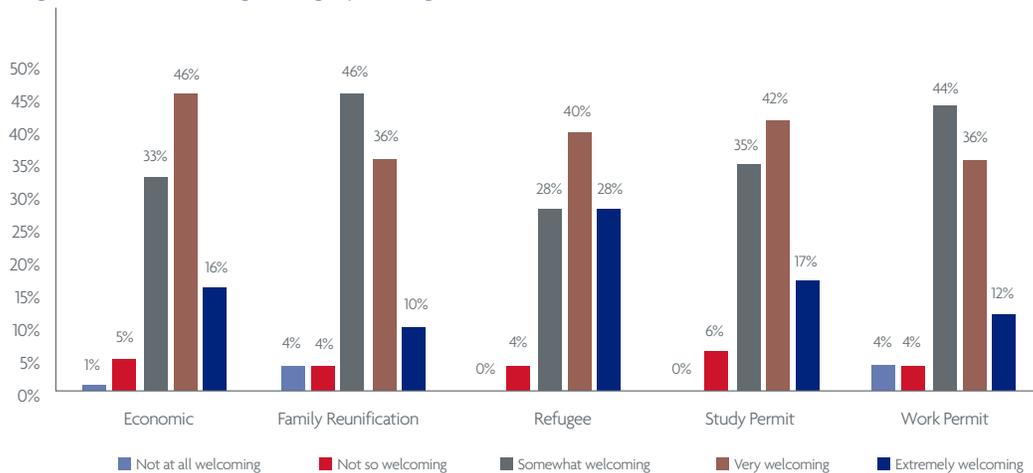
Table 52: Welcoming Rating by, Ethnicity

How welcoming are the people of Greater Saint John towards immigrants?	White	Black	Asian	Latin American	Arab
Not at all welcoming	4%	0%	0%	4%	0%
Not so welcoming	5%	2%	4%	13%	5%
Somewhat welcoming	35%	35%	35%	39%	34%
Very welcoming	37%	40%	45%	30%	48%
Extremely welcoming	19%	23%	15%	13%	13%
Total Respondents	79	43	255	23	77

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

We also examined welcoming ratings by immigration stream and found slightly more favourable ratings from those who entered Canada through the economic and refugee stream, with over 60% in each group reporting that the people of Greater Saint John were very or extremely welcoming towards immigrants (see Figure 68).

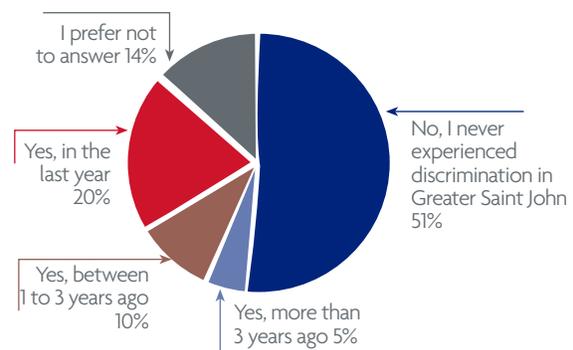
Figure 68: Welcoming Rating, by Immigration Stream



## EXPERIENCE OF DISCRIMINATION IN GREATER SAINT JOHN

To better understand discrimination, we asked participants if they have experienced discrimination in Greater Saint John because you are an immigrant. Results show that 51% of respondents never experienced discrimination in Greater Saint John because they were an immigrant (see Figure 71).<sup>94</sup> Of those that experienced discrimination, the largest proportion was reported within the last year (20%). Ten percent of respondents reported they experienced discrimination 1 to 3 years ago, and 5% reported they experienced discrimination more than 3 years ago. It is important to note that 14% of respondents did not want to answer this question; and it is possible the participant did experience discrimination but did not want to disclose any information regarding the event(s).

Figure 71: Experience of Discrimination Because You are an Immigrant



<sup>94</sup> Q73. Have you experienced discrimination in Greater Saint John because you are an immigrant? If so, when? (n=517)

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## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

When comparing discrimination responses across gender and age, we found discrimination was reported slightly higher among females, and among respondents 19 to 54 years of age within the last year and among respondents 55 years and older three years or more ago (see Table 55).

With respect to ethnicity, we found that ethnic groups that experienced the highest proportion of discrimination in the last year were Latin American (27%), Black (26%), and Arab (25%) respondents. It should be noted as well, that 19% of Black respondents indicated they ‘prefer not to say’, while 9% of Latin American and Arab respondents indicated they ‘prefer not to say’. Thus, it may be possible that proportionately more Black participants have experienced discrimination over any other ethnic group; more research in this area is warranted. Overall, White (58%) and Asian (57%) respondents were the top ethnic groups that reported no experience of discrimination, while Black respondents (63%) had the highest proportion reporting they have experienced discrimination at some point while living in Greater Saint John.

Finally, when comparing responses across the immigration streams, results show that more than half of respondents who arrived in Canada with a temporary permit or through the refugee stream have experienced discrimination in Greater Saint John. Respondents with the highest proportion who experienced discrimination in the last year included those who entered Canada via a work (24%) or study permit (25%). Reports of discrimination in Table 55 may be higher in some groups as a sizeable portion of participants chose not to answer this question.

## ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Table 55: Experience of Discrimination by, Gender, Age, Ethnic Background, and Immigration Stream

	Yes, in the last year	Yes, between 1 and 3 years ago	Yes, more than 3 years ago	No	I prefer not to answer	Total Respondents
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	22%	10%	4%	49%	16%	245
Male	18%	10%	5%	55%	13%	270
<b>Age</b>						
19 to 34	28%	9%	3%	44%	17%	185
35 to 54	27%	10%	3%	44%	16%	143
55 and +	14%	9%	23%	45%	9%	22
<b>Ethnic background</b>						
White	16%	10%	2%	58%	14%	82
Black	26%	16%	2%	37%	19%	43
Asian	18%	7%	5%	57%	14%	251
Latin American	27%	14%	0%	50%	9%	22
Arab	25%	11%	6%	48%	9%	79
I prefer not to say	17%	14%	8%	31%	31%	36
<b>Immigrant stream</b>						
Economic	19%	7%	5%	54%	14%	259
Family	18%	16%	4%	53%	10%	51
Refugee	15%	13%	7%	49%	16%	55
Study Permit	25%	9%	1%	48%	17%	107
Work Permit	24%	12%	12%	44%	8%	25
I prefer not to say	12%	18%	0%	53%	18%	17

We also examined discrimination responses by annual household income to see if there is any correlation between socioeconomic status and experiences of discrimination (see Table 56). We found that respondents with an income of \$80,000 or more were less likely to report having experienced discrimination in the last year, compared to immigrants who reported an annual household income of less than \$80,000.

With respect to the place of residence, the lowest proportion of participants who reported experiences of discrimination in Greater Saint John were respondents living in Rothesay (15%); Rothesay respondents also had the largest proportion who reported they prefer not to say (18%). Saint John respondents were also less likely to report the experience of discrimination in the last year.

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

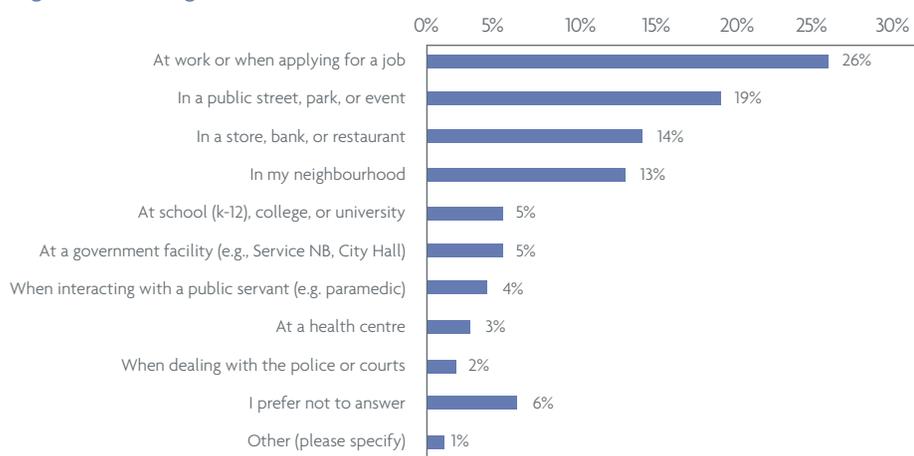
Table 56: Experience of Discrimination in Greater Saint John by, Annual Household Income and Place of Residence

	Yes, in the last year	Yes, between 1 and 3 years ago	Yes, more than 3 years ago	No	I prefer not to answer	Total Respondents
<b>Household Income</b>						
Less than \$19,999	22%	8%	2%	50%	18%	107
\$20,000 to \$39,999	24%	11%	2%	52%	11%	111
\$40,000 to \$59,999	15%	13%	9%	47%	16%	75
\$60,000 to \$79,999	24%	7%	2%	44%	22%	45
\$80,000 to \$99,999	12%	0%	0%	73%	15%	26
\$100,000 to \$149,999	14%	14%	11%	54%	7%	28
\$150,000 and over	18%	18%	9%	55%	0%	22
<b>Place of Residence</b>						
Saint John	21%	9%	5%	50%	14%	445
Quispamsis	13%	13%	3%	59%	13%	39
Rothsay	6%	9%	0%	67%	18%	33

## SETTING WHERE DISCRIMINATION OCCURRED

The top 4 settings where discrimination was experienced by respondents include work or when applying for a job (26%), public street / event (19%), a store / bank / restaurant (14%), and their neighbourhood (13%, see Figure 72).<sup>95</sup> Government organizations were the settings that were reported the least for experiences of discrimination, including interactions with police or in court (1%), health care centre (3%), interacting with a public servant (4%), at a government facility (5%), and in an educational institution (5%).

Figure 72: Setting Where Discrimination Occurred



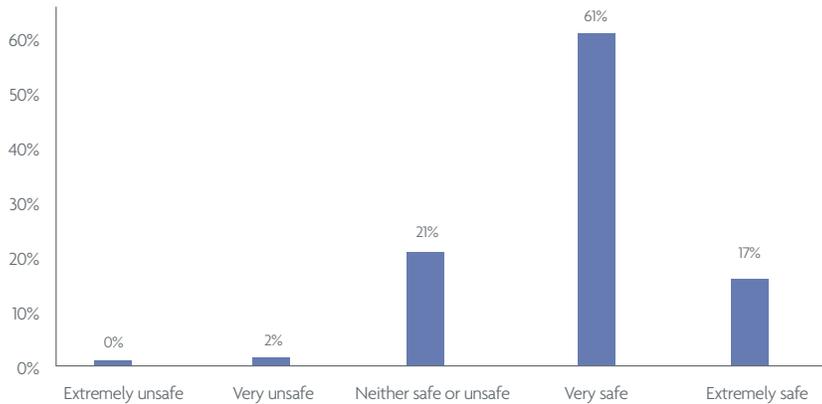
<sup>95</sup> Q74. In what type of setting did the discrimination occur? (check all that apply) (n=171; total responses = 284)

# ESSENTIAL FACTOR: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

## FEELINGS OF SAFETY

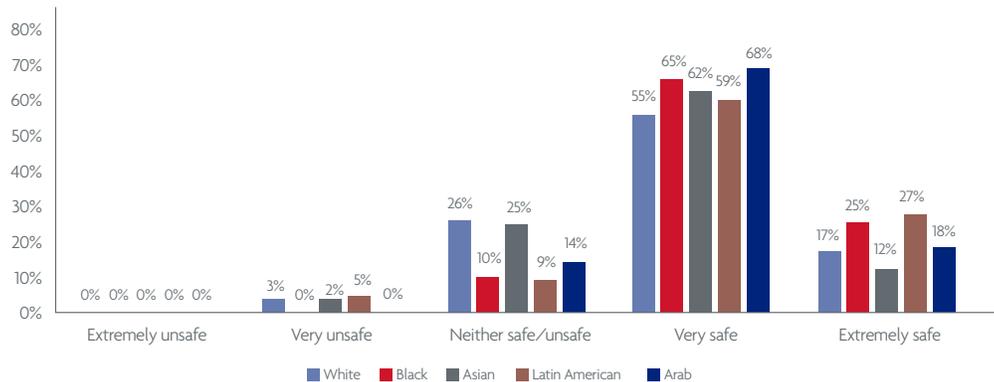
When asked about feelings of safety in the City of Saint John, participants provided an overwhelmingly positive response (see Figure 73). Nearly 80% of respondents reported they feel very/extremely safe in the City of Saint John, and only 2% of respondents thought it was very unsafe and 0% reported it as extremely unsafe.<sup>96</sup> Perceptions were consistent with the overall sample across gender and age groups.

Figure 73: Feelings of Safety in City of Saint John



When comparing safety responses by ethnicity, we found that Black, Latin American, and Arab participants had the greatest tendency to perceive Greater Saint John as a very or extremely safe place (see Figure 74).

Figure 74: Safety, by Ethnicity



<sup>96</sup> Q72. How safe do you feel in the City of Saint John? (n=509)

# CONCLUSION

The City of Saint John, in collaboration with the Saint John Local Immigration Partnership, conducted its first major immigrant survey, open to all immigrants 19 years or older and living in Greater Saint John. To help ensure this survey was relevant and accessible to all immigrants, we pilot tested the questions with a panel of local immigrants and incorporated their feedback into the final version of the survey. In addition, the survey was translated into the five most commonly spoken languages in Greater Saint John, including English, French, Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish.

In our survey, we asked 81 questions related to participant characteristics, settlement, integration, and retention. This survey provides timely, large-scale data on the experiences and perspectives of our local immigrant residents. Notably, we identified five essential factors that may significantly improve immigrant success and retention in Greater Saint John; the essential factors include a sense of belonging and social support, gainful employment, suitable housing / accommodation, language fluency, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. These five essential factors were uncovered based on our survey results, with particular attention regarding the demographic characteristics of our sample and what participants identified as: i) most helpful factors during the first two years of arriving in Greater Saint John; ii) most challenging issues; and iii) suggestions about how to better support newcomers. Because immigrants are a diverse population and their needs are unique to their experience and current context, we deliberately chose not to rank the essential factors as their importance varied from immigrant to immigrant. It is important to note that the community has the ability to improve the conditions of these essential factors, through existing policies, programs, and services on an organizational, municipal, and provincial level.

These results may serve as benchmarks for future surveys, to help measure the progress made from our collective actions as a community. To ensure meaningful change, as we move forward it is important that we work WITH our immigrant population and provide them with a safe space to have their voices heard and be involved in the process of change and improvement. Despite the richness and value our survey report provides, it does have its limitations. First, the survey results were drawn from a sample and we cannot say with absolute certainty that these results accurately represent the entire immigrant population. The results should be interpreted with some caution, as our sample sizes varied between groups and therefore some groups may be under-represented. For example, comparatively, we had a low sample size of temporary foreign workers, Latin American participants, and the sample was skewed towards recently arrived immigrants. Second, despite translating our survey for improved participant comprehension, some groups or individuals may interpret specific words or concepts in the survey differently (e.g., discrimination, affordable), and this could impact the survey findings.

---

## CONCLUSION

Third, our survey data was collected in October and November of 2019, and since then we have had a significant awakening from the Black Lives Matter movement and the COVID-19 global pandemic. There is no doubt that one or both of these events have impacted the lives and perspectives of our immigrant community, and thus this needs to be acknowledged in light of the results we present in this report.

Finally, the results reported in this report provide a snapshot of the experiences and perspectives of local immigrants in late 2019. Our survey unveiled some associations between variables, but no causal inferences can be drawn from our results.

We recommend further research and investigation regarding some of the challenges and barriers that were presented in this report. For example, it would be helpful to find comparative data with other geographic areas to better understand if the challenges and barriers we identified are localized to Greater Saint John, or if it is a wider concern (e.g., regional, provincial).

It would also be helpful to dive further into better understand the experience of specific sub-groups, such as the Francophone population or gender differences. This additional knowledge will help us identify how we may build strategies to help improve the conditions needed to help immigrants prosper and thrive in our region.

Overall, our survey analyses provide a rich overview and new evidence of key challenges and barriers identified by local immigrants, as well as areas where Greater Saint John is doing well for its immigrant population.

Settlement and integration are essential processes for immigrants, and success is dependent on a two-way street model between the immigrant and host community – the immigrant must learn to adapt and embrace their new life in Canada, and the community (e.g., organizations, employers, neighbours) must provide a supportive and inclusive environment for new people and new cultures (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018).<sup>97</sup>

An immigrant's settlement and integration experience significantly impacts their decision on whether or not to stay in their current community. Understanding the importance of settlement and integration for retention will be critical as we use the results from this study to help guide key decisions related to improved immigrant satisfaction and overall well-being.

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<sup>97</sup> Kaushik, V. & Drolet, J. (2018). *Settlement and integration needs of skilled immigrants in Canada*, *Social Sciences*, 7(5), 76.



# IN-DEPTH IMMIGRANT INTERVIEWS ANALYSIS

**Report (2020)**

Reported by

Mikael Hellstrom, PhD

A REPORT BY THE CITY OF SAINT JOHN AND  
THE SAINT JOHN LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Succeed and Stay research project is a collaboration between the City of Saint John, the Urban and Community Studies Institute of the University of New Brunswick Saint John, and the Local Immigration Partnership of Saint John. It aims to enhance Saint John as a welcoming community for newcomers, regardless of where they might come from. As the native-born population has sought economic opportunities elsewhere in Canada, the population has even been declining during some periods recently.

The research project has produced data to support stakeholders in achieving two objectives:

1. Attract more immigrants to the Saint John region.
2. Increase the retention of immigrants who decided to move to Saint John.

This study seeks to respond to both challenges.

The study was conducted by completing 39 semi-structured interviews with immigrants to the Saint John region. Respondents from three categories of relevant demographics had to fulfill these criteria:

**Category 1:** Have settled successfully in the Saint John Census Metropolitan area, i.e. they were economically self-sufficient, socially engaged in their communities and/or had a strong sense of belonging in the region.

**Category 2:** They used to live in the Saint John region, but for some reason, they moved away.

**Category 3:** They used to live in the Saint John region, then they left for some other location, but they have now returned to the Saint John region.

The questions concerned barriers and support systems that the respondents had experienced and asked them for advice on how to make the Saint John region a more welcoming community.

Migrants' movements to and from a region depend a lot on what is commonly known as push and pull factors. Push factors push people away, i.e., they consist of the variables that discourage people from staying in an area. For the region of Saint John, respondents were very much in agreement that employment was the single most important push factor. The consensus was very strong: the one thing that would make them seriously considering moving away was if their careers in the region became imperilled.

Pull factors are the characteristics of a region that makes a person want to stay and the respondents do agree that Saint John has the potential to attract and retain immigrants. The primary pull factors consist of:

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The welcoming and warm local people.
- The region is very family-friendly.
- The low cost of living and low property prices.
- A short commute.
- Being close to nature.

These traits will not be attractive for every potential immigrant, but for those who seek a nice place to raise a family, with proximity to nature, Saint John could be considerably more attractive than a major metropolitan region like Toronto.

Settlement services can help, and respondents primarily used three types of services to settle in the area:

- Language classes (English or French).
- Assistance with job searching. This included resume preparation.
- Volunteering opportunities. In several cases, these opportunities allowed the respondent to build a professional network and become acquainted with various employers, which, in turn, lead to employment later.

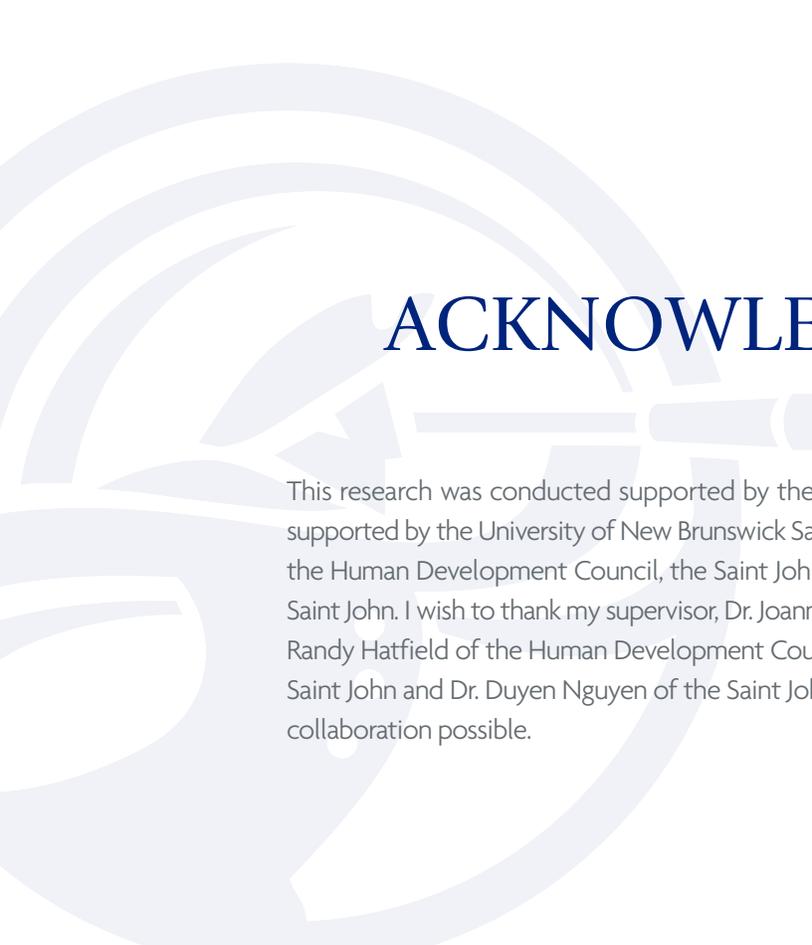
Moreover, the evidence is sufficient to produce a set of actions that can be undertaken over the short and long term.

Actions over the short term include:

- Increase coordination with landlords and employers.
- Developing a comprehensive welcoming package that answers the most commonly asked questions for new arrivals in several languages.
- Diversify the staff of public and private organizations so that newcomers can see themselves reflected at all levels and feel encouraged that they, too, can make a good career here.
- Develop a unified community centre for those ethnic groups that are not big enough to have their own meeting spaces yet.

Actions over the longer term include:

- Improving access to health care and transit.
- Addressing systemic racism and discrimination
- Strengthening the development of community social capital, i.e. increase connections between newcomer communities and the native-born population in both professional and private spheres.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

The Succeed and Stay research project is a collaboration between the City of Saint John, the Urban and Community Studies Institute of the University of New Brunswick Saint John, and the Local Immigration Partnership of Saint John. It aims to enhance Saint John as a welcoming community for newcomers, regardless of where they might come from. As the native-born population has sought economic opportunities elsewhere in Canada, the population has even been declining during some periods recently.

To achieve population growth through immigration, two objectives should ideally be achieved:

- 1: Attract more immigrants to the Saint John region. Active recruitment efforts from stakeholders in the Saint John region could help with this, but such initiatives will be facilitated by more knowledge about the immigrants who have remained in Saint John over the past years and decades.
- 2: Increase the retention of immigrants who decided to move to Saint John. To accomplish this objective, stakeholders in the region need to know more about how the push and pull factors act on immigrants during the initial years after arrival.

This study seeks to respond to both challenges.

The study begins with a background providing important context for why the partners started this research project. This section gives the reader the recent developments regarding population decline in this region, as well as examples from research of how smaller urban centres in other countries or provinces have managed to successfully reverse a negative population trend by turning to the recruitment and retention of immigrants. These examples provide benchmarks for how stakeholders in the Saint John region could, taking the unique local environment into consideration, proceed. After the background section comes presentations of the purpose of the study and its research design. That concludes the introduction.

The next section deals with the results of the study. As this study is based on interviews, it collates the responses provided by respondents to present the bird's eye view of the most common features of the settlement experience. The first part of this section presents the dominant themes emerging from the conversation with the respondents. That includes discussions about key experiences for short- and long-term settlement, including challenges and barriers as well as solutions and support systems that newcomers commonly encounter. That section is followed by an account that summarizes the settlement process as newcomers experience it from the time that they start preparing to move to Saint John, until several years after taking up residence here, based on the collected accounts of the respondents.

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# INTRODUCTION

The last section of the study consists of a discussion of the implications of these results and conclusions, as well as a reference list of further literature for the reader's convenience. The results and conclusions form the basis of a value proposition regarding how stakeholders can present the Saint John region as an attractive place to live in when considering how to calibrate recruitment efforts, and then recommendations for how to focus efforts to improve welcoming and retention for newcomers in the future.

# BACKGROUND

Lack of growth has been an issue for the Saint John area. Native-born Saint Johners often leave the area to seek economic opportunities elsewhere, and Canadians from other provinces seem reluctant to consider Saint John a place where they can build a life for themselves and their families. At the same time, employers in the Saint John region have struggled to find people to fill the open positions that do exist. Hundreds of vacancies in the area remain unfilled.

Saint John is not the only smaller urban area that has been in this situation. All over the post-industrial world, people have left rural areas and smaller population centres to move to major metropolitan areas. This has been noted in both North America, Australia, and Europe (Krahn et al. 2005; Jensen 2006; Donato et al. 2007; Fonseca 2008; Hugo 2008, Carr et al. 2012).

The good news is that the problem can be addressed through immigration. Smaller cities in various countries, including Canada and the USA, have reversed a negative population trend by reaching out to immigrants who are willing to take the available open positions. As they take the available open positions, economic growth increases. They also pay taxes locally, to the province through their incomes and to the municipality when they buy their houses. That, in turn, revitalizes the government revenue stream, enabling stronger funding for services such as schooling and health care (Jensen 2006; Carter et al, 2008). This is what stakeholders in the Saint John area seek to achieve.

However, the successful examples also demonstrate accomplishing this goal requires that the community comes together and coordinates efforts to show newcomers that they are valued in their new home. That includes efforts to facilitate initial settlement by identifying the needs of immigrants on arrival. Beyond initial arrival, stakeholders must implement actions to make sure that the community is welcoming. That includes identifying potential discriminatory practices and potential systemic racism that exclude newcomers and immigrants from key sectors of society, including employment, civil society, and government, to the extent that they exist in the community (Esses et al,2010).

When needs and barriers have been identified, the community needs to develop a series of actions to respond to these in a comprehensive, coordinated fashion. Earnest and substantive work can pave the way for success, attracting more immigrants to the Saint John area, and providing these newcomers with a sense of belonging and economic opportunities that they can take advantage of to enjoy rewarding careers and provide for their families. Some such actions, particularly those that deal with changing institutionalized practices in public or private organizations in the host community, might seem insurmountably difficult to implement, for various reasons, and will hardly be achievable in the short term. Even so, it is important to initiate a process to achieve long-term success.

# ON REFUGEE NEWCOMERS

Only two of the respondents of the present interviews came to Canada as refugees. Even so, many of the newcomers arriving in Saint John since 2015 are refugees. Considering the barriers that could impact their ability to settle successfully in this region is therefore important for the overall success of a population growth strategy.

None of the four most common rationales for coming to Saint John as a non-refugee immigrant (see below) apply to refugees, who are either assigned to come to Saint John by the federal government, in the case of government-assisted refugees or because their sponsors are here, in the case of privately sponsored refugees. Hellstrom's previous research on the experiences of Syrian refugees arriving in New Brunswick could provide important insights here. The group demographics are particularly relevant. As a group, they had a lower education level than most other immigrant communities, many of them lacking the completion of grade 9 elementary schooling, let alone a high school diploma. Moreover, while they did have considerable work-life experience, as many of them started working during their teenage years, they might not have had certification, as the Syrian labour market did not regulate their professions. Further, many of them had low English language skill levels on arrival. Most of the respondents interviewed for this Succeed and Stay study did not encounter anywhere near as significant barriers to settlement. Notably, most of the barriers refugees encountered consisted of government systems operating on the provincial or federal level.

These were:

- Foreign Qualifications Recognition.
- Language Learning.
- Family reunification (Hellstrom,2018).

Foreign Qualifications Recognition includes both recognition of foreign credentials and diplomas, and the recognition of foreign work experience. Many of the refugees had short formal education and started as apprentices in their mid-teens. Thus, a 35-year-old could have 6 years of schooling from Elementary school, and then twenty years of experience from a trade, without a certification from this trade, as Syria did not regulate the profession in question. Refugees with a diploma needed to get those credentials recognized. Accredited professions and educational credentials are regulated on the provincial level. For highly educated refugees working in non-regulated white-collar professions, this barrier is lower than for refugees working in regulated professions. For example, IT specialists could have an easier time accessing the Canadian labour market than nurses, hairdressers, or plumbers, as the latter three occupations require licensing for practice.

---

## ON REFUGEE NEWCOMERS

Some refugees in the trades further underlined that even if their foreign work experience and training were recognized, there were some significant differences between how the profession was practiced in their country of origin and Canada. For example, when working in construction, most residential housing in New Brunswick are built with wood, whereas most houses in Syria were built with cement. Further, the climate made a difference for the work environment as well. The refugees acknowledged these differences and made it clear that they wanted to learn about them as fast as possible so they could get to work and provide for their families.

Language learning was also an issue. Many of the refugees had low levels of English language skills, if any. Refugees with such low language skills find the barrier for labour market entry even higher, particularly if their vocation is a skilled profession, like trades or white-collar jobs, as these professions have more highly specialized professional jargon. The refugees were aware of this dilemma and wanted more intensive English language training than was currently available so they could raise their language skill levels. Further, they wanted more courses in professional English so they could re-enter the workforce faster.

The issue of family reunification relates particularly to the quality of life, stress levels and feeling at home in the new community. While few of the respondents in the study on refugee resettlement in New Brunswick talked about this as an issue, for the ones who did speak of it, it mattered a great deal and was a significant source of stress. A Saint John respondent in that study talked about how harsh the living conditions in Jordan had been. For instance, they had no electricity. Arriving in Canada, when their son saw a TV for the first time, it scared him. However, she was happier without the high material quality of life that Canada offered, if the whole family was together (Hellstrom, 2018). It will likely be more difficult to develop a sense of belonging in a location, when the sense of belonging is so strongly attached to the family group and the family is scattered in a diaspora.

# RESEARCH DESIGN

The research for this project was done using semi-structured, in-depth interviews with 39 respondents. Respondents from three categories of relevant demographics had to fulfill these criteria:

- Category 1: Have settled successfully in the Saint John Census Metropolitan area. This means that the participant had lived in the Saint John region since at least 2017, and had been successful in at least one of the following areas of settlement:
  - Economically self-sufficient. This means having a job or an income from a business that is enough to get by and preferably more economically successful than that.
  - Socially active: involved in their communities. They might be volunteering in various charities, being involved in a Parent-Teacher Association, being engaged in neighbourhood groups or similar.
  - Culturally settled: they have a strong sense of belonging in Saint John, they feel like they are now a Saint Johner.
- Category 2: They used to live in the Saint John region, but for some reason they moved away.
- Category 3: They used to live in the Saint John region, then they left for some other location, but they have now returned to the Saint John region.

Recruitment was done using the network of connections available to the Succeed and Stay research team. Potential recruits were identified using a pre-screening questionnaire when needed. The team used their connections with the local settlement agencies and other key organizations, as well as from volunteers who reported that they wanted to participate in further research through the survey the City of Saint John launched during the Fall of 2019. Using this method, it was challenging to reach potential candidates from categories 2 and 3. Thirty-five respondents are therefore from category 1, two respondents from category 2 and two respondents from category 3. The interviews were conducted between March and August of 2020.

The interviews probed three themes; a) their personal experiences of the settlement process in Saint John, b) their advice for how to make Saint John a more welcoming community, c) their advice to newcomers regarding what they should think about when they come to Saint John. Most interviews took between 30 minutes and one hour to complete. The longest interview took about 1 hour 20 minutes, and the shortest around 20 minutes. The question sheets included in the appendix were used. The interviews were semi-structured. That means that the interviewer asked the respondents the questions on the sheet, but also allowed respondents to guide the conversation depending on how they associated the questions to their own experiences, so no two interviews were identical, as each lived experience is unique.

# RESEARCH DESIGN

During selection, the researcher took care to find a sufficient number of voices from various key demographics to capture a wide variety of perspectives and experiences and be able to investigate whether people from various backgrounds encountered particular barriers or experiences more than others while settling in the Saint John region: These key demographics were:

- Women
- People of colour
- People arriving in Canada from an Asian country of origin
- Immigration stream
- Year of arrival

The demographics of the participants are presented below:

Table 1: Ethnic/racial and gender demographics of respondents

<b>Ethnic/racial origin</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>No.</b>
People of Colour	23	Women	14
Middle Eastern	8	Men	25
East Asian	5		
Latin American	2		
South Asian	4		
Black	4		

Table 2: Respondent entry stream, arrival year and respondent category.

<b>Entry stream</b>	<b>Arrival Year</b>	<b>Respondent category</b>
Economic	16	2015-2017 16
Study	6	Leaver 2
Family	10	2010-2014 11
Work	4	Left and returned 2
Refugee	2	pre-2010 12
		Succeeded and Stayed 35

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## RESEARCH DESIGN

An audio recording was at the respondents' discretion. When respondents declined the audio recording option, the interviewer took notes during the interview, and transcribed those notes immediately afterwards. If they did allow the audio recording, the recording was sent to Rev.com for transcription. The completed transcriptions were entered in NVivo for analysis to spot themes and patterns across all interviews.

The single greatest limitation on this study came from the COVID pandemic and the ensuing required restrictions on social interactions. The actions taken to limit the spread of the virus, including social distancing, and working from home, increased the difficulties involved in recruiting and interviewing respondents for this study. Further, reaching respondents from categories 2 and 3 turned out to be harder than anticipated, and only a small number of people from each of these were recruited. They did, however, provide important commentary that has been added to the evidence when valid and relevant.



# RESULTS

This section covers the results of the interviews. It presents these as an overview of the main themes that emerged from the conversation, to identify the most typical types of experiences that newcomers are likely to encounter when trying to settle in the Saint John region.

# EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

The respondents discussed a range of challenges and barriers to settlement. As labour market entry is key to self-sufficiency, these issues are divided into two categories: challenges and barriers related to labour market entry, and other challenges and barriers. These are the issues that respondents themselves raised during conversations.

## **CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS RELATED TO LABOUR MARKET ENTRY**

Labour market entry is the single most important part of that process in terms of self-sufficiency and retention. This section discusses barriers to job acquisition first, and then moves on to discuss more general challenges to settlement.

Respondents identified a series of barriers to entering the labour market, in this order:

1. Lacking Canadian work experience
2. Lacking a professional network

Each will be dealt with in turn. After that, this section also discusses credentials recognition. While most respondents in this study did not encounter many problems with that, because they work in non-regulated professions, the barrier has been recognized as a primary settlement barrier across Canada for decades, and as the Saint John region's stakeholders want to increase immigration, the discussion about credentials recognition cannot be ignored for the purposes of future recruitment of highly skilled workers.

### **Lacking Canadian work experience**

The research on settlement in Canada, in general, has long tried to bring attention to the issue of how Canadian employers often discriminate against newcomers by demanding Canadian experience for recruitment. This problematic practice means that newcomers see the experiences they have accumulated during their potentially long careers become devalued or entirely ignored by employers, even though many of the skills they might have learned could very well be transferable and valuable, with some adjustment for local needs, to a Canadian context. That would vary by economic sector, of course, but erasing that experience completely and assuming that newcomers are blank slates is a mistake that probably leads employers to miss out on a lot of talent and competence all over Canada.

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Respondents' narratives reveal that they had encountered this attitude in Saint John, as well. One respondent speaks to how newcomers can strategize to accumulate this type of experience: "If you don't have Canadian experience, it is really hard. That's why I volunteer... How can we get experience without an opportunity to work?" (Respondent 33). This respondent, from Western Europe, was somewhat surprised: "I thought that my versatile experience as a business owner and operator actually, would be appreciated... when I was interviewed by New Brunswick employers, they couldn't really capture what my expertise was at the time, because I'm not a... specialist" (Respondent 14). Respondent 35 asserts that the "...private sector, employers, for sure, need to be more open with opportunities for immigrants. They are asking for [Canadian] experience, we don't have Canadian experience, but there are some kind of transferable skills that we can use" (Respondent 35).

These reflections raise an important question. Does the emphasis on Canadian experience for employment mean that employers reject most, or all non-Canadian work experience, or is some foreign experience likely to be considered more acceptable as a proxy for Canadian experience than others? If so, would this be connected to processes of racialization? Intuitively, maybe some would be more likely to consider work experience from the United States or Western Europe more like Canadian experience than, say experience from Kenya or Vietnam? Respondent 14's remark suggests that more research is needed in this field. Efforts to make Saint John a more welcoming community should certainly pay attention to this issue, given how common it is across Canada.

### **Lacking a professional network**

13 of the respondents talked about how important a professional network was to be able to enter the labour market. They described this as something characteristic for the Saint John region and underscored that employers would not consider them to be serious candidates for employment without the proper connections. The culture among Saint John region employers specifically puts immigrants at a disadvantage, they argue.

So many who come to Saint John leave for Moncton to get a job. They ...had to move, because they had no connections in Saint John. We have to face reality – in Saint John, one needs to have contacts or network to get a job. That is not needed in Moncton, you can get interviewed without knowing the employer or the boss, and still get the job. That is much harder in Saint John. So, people who live here have to move to Moncton instead (Respondent 26).

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## **Credentials recognition**

Credentials recognition is not on the top of this list, as most respondents did not work in regulated professions. It still deserves attention, though, because when it matters – i.e. for people with a background in a profession that is regulated in Canada – it matters a great deal. For this respondent, it became a hurdle for the spouse, who used to be a teacher in their country of origin: “She did get a work permit as well but back in [country of origin] she was a teacher of English, so kind of useless here. Even if she wanted to continue doing what she used to, she'll have to go through a lot of certifications and stuff” (Respondent 12).

One of the respondents was a foreign-trained nurse, but managed to get through the credentialing process, not thanks to the official institutions, but rather through personal connections that provided guidance through the system: “I trained as a registered nurse in [foreign country], and then I didn't work for many, many years, and so coming to Canada, I wasn't up to date with my license....I did approach the university, they didn't seem very accommodating. Then I think my husband had a friend that worked as an LPN, and she sort of cued me into and

Respondent 22 had a lot of support from the employer to get through the processing for Canadian licensing:

...Certainly, all the hoops you have to jump through to get a work permit, and especially if you're working in a registered or credentialed profession like psychology or healthcare, on top of that, you have to register with whatever the provincial boards are too. So, the time, trying to figure out the logistics between the timeline the employer wanted and the timeline with....my application practice in the province... There's a lot of logistics involved so anything that would help professionally...I got through it, [thanks to] The employer saying this, 'I need this for the cost of [credentialing]. I need this for immigration' So if there was a way to streamline that process, that would have been less stress at the time (Respondent 22).

When the employer provides support like that, the settlement process arguably becomes easier. Saint John community stakeholders should take this into account.

As if the credentials recognition was not hard enough, it can come as a nasty surprise to newcomers if representatives for the Canadian federal government give migrants incorrect information before the migrant departs from their country of origin, effectively creating false expectations as to how easy entering the job market might get. That is what happened to Respondent 34:

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That was the first hiccup, because unfortunately there is not a lot of guidance when it comes to what you have to do to get your qualifications in order. So, again, the information I was getting back from the Canadian Embassy in [country of origin] wasn't matching the information I was being given here. And I had asked particularly for that because they knew that I was a [profession]. I told them, "... If I want to go there, I want to do the same thing. And they said it will be easier, I could just get my credentials accredited and so on and so on, which wasn't really the case (Respondent 34).

This reflects the constitutional division of labour between federal and provincial levels of government. The federal government ultimately has jurisdiction over who can reside in Canada. Meanwhile, the provincial government has jurisdiction over education and professional licensing. Federal representatives are not obliged to know the rules for every regulated profession in every province. However, migrants asking questions about Canada and embassies and consulates abroad cannot be expected to know about this constitutional order and will naturally assume that a civil servant representing the Canadian federal government will share accurate information. This creates a problem for newcomers, particularly when they arrive, and find that the information they received initially was inaccurate.

## Summary

In summary, the biggest hurdles to accessing the labour market have been lacking Canadian work experience and a lack of professional network. For those newcomers with a background in professions that are regulated in Canada, credentials recognition has also been an issue. These findings are consistent with previous research on other smaller centres. Saint John Community stakeholders should collaborate with employers to make this process as smooth as possible for the newcomers, including providing support for the credential's recognition

## OTHER CHALLENGES

In addition to finding their way to a job, newcomers must manage several other barriers during their settlement process. The most referenced non-labour market-related challenges to the settlement were:

1. Every day micro-barriers
2. Accessing health care
3. Accessing transit
4. Moments of cultural misunderstanding

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Aside from these most common concerns, some other challenges also deserve attention. These challenges are barriers to finding housing, the problem of coming from a large city to a smaller centre and arriving in Saint John without a permanent residence visa in place. While a smaller number of respondents raised these as issues, they are significant for those who do encounter them and are discussed below.

## **Everyday micro-barriers**

Everyday micro-barriers here refer to daily life functions that might be easily overlooked by the native-born population, who are used to how things are working here but might create hurdles for people who are not used to these systems. Some respondents referred to these as the “little things” that made settlement harder as they had to learn a system often without guidance, because locals take these systems for granted and are not aware that introductions might be helpful.

These can be relatively innocuous, like orienting in how groceries can be different in Canada than in other places: “So, all of the products in a grocery store had different labels. So, you have to really read what you’re buying because I tried to buy some cherries in a can. I’m thinking it was cherries” (Respondent 05). Other everyday micro-barriers include difficulties with buying a car, learning about how credit is often needed to access various services and products, or how to handle snow removal or driving under winter conditions: “how do I get rid of all this snow? How do I drive my truck in this environment with this?... I didn’t know about Winter tires or anything like that” (Respondent 16).

Community stakeholders can design information workshops around these issues in collaboration with relatively recent newcomers who can share their experiences around the most common such encounters. This type of information could also be collected and presented as a welcome package on various websites or through social media to help newcomers prepare pre-arrival.

## **Accessing health care**

Respondents often expressed concern regarding accessing health care. They often expressed frustration over waiting times and the difficulties of finding a family doctor:

... there is some inefficiency with the medical system here. The long waiting time, long time to get an appointment with a doctor or if you’re going with an emergency with a crushed toe, you have to wait for three and a half to four hours. I think there is still a lot of scope for improvement in the medical service efficiency (Respondent 6).

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...I have seen a lot of them now as more and more people are coming in it's becoming harder for them to get the family doctor. The fastest way of getting a medical doctor is if someone is pregnant. Then they get a family doctor immediately. But if you're a young family it's very hard for them to get a family doctor. If there is a single person, very, very rarely. So that has been a challenge (Respondent 10).

These respondents specifically compared the health care system of the Saint John region to their countries of origin and the health care system here did not come out in a favourable light:

The other important point is medical service, which was problematic in Saint John, unfortunately. Well, actually medical services are not really good, in general, in Canada, as compared to where I came from....in [country of origin] when you are sick, you can go to the doctor the next day, and you get treated right away so you don't have to wait. In Saint John, the waiting time for me, when I got really sick and I had real problems with my health, was half a year. That was crazy (Respondent 2).

The one thing that I feel is also not as good as the [country of origin], again, not bad, just not as good, is the healthcare availability. I mean, it's available. It's just, I had to go to the emergency room once for a cut, nothing big, but it's like a 12-hour wait and it's just incredibly dull. Similarly, we know that we lucked into getting a personal doctor for our family. We had to get a test for our immigration paper stuff, so we had to go to a doctor and get an X-Ray and stuff. And we just happened to talk to her and she said, "Well, I think I can take you on." So, we kind of went there. (Respondent 20)

These two respondents came from Eastern and Western Europe, respectively. This immigrant from Sub-Saharan Africa even recommends newcomers bring their own medical supplies as part of their settlement preparations: "Like, being truthful to the newcomer ... Like, you're not going to come here and get a doctor here right away. So, bring your medications, bring all that you require" (Respondent 039). Decision-makers in New Brunswick would do well to take this type of critique seriously. If newcomers from countries that are otherwise considered middle-income countries find the health care in a high-income country like Canada lacking, then there is surely a reason to suggest that it would be worthwhile to investigate ways to improve the situation.

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Notably, the respondents did not raise the issue of cultural sensitivity or staff language competence in these conversations. That is a difference compared to interviews with refugees, who found language to be a major barrier to accessing health care services (Hellstrom, 2019), a concern that was also raised by newcomers to Moncton (Fourot and Aung, 2019). Their absence here is therefore interesting. It is possible that this group of respondents, who number among the most successful newcomers to the area, had stronger language skills on arrival than the refugees did.

## **Transit Access**

The third most significant barrier to settlement concerned experienced barriers to accessing prompt transit services. While many felt that transit overall was good or decent, they still had specific points of critique for how it could and should improve. For some, the problem was the bus frequency:

If you live uptown that you can walk. If you live a little bit outside bus schedule by certain schedule, and if you out of that schedule, we have to walk...probably car is needed here, just to simplify, especially if you have kids and you have to drive those kids to lots of activities. So, you probably would need that. Rent the car at the beginning and maybe buy a car (Respondent 05)

For others, it was more a question of how the routes were planned and the efficiency of the system:

Transportation has been good. I have personally used a lot of transportation. Although I had my cars, I was still using public transportation which I enjoyed in this place. There were in terms of efficiency, I'll say that was lagging. Some of the roads could be more efficient... efficiency is what is key which is missing and that is the reason people lack taking the public transportation. Airport, I go so frequently to airport I rarely seen people taking buses because there's only limited number of buses. (Respondent 10).

The overall effect of these traits discouraged the use of transit for many respondents, even when they expressed understanding for the situation, given that the Saint John metropolitan area is comparatively small in terms of population levels by international standards:

I miss public transport, public transport system. I mean, I get why it's not really feasible here, miss the distance and population density. But it is something I do miss (Respondent 20).

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Even so, it remains a barrier, particularly for newcomers who come from areas with stronger public transit infrastructure. Such newcomers might not be used to rely on a car for transportation and may not even have a driver's licence on arrival if the community they came from developed a culture that is more centred on public transit than individual car ownership:

At first when we didn't have a car and we didn't drive back in [country of origin], so I didn't have any driver's license and I couldn't even drive. And this is pretty hard in St. John not to be able to drive. This is not something that we're used to in [country of origin], because in [country of origin] most people I know...don't have the cars, they just ride the buses and public transport and stuff like that. Even in like rural areas, which is not something that you see a lot here (Respondent 12).

A person who is used to widely accessible and efficient transit, to the extent that they did not even need to get a driver's license in their country of origin, will face the added hurdle of having to complete driver's training on top of completing the other work needed to settle in the area. Community stakeholders should take that added source of stress into account. Some of these concerns call into mind how Fourot and Aung remarks concerning how new public facilities and commercial development should take transit connectivity into consideration during development (Fourot and Aung, 2019).

## **Moments of cultural misunderstanding**

The last item on this list of barriers has been collected under the heading of cultural misunderstandings, which here is used to describe moments of dissonance when newcomers and/or native-born Canadians do not understand each other and have different social reflexes concerning what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. Such events can occur in working life as well as in private everyday life, and ultimately are resolved by learning to understand each other and making compromises and accommodations. However, that process takes time, and must be negotiated, and respondents provided several examples of such moments.

The way we deal with labourers here, you have to handle things in different strategy than what we used to back in Middle East ...It will hurt you as a business owner if someone did something in your business. Like let's say someone approached a labourer or a skilled guy in an improper way, shouting, yelling, or mentioning some words ...In my culture, it's very normal to say it.

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In your culture, no, it's an offence. Okay, that's one of the things, the way he deals with the people. You can't push people. Here you can't push people as well, but it depends on the way you push people (Respondent 1).

This respondent explains that workplace culture differs between their country of origin and Canada, and that it will take time for labourers from this region to learn how to behave appropriately in their new country. Likewise, it can be difficult to understand the social codes for communication when coming here from the outside:

People who come from outside are very black and white. If they don't like, they don't like and they say it on the face. Eastern Canada, Atlantic Canada is not like that. They are so polite, so nice, so well-spoken. You will not know what his thoughts are and what he is actually speaking. That is something that you need to learn. Even I had to learn to be polite. And that is very difficult when someone comes in here (Respondent 10).

The respondent is describing that it can be difficult to understand what a native-born speaker means when they are saying things politely. For example, a native-born person might be expressing critique on a completed job, or trying to communicate rejection in some form, but does so in a polite manner, as that is the way of things here. This is about understanding communicative context and subtleties in tone, pitch, and body language of the speaker, which is not always easy to understand for someone who grew up in a different social environment.

For this respondent, the encounter with Canadian culture was intense. They arrived as a student and struggled initially:

The culture shock then hit me so hard and I just couldn't... Sometimes on the bus, I forget myself, the bus would just take me past my bus stop. So, it was pretty much psychological for me. I never thought I could make it. Like I said, somebody like [name] actually, she literally opened up her arms, she gave me all the opportunity to let it out. I go to her office, I cried to her. She helps me. She is one of those persons that I respect a lot ... She's the best support I ever got (Respondent 17).

The respondent thus describes not just how jarring the settlement process can be psychologically, but also the value of support people who can help the newcomer negotiate the new space.

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Respondent 14 also talked about the cultural differences, but, like Respondent 17, discussed how to overcome such frictions, describing an experience of an organized information session that helped a great deal:

You mentioned the cultural aspect. I remember attending an information session where somebody was explaining the do's and the don'ts in a Canadian environment. I'll give you an example. If you are out in a grocery store in my home country and you see a young mother with a young child, it is perfectly acceptable to go over to the child and maybe just put your hand on the child's head and try and build that personal rapport. You'll quickly understand whether the mother agrees or not to that approach. But we were told that in the ...Canadian environment, that is something that you should not do. That's the first example that comes to mind but obviously, it was very interesting and very important for us to know how to behave in Canada (Respondent 14).

This provides an example of how behavioural codes differ between various cultures in ways that native-born people might not always be aware of, as it concerns taken-for-granted everyday interactions. This case also describes an example of how a community stakeholder –one of the settlement agencies – provided a formal setting to support newcomers in how to navigate that new environment.

It might be a good idea to do similar outreach to key native-born demographics, particularly employers, so that they can prepare similarly to negotiate potential cultural misunderstandings through communication so that frictions can be mitigated easier and with potentially fewer conflicts.

## **Accessing Housing**

Accessing housing can be challenging for a newcomer. This section details some of the experiences respondents shared regarding their search for affordable and suitable housing. One of the challenges for respondents consisted of their limited local area knowledge on arrival, particularly if they did not know anyone in the area before arriving, as this respondent explains:

When I first came to Canada, I didn't know anyone...So, you know, having to ask my employer. ... “Who are the good landlords around here?” Not knowing nothing about the neighbourhood, now that was a challenge. So, I did have probably some landlord experiences that were less

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than ideal... then I heard later that landlord .... from the first year, had a reputation for being somewhat of a slum landlord. You don't hear about that complication if you are new in a community, so that's a challenge (Respondent 22):

The orientation difficulties extended beyond just familiarity with various landlords and neighbourhoods. For newcomers interested in purchasing property, either before arrival or shortly afterwards, lack of familiarity with construction codes, materials and such make it harder to evaluate housing quality:

We just on the internet, and talked to a realtor, and bought a house. That was a huge mistake ... That would be my “do not do it like we did it”-advice. I think if we were doing it again, we'd probably rent a place and have a good look around. ... I didn't know about Canadian construction code because, obviously, in [country of origin], everything's built in bricks and mortar, and things are a bit different, and 220 volts instead of... The plumbing's different as well. Coming here, I didn't know any of that stuff. I wouldn't have known what to look for in a house (Respondent 16).

This respondent was from Western Europe, showing that one should not assume that post-industrial countries have the same standards for various everyday functions. Immigrants need to be properly prepared for this. At the same time, it will be difficult to prepare immigrants for these differences if the welcoming infrastructure is unaware of these differences.

## **Coming from a large metropolitan area to a smaller centre**

Many respondents came from large cities, such as major metropolitan areas in Ukraine, India, China, or Nigeria. Some of these cities have more than 10 million inhabitants and are thus larger than any city in Canada. Coming from such a large metropolis to Saint John, a relatively small city even by Canadian standards, can be a great contrast.

Younger adults could find that contrast harder to manage. They are often more interested in the atmosphere and lifestyle that major metropolitan areas can offer. For example, they might look for a more intense nightlife, or a greater diversity of entertainment options.

For people who have spent some years with several hours' long commutes with children in elementary school, Saint John is highly attractive. With a commute of about 30 minutes, parents get more quality time with their families.

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Even so, many of the respondents spoke about how important it was to manage their expectations on arrival, because the size of the region and its climate means that many had to adjust to a new environment:

If you come here believing that it's not going to work out and the weather's too cold or I can't find a job, and I will never be able to find a job. I don't have enough friends here. It's too small a city. Then probably, things will turn out like that. I feel that if you have the mindset to reach out to people and in a positive way and say, "What can I do about this problem that I'm having?" There are people out there to help. You just need to make the effort to reach out to them (Respondent 3).

First of all, they have to do their homework. I have often seen this situation that there is a gap between expectation versus reality. Specifically, people who are coming from developing countries to a developed country. They look for glamour, grandeur, flamboyance, all these kinds of things, which may not be present in Saint John. Saint John has its own charm (Respondent 6)

Personal expectations and managing those. The first expectation I had where I ran into problems was with the school system for the kids. The Canadian system is less intense than the British system that we were used to, and we were disappointed. The kids wanted to go back to [country of origin]. Then, over time, the kids understood that it's a different system, but they can still learn, and they were able to blend. So, managing those expectations – every system will not be the same, and we have to adapt as well, we can't expect everything to be the same (Respondent 26).

I could say, it is successful for my family because I didn't set high expectations.... I never thought I could stay in Saint John, a very small city (Respondent 35).

These reflections show that moving from a larger city to a smaller one can present challenges, but also that these challenges can be overcome, if the newcomer is prepared to have an open mind and manage their expectations while transitioning to their new environments.

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## **Arriving in Saint John Without Permanent Residence Permit**

Some newcomers arrive in Saint John through streams that are not primarily designed for immigration and thus do not have a permanent residence visa on arrival. They hope to use student-, work- or even a tourist visa as a gateway to permanent residence after arriving or enter the country with one of these temporary visas and then decide that they want to stay. Doing so carries both opportunities and risks, depending on circumstances. Several respondents experienced hurdles to settlement because of the difficulties transitioning from temporary to permanent residency permits. Respondent 25 arrived with a temporary work visa, and the paperwork for this was completed by the employing company:

We were supposed to go for permanent residency... the [company] lawyers made a mistake. It was just screw-up after screw-up from them, making a mistake on that. And then, [the federal government] wasn't making it any easier. I got asked to move over here. I didn't ask to move to Canada. They asked me to come here, and then we had nothing but problems. We're permanent residents now, but we had nothing but problems for a long time (Respondent 25):

Respondent 36 arrived as a visitor:

...to visit my wife, and then I decided to apply for my program while in Canada. So, I had a visiting visa, I couldn't work. And my application for some reason took a little bit longer than other applications. It took me two years to get a work permit. So, for two years I was not working. And then after two years, I go out ... looking for a job, I had just completed a Master's degree without any experience in that field. The last time I worked was in 2009 (Respondent 36).

Such a long period since the last employment became an obstacle to finding new employment for this respondent, which should not be surprising – employers will look at the resume and ask why the applicant has that gap in employment status on the CV, and likely be unaware that the gap is there because of government regulations of residency status, through no fault of the applicant.

Another issue of entering the country without a permanent residence permit already in place is that the rules might require the newcomer to leave Canada and then complete the

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permanent residence application from outside the country. Respondents 3 and 9 went through this experience. That, of course, delays the settlement process and could imperil the newcomer's access to the labour market. Respondent 3 came to Canada with a student visa. As the program was completed, they returned to their country of origin, completed a permanent residence application there, and had to wait for some time to be able to get back into Canada. Luckily, an employer was patient and extended a job offer throughout the time needed to complete the application process:

I was offered the job while I was back home in [city of origin]. So, I accepted the offer then and they actually waited until my visa came back to me. So my passport was with the Canadian embassy in [country of origin] at the time and they had asked for it to stamp the visa, but right after I sent it, the immigration office in [city of origin] went on strike. .... So, when I was interviewing with [employer], I knew that my visa was approved because they had asked for my passport to stamp it. But thereafter they sat there with my passport for about a year. So [employer] patiently waited for five months before I could get my passport and visa back (Respondent 3).

Newcomers should not rely on being that lucky, though stakeholders in the community could encourage employers in the region to follow the example of this employer.

Moreover, people who are in Canada on a student visa are not necessarily allowed to work here. Respondent 1 described how this created an added complication, as this respondent needed to achieve permanent residence status before being able to work after finishing the degree here:

After I finished my MBA, in I think, three, four months, I got the acceptance and I went, I just changed my status from a temporary resident to a permanent resident. During that time as well, people would ask me... "What's your status?" You would convince them, okay, I have the proof. I can tell it's in the process for me to be a landed immigrant (Respondent 1).

All these experiences show that going from temporary residence to permanent such is not necessarily a straightforward process. One commonality in the above narratives seems to

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be that the respondents made the commitment to stay in Canada after initially arriving in the country, and then had to deal with the administrative procedure and the complications that arose on the way.

Some other respondents decided to move to Canada from the very start, and then used a temporary residence permit to plan their future migration to Canada more comprehensively. For them, the visa provided an opportunity to conduct exploratory visits before the migration: "... before we came here, I already came to visit her just on the visitor's visa. So, I've seen the city" (Respondent 5). For Respondent 16, the processing time for a permanent residence turned out to be very long, so the work visa became a way to gain entry to Canada and build some experience while continuing the process to attain permanent residence:

...we decided on Canada a year before. I put in federal skilled worker forms. Six months later, after I filled in all the paperwork, they sent me a receipt for the money that I sent them. I thought, "This is going to take forever." They didn't even give me a receipt for six months. So, my wife said, "Look, if you're serious about moving to Canada, why don't we just go on a work visa and do it that way?" (Respondent 16).

The above thus provides examples of how various respondents strategized in the light of federal rules and regulations surrounding permanent residence. In some cases, the respondents had little choice in terms of which immigration streams were open to them, which potentially created hurdles for the settlement process. In other cases, they tried to leverage various visa forms and strategize to make their settlement as smooth as possible.

## **Why did some of the respondents leave Saint John?**

Two of the respondents, 1 and 2, decided to leave Saint John permanently. For Respondent 1, this was mostly a decision informed by job prospects: "Well, I didn't have enough exposure, I would say, in my field here... Whenever you would like to go to a place where there is exposure in your field, to know what to pick, what to choose. And especially in Canada, it's so specialized...." (Respondent 1).

For Respondent 2, job prospects were one dimension of moving, but their family would have moved anyway:

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Yeah, that's one of the reasons, but actually we would move anyway, or I would return to [country of origin], one of those, because living in Saint John, for me, it was really tough, I'm from a very large city. ... It is the capital of [country of origin], and as compared... Saint John is actually very, very small. The problem there was that there were no services I'm used to, like good shopping, cafes, restaurants, bright city life, stuff like that, theatres, concerts and so on. Those were the things I really missed (Respondent 2).

Respondent 2 also argued that this sentiment was the driving force for all members of her ethnic community that left the Saint John area – they all felt that they had moved to a place with so much lower levels of services and amenities that they had to leave. According to Respondent 2, only people who moved from smaller cities remained in Saint John, as “the level of their life didn't change, so they were okay with it” (Respondent 2).

This sample is too small to draw conclusions from this group of responses alone, but the replies can be read in the context of what those who stayed in the region said. When this is done, it is apparent that lacking job opportunities is consistently the top push factor that drives newcomers to move away.

### **Racism and discrimination**

It is important to recall that racism and discrimination is a complicated issue. Discrimination and exclusion based on ethnicity do not always manifest like racist rants from someone shouting obscenities in the streets. Rather, it can include a range of behaviours that are less explicit, but still impactful, such as various forms of silencing or invisibility-making, or biases informing systemic practices that privilege the native-born population over immigrants, or white people over people of colour. Those who engage in such behaviours may not intend for them to be discriminatory or aware that the systems in question have discriminatory outcomes. The system will still, even when subtle and invisible to the native-born population, make settlement more challenging for newcomers.

Thus, those who seek to identify racism and discrimination must be aware of the various forms that such behaviours can take, and include the latter forms as well, as they may be more subtle, and less obviously threatening to life and limb, but also more common and cumulatively create barriers that impact the quality of life profoundly.

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## EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

In the case of the Saint John region, most respondents reported that they had no trouble, or minimum such, with racism and discrimination in Saint John. However, demographics matter in this context. Those who had experienced racism and discrimination tended to be Black. They discussed how their children experienced anti-Black comments in schools, but also how schools varied on this. Schools on the East side were more problematic, whereas schools in Millidgeville were less so. People from Asian or Arab countries of origin reported encountering negligible levels of racism, certainly not enough to deter or impede settlement when asked directly about racism and discrimination.

However, while discussing other issues of settlement, there were still examples of how Saint Johners are not always as inclusive as they might appear at first glance. The responses from the respondents did capture examples of both overt racist behaviour and more subtle forms of biases and discrimination. 12 of the 39 respondents had experienced overt racist behaviour of some kind during their time in the Saint John region. Some of these incidents consisted of random people shouting racist obscenities at them or people they knew. Some of the most egregious such events are illustrated by these quotes:

My children tell me they don't want to go to school because somebody tells them they look like poop (Respondent 17).

... when I came in as a student, you find out that when you sit on the bus, sometimes... you are sitting alone in the bus, and as more people are coming in, instead of them to sit beside you, they would rather stand than sit beside you (Respondent 35).

....my son one time told me, 'I don't know who I am. I feel like I don't belong with my Canadian friends because I'm not Canadian enough for them, and I don't belong with other friends who speak our language or the other newcomers because I don't speak the language very well.' They're Canadian. They're born here (Respondent 32).

Note that these respondents do not specify when these incidents occurred. Respondent 17 arrived before 2015 but after 2010, Respondents 32 and 35 before 2010. It is thus possible that these incidents took place several years in the past, but even if that is the case, it should not invite a sense of complacency.

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## EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

Significantly, more subtle forms of biases that could lead to unintentional discrimination were more common. 15 of the 39 respondents discussing instances when they experienced such. These instances reflect behaviours that are harder for the native-born to detect and acknowledge, because they involve key silences and social reflexes that go unnoticed, as they are sometimes expressed through inaction. Respondent 3 offers an example: “It’s more reflected in the form of not reaching out, keeping a certain distance. It’s not reflected in the form of, ‘you don’t fit in’. Like, nobody will say that directly. It will come out in other ways. Just holding back and... Like I was saying, there’s a line between racism and just plain uncomfortable” (Respondent 3). As Respondent 4 discusses, this could very well be related to the size of the community and its comparative monochrome history:

...I’ve been living in different cities at different times and I lived in another community similar to Saint John in the manner that they are close-knit, monochromic cultural communities. I’ve seen the same thing, they’re really nice people. They will help you. They’re really nice, but embrace you or beyond the ‘hello’ and ‘goodbye’? That’s very difficult. It happened the same when living in a small city in Catalonia in Spain and I lived in Portugal... it was always the same. They would give directions in the street, they will help you out if you have a flat tire, but invite you to the house or make friends? These relationships, they are knitted in high school... (Respondent 4).

The consequences of such attitudes can still be significant, materially, if, for example, employers make hiring decisions based on how strong a person’s accent might be. This study cannot provide conclusive data on that matter as it has not investigated hiring standard operating practices: Even so, at least some respondents do have the perception that such attitudes might inform hiring decisions: “So people here a little bit careful to hire the person with accent, because they don’t know how good you are in understanding and doing stuff, and it’s probably different culture as well” (Respondent 5). Respondent 5 was not the only one to reflect that this type of subtle reflexes might impact their chances of getting a job. Respondent 7 wondered if their name might be the obstacle: “Everybody was saying [incorrectly pronounced name] so then I realized yeah, that’s why they’re not hiring me, they cannot say my name which makes sense. You don’t want to hire somebody you cannot say their name” (Respondent 7). This is obviously something nobody should have to worry about.

These comments are significant enough, arguably, to merit alertness on this subject. If there

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## EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

is a lack of habit of encountering people with accents, employers might consider accent a proxy for competence, which would skew their recruitment. It would be worthwhile to investigate if that is the case in the Saint John region.

While the comments of these respondents are not sufficient proof in and of themselves to be able to say that employers do discriminate based on these kinds of triggers, one indicator that stakeholders should pay attention to is the diversity within the staff of various employers. Respondent 39 observes that the local police force has been doing good work in terms of community outreach, but remains internally very monochrome, suggesting that more work needs to be done over time: “Okay, I'm not as... the same thing, the police have been working fantastic, I should say, I think you've got one of the better police forces in North America...In my opinion, anyway, we have not seen any incident of racial discrimination. In fact, they are very open about combating racism.... But, when you look at the police force, there's mostly one race” (Respondent 39).

The rate to which respondents experienced these types of behaviours did also vary depending on the ethnicity or racial belonging of the respondents in question. All interviewed Black people had experienced racism or discrimination of some kind. For other ethnic or racial categories, the situation differed. Five of 11 People of Colour from South Asian, Middle Eastern or Latin-American countries had experienced such. One of five East Asian respondents had personally experienced such behaviour. One of seven Eastern European respondents did, and none of the Western European/Anglo-Saxon respondents did. This suggests the existence of a hierarchy of racialization in the Saint John area that needs addressing.

The University of New Brunswick Saint John MBA program has developed strong recruitment from Nigeria. This is an important piece of infrastructure that could play a significant role in the future recruitment of immigrants to the Saint John region. If students in the program experience racism or discrimination in the Saint John region during their studies and/or as recent graduates, there is a real risk that they might leave the region to pursue a career elsewhere. To ascertain the risks in more detail, a study should be completed to identify how many alumni might still be in the region, and how many might have left, and investigate to what extent they might have experienced racism or discrimination, and the contexts in which they might have done so. Such a study could become a first step in designing a program for addressing racial discrimination so that the full potential of this program can be properly harnessed and ensure that a Nigerian community can thrive in this region.

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# EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

## **Gendered responses to how services function**

The responses were not gendered to a significant extent. This may be a result of selection bias – the participants were selected based on being as successful as possible with their settlement process. Thus, they had either experienced fewer barriers than average for newcomers or managed to overcome those barriers by drawing upon economic, social, and cultural resources that, on average are otherwise more gendered.

Still, there were some differences in emphasis in the narratives between men and women when discussing settlement supports. Women focused slightly more on service gaps than the men would. Men, on the other hand, tended to focus the discussion on settlement supports on administrative functions, like the process of completing the driver's license and getting the SIN card.

Both men and women commented on representation in service delivery. For example, this respondent, a woman, emphasized how “...the more we have immigrants...in decision-making places in the workplace for example... I feel that that would be easier. So, it's not just one group of people serving the other.... I feel like if immigrants are also part of the groups that deliver those services, it will make that transition much easier” (Respondent 3). This respondent, a man, spoke very similarly about this issue: “What else did you say? Hiring newcomers. I would say no. I would say there's still a lot of work needs to be done in that area” (Respondent 4).

## Summary

In summary, the respondents found that the most significant challenges to settlement that were not related to labour market entry were everyday micro-barriers, inaccessible health care, poor transit, and moments of cultural confusion. Some of these findings are consistent with research from other smaller centres. A study on settlement in New Zealand discussed the importance of ethnic-specific health care services, including mental health care particularly for refugees. The Wellington Refugees as Survivors Centre is listed as an example of a mental health centre dedicated to refugees specifically (Pepworth and Nash 2009). In Western Canada, newcomers in smaller centres likewise found that transit was not sufficiently well developed (Rural Development Institute, 2015). Attention also needs to be paid to discrimination and conducting work to eliminate processes in recruitment and career advancement that might enforce systemic racism.

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# EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

## SETTLEMENT SUPPORTS

Respondents listed several sources for support during their settlement in the Saint John region. Settlement agencies were not among the top three of these. Instead, the primary sources of support among these respondents were:

- Friends. Friends offered a range of supports on arrival, including possibly temporary first housing, advice on bureaucratic procedures required for residency, and social connections, including connections that could lead to jobs.
- Employers. When respondents came to Saint John because of having been recruited by a local employer or because the employer moved offices to Saint John, that employer often provided initial settlement support, sometimes including initial temporary housing.
- Family. Those who came to the region due to a family connection could also draw on the support of that family for initial settlement.

Five of the respondents explicitly said that they never used the services that settlement agencies presently have on offer. Their reasons for that varied:

- They arrived in the Saint John region before agencies existed or could offer these services.
- They did not know that the services were available.
- They did not feel that they needed the services.

When respondents had used services, the three primary such services were:

- Language classes (English or French)
- Assistance with job searching. This included resume preparation.
- Volunteering opportunities. In several cases, these opportunities allowed the respondent to build a professional network and become acquainted with various employers, which, in turn, lead to employment later.

These comments give some insights into how the respondents experienced the utility of the services available in the community. Of course, this target group counts among the most successful newcomers to the region, and thus as the group least likely to need settlement services, as they are less likely to encounter barriers than other newcomer groups. It is entirely possible that target groups facing more barriers, like most Government Assisted Refugees, for example, would respond differently.

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# EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

Further, respondents stressed that Service New Brunswick had been helpful during the initial few weeks in Saint John. This might not be the first institution someone thinks about when it comes to settlement support, as opposed to settlement agencies, but Service New Brunswick does handle almost all processing related to registering as a resident in the province, including issuing Medicare card, driver's license and so on. All immigrants will have to go through these processes at one point or another. That the experience was mostly reported as smooth and straightforward removes one potential source of hurdles.

Some of the respondents reported that Saint John did not have an ethnic community that could provide support to them on arrival. This is noteworthy, as the science has shown that ethnic communities often provide important supports to new arrivals, as older generations of migrants pay it forward to arrivals that are more recent. Having gone through settlement themselves, the older generations know what the new arrivals are confronting on a granular level that native-born rarely can comprehend and can also communicate with the newcomers in their first language and in a culturally sensitive manner.

## **Ways to enter the labour market**

Not all respondents spoke about how they found a job in the Saint John region, but among those who did, a strong pattern emerged on how to find a position:

## **The importance of professional networks**

While there were many different paths to employment, as the narratives below show, many respondents did emphasize the importance of professional networks. These are some examples of how they spoke about this topic.

This respondent describes how alienating it can be to be a foreign-born person in the area: "I think there are other options in Canada that would give more opportunities and feel more welcoming... because it's so close-knit, so tight-knit. Everybody knows everybody. If you weren't born here, it's like, "why are you here?" (Respondent 24). The first sentence strongly suggests that the closely-knit community impacts access to job opportunities for immigrants in the Saint John area. The next respondent agrees, speculating that without having a certain social network, the career development could have been negatively impacted: "Again, connections, obviously are important. I feel I was qualified, but without those connections who knows what would have happened?" (Respondent 11).

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# EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

The following respondent provides a powerful example. They had friends who could not find a job in Saint John without the proper professional network. They would submit applications in Saint John without success. However, when they submitted applications for positions in Moncton, they were successful: “So many who come to Saint John leave for Moncton to get a job. They lived in Saint John and had to move, because they had no connections in Saint John. We have to face reality – in Saint John, one needs to have contacts or network to get a job. That is not needed in Moncton, you can get interviewed without knowing the employer or the boss, and still get the job” (Respondent 26). This strong theme underlines that this is an area that facilitators will need to pay attention to.

## **Settlement agencies can broker connections with employers or facilitate the development of those professional networks**

Some respondents explicitly emphasized settlement agencies as key for acquiring jobs. For example, this person discussed how a settlement agency program “...connected me with the CEO at our company, and I get a three-month contract with them. And the following year they ask me to join with them for a full-time” (Respondent 31). Others started volunteering with settlement agencies and developed their professional networks that way: “A friend who was also doing the internship, we went to job fairs together. She helped me find a good stop to volunteer, and volunteering opened the door to my present position.” (Respondent 26). The settlement agency programming thus facilitated the development of key social capital.

The MBA program and other post-secondary programs as a gate to the labour market  
Some respondents had acquired jobs through their post-secondary programs. The MBA program was completely dominant in this category, with four of the five emphasized how the MBA program had been their gate to the labour market, specifically, the internship program that was included: “The MBA included an internship program which was very good to get connected with a strong professional network” (Respondent 26). Another found a job through a well-connected instructor: “It was towards the end of my master’s program. So, I told him, “Hey, I’m on the lookout, if you know anyone and all of that.” And he said he thinks there’s someone in [company name] that he can refer me to, that I should just send my resume to him” (Respondent 37). One can notice the pattern: actions that develop a professional network helps newcomers find employment. Notice, too, how these programs are more in-depth than simple events like job fairs.

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# EMERGENT MAIN THEMES FOR IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT IN THE SAINT JOHN REGION

## **Find a job themselves by answering an ad for an open position.**

Some respondents had acquired jobs by finding an ad for an open position and going through the standard ensuing procedure. For this respondent, the available support systems were not effective enough: “Nobody here sped up the process so it's really slow. So, I found the first job placement. I found it myself in a call center. So, it was really nice experience” (Respondent 5). This respondent used a job search engine: “I don't even remember which ones they were at the time, but just the direct web job sites for New Brunswick. And I found the job that actually seemed really perfect, and I still really enjoy it, so it was a great fit.” (Respondent 20).

## **Already hired by an employer before they arrived.**

Some respondents had been hired before they arrive and thus did not have to look for a job in their field as part of their initial settlement. This was not uncommon among people working in IT: “I came here in 2016 and at that time IBM was recruiting some people in their Saint John office. I applied for this position from [country of origin]. And my application was considered, I was interviewed over the phone, I was given a job offer. When I landed here, I already had a job. It went perfectly smooth for me” (Respondent 6). Respondent 7 was visiting friends in Montreal and managed to get a test period with an employer for a week, “and then he says, ‘Okay, but you need all the papers to work’” (Respondent 7). Entering Saint John this way does facilitate settlement a great deal.

## **Summary**

The preceding section has detailed the main themes emerging from the respondents as they engaged in the conversation surrounding challenges, barriers and supports while settling in the Saint John region. The main barriers were clustered around hurdles that had to be navigated to enter the labour market, and other issues that also impeded settlements. The conversation on settlement support centred on ways to enter the labour market, which is a key issue for self-sufficiency and prosperity in the new country. The text now moves on to the chronological account of arriving and settling in Saint John.

# ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

The respondents' narratives produce a picture of pathways to successful settlement in Saint John. The narratives, being from the newcomers' point of view, include key challenges that newcomers must solve during the settlement process, and how the respondents solved them. The narrative is presented here in chronological order, beginning with why the respondents decided to come to Saint John, to begin with, continuing with pre-arrival preparations, and then going into descriptions of the early days after arrival, and finally covering the long-term settlement process including the first years in the area.

## REASONS FOR COMING TO SAINT JOHN

Respondents came to Saint John for a variety of reasons. The below presents the most common reasons for coming to this region, in descending order, with some examples from the interviews to illustrate how that pull factor manifested for that respondent:

### 1. Employers recruited them for an open position.

"It would have been due to my husband's job. He was offered a job... that was the reason why we came over" (Respondent 19).

"It happened by accident actually. I was offered a job here" (Respondent 21).

"The company I work for, we have a manufacturing plant here. ...I was here in Saint John...to have a look at the plant...We turned business around...We secured more jobs because of the work that we did, and hired a new general manager and staff....So, basically, after that, they asked me if I wanted to move to Canada to help grow the business here" (Respondent 25).

### 2. They wanted to join a family member living in Saint John.

"My wife is from here. We met in [country of origin]. My father-in-law was sick, he had a terminal disease.... So, we decided, well she wanted to be close to her family and enjoy. That's why we decided to come here" (Respondent 4).

"My sister lived already in Saint John for ten years before we came. So, it was easier for us to settle down here because we came basically to her house" (Respondent 5).  
"...the reason I came is I met my husband ... we met each other, and he was working here" (Participant 32).

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# ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

### **3. They wanted a change in lifestyle. People in this category were often looking for peace and quiet, with access to nature, away from a bustling large metropolis.**

“I was offered to be bought out of the company by business partners and I more or less saw an opportunity to do something different in life. Maybe build a different relationship with my family because we were so busy, that we probably missed some very, very useful and important family time” (Respondent 14).

“... about 10 years ago, my wife and I both got a bit tired of the rat race in [country of origin], that's where we're from” (Respondent 20)

“I didn't want to live in a large city, because the city I lived in [country of origin] was so big, too big” (Respondent 26).

### **4. They came to Saint John to study; most of the respondents in this category had applied to the MBA program at UNBSJ.**

“I came to seeing John in 2009 to study. I was looking for an MBA program at the time and I started to look in the US, but then I started to look in Canada because I wanted a one-year program and most of the programs in the US are for two years” (Respondent 3).

“I came to Saint John New Brunswick because I wanted to study. So, I researched all the schools in Canada, US, and the UK and UNB MBA program kind of met all my needs” (Respondent 17)

“I needed to get a master's degree from Canada. I wasn't sure of the school, but I was looking for ratings. I was looking for a one-year MBA program. I was looking for... that in terms of cost, I could afford. And then, finally, I was looking for a city that is not as big as the one where I used to live, where we had about 20 million people” (Respondent 37).

Of these four reasons, numbers 1, 2 and 4 offers potential advantages for settlement and integration. Having a job on arrival removes the potentially most significant barrier to settlement – finding work. Joining a family member means having access to housing on arrival and means that the newcomer can rely on the advice of that family member for all practical issues and orientation during the initial period after landing. Going through an educational program also makes it easier during the early stages in the new country: the student will potentially have access to housing through the student residence, and can use some of the time during studies to learn more about Saint John to prepare for the labour market entry.

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# ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

## PRE-ARRIVAL

Pre-arrival, most respondents did research. Respondents arriving post-2005 usually got their information through the Internet, using Google and conducting a web-search that way:

I did a Google search. At the time I was looking for, I literally searched in Google, MBA in Canada. And St. John did come up as within the top 10 MBA programs in Canada, UNB Saint John  
(Respondent 3).

Well, I just googled for jobs. I wasn't really looking at the place. I was just looking for a job, and I found the job right here. Then I started researching about Saint John and where the heck is this place (Respondent 16).

Obviously, when we knew that we are going to have an option to go here I did look into details and it was done mostly online (Respondent 18).

Another common way of getting information was through family members who were already in the region or the province.

So, the first information about Saint John? Yes, we got it from my sister. And before we came here, I already came to visit her just on a visitor's visa. So, I've seen the city (Respondent 5).

I applied for my PR. I got to know about Canada and PR from one of my cousin's sisters. So, she was also in the US and she was applying for her PR. And she asked me to also apply for PR so that we can both at least stay closer as the closest family that we had been outside of [country of origin] (Respondents 10).

Notably, most of them could not arrange a rental apartment from outside Canada, as landlords will typically not agree to sign a lease with someone who is not in the country. Instead, they would access lodging for the first days through family or friends:

Yeah, we started with our sister. We came to her house and we stayed there for a month until we found an apartment here because we tried to look for an apartment from outside of Canada and it's almost impossible (Respondent 5).

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

Newcomers who came to Saint John because they were recruited, or because their employers relocated their offices to Saint John, could arrange lodging for their employees:

...for us, it was [company name] who invited us. So, the employer provided the housing for the first, they actually paid, I think, two months, first two months of rent. It was kind of part of that relocation package (Respondent 21).

International students could have housing through the university residence:

Sure. I was living in residence when I arrived. So that was the easiest for me to arrange from my hometown before I came (Respondent 3).

This type of arrangement removes the potential source of stress of having to find lodging for the newcomer for the first few weeks.

Another advantage of arriving as a student was that the time spent in the program allowed the students to gain some initial orientation in Canada before they had to start navigating the labour market. That bought them some time to prepare strategies and get familiar with where they might find opportunities and thus plan their labour market entry more comprehensively:

So, I recall in 2014 when we came in virtually all the MBA graduates and some other postgraduate students, they left, they didn't really stay. They ... go down to the west like Alberta, Ontario and all that. ... Everybody already made up their mind, we're just going to be leaving because there's nothing in Saint John. Companies are not ready to recruit and all that. But then things started changing. By March of 2015, which is barely four months into the program, then we had the oil crunch... And then it became obvious that ... west side now it's not really an option. ...So that was when things started changing ... (Respondent 17).

Being students during such a dramatic change in economic prospects in one part of the country allowed this group to assess labour market opportunities and plan for how they could navigate the labour market post-graduation.

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

Many respondents came from major metropolitan areas in the world, cities like Beijing, Kyiv, Kolkata, Lagos, Mumbai, or Shanghai. However, they might not always be able to get an accurate sense of how small Saint John is in comparison to the cities they are used to from the material available on the Internet. While information about population size is readily available online, for people who have not experienced living in communities of this kind before, the scale might be hard to comprehend:

...living in Saint John, for me, it was really tough, I'm from a very large city. Kyiv is a large city...compared to Kyiv, Saint John is actually very, very small. The problem there was that there were no services I'm used to, like good shopping, cafes, restaurants, bright city life, stuff like that, theatres, concerts and so on. Those were the things I really missed (Respondent 2).

...I feel that some of us enjoy the fact that we have more space here and more time, so less commute time and more time to spend with people that we like and people are in general more interested in others. For example, over there we would not be talking to strangers at all. Like we just don't even make eye contact. So, we were used to that. So, at first that struck me as odd, why would a random stranger at the bus stop talk to me about the weather? ... But it took me just a few days to realize no, people really here genuinely enjoy the company of others and they are nice and they're just being pleasant, and they are interested in other people's lives and willing to help. So that did feel good (Respondent 3).

I flew into Montreal; I took the train back over northern New Brunswick. I remember looking out and thinking, 'I don't see any kind of habitation here.' Then, I took the bus from Moncton down to Saint John and there's not much to see there. I remember feeling somewhat relieved when I saw the first traffic light. I thought, 'Oh, good. At the very least there's a traffic light.' You go through for 10 hours, and you don't see a whole lot of anything other than trees (Respondent 11).

So, you need to understand that this is more or less a village, not a city. So, if village life suits you, you can be quite happy here. If you need the city life, this is not the place. In the same vein it's more or less middle of nowhere. It's not, of course, like Northwestern Territories or anything but still if you, in other places you get Ikea, in New Brunswick you don't get Ikea (Respondent 18).

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# ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

These examples describe how people who are used to living in great urban cities experience Saint John when they first arrive. For some, like Respondent 2, the size became a problem. For most, the friendly locals were one of the points of attraction.

## **PHASE ONE: ARRIVAL**

The first phase, as the respondents tell these narratives, consists of the initial weeks and months of living in the region. At this stage, the newcomers who have not already organized housing have to do so. Quite a few of the respondents who were in this position described how they spent their initial week(s) in a Bed and Breakfast or Motel of some kind, using that time to search for a more permanent housing solution.

Yeah. The first night we stayed to the bed and breakfast... (Respondent 7)  
It is funny. When I landed here, I had to ask my friends where. We had to stay in the hotel for 1 week (Respondent 35).

The most common solution after those initial weeks was to rent an apartment for the immediate future. Notably, many respondents felt that rents have started increasing at a concerning pace over the last few years:

Rent is, in comparison to the income, is pretty affordable. But lately, I find that rents are becoming more and more expensive in the city (Respondent 39).

This is a troubling development that will create a hurdle for newcomers during those initial weeks and months, particularly if they have not secured a job before arrival.

Moreover, this is the time when the newcomer permanent resident has to get all the basic paperwork completed: getting a New Brunswick Medicare card, possibly a driver's license, a SIN number and so on. Service Canada and Service New Brunswick handle these services and most respondents agree that this process was smooth.

The third essential task of this time is to ensure job readiness, if the newcomer did not already have a job on arrival (as noted, some newcomers came to Saint John because they were recruited by employers). This can be a difficult task for some newcomers, particularly if they do not have sufficient English language fluency before arrival. If that is the case, the English as a Second Language, ESL, courses offered by settlement agencies become important. Even if the newcomer's English is

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

good, settlement agency support with resume writing and professional networking of various kinds can become important at this stage, particularly because Saint John employers primarily recruit from their established social networks, many respondents assert.

For me... the government help to settle down, because I went to the [settlement agency] and they had a language program for immigrants. After I graduated from that program, probably like three or four months, they had another program that offered job placement for the students who graduated it, like for new immigrants that where the government paid the minimum wage for that, and the employer would pay the difference  
(Respondent 5)

Yes, they are very, very helpful. [Settlement agency] helped a lot, I could take English courses for free... Service Canada helps people to find a job (Respondent 35)

A fourth task can involve acquiring access to a vehicle, and/or a driver's license. The respondents generally agree that transit is insufficient for long-term needs, so this was something many were looking to do as part of their settlement process. Acquiring a driver's license can require some funding and some time, depending on where the newcomers come from and how much driving experience they might have. Acquiring a vehicle will likely require a line of credit, and that could be a bigger hurdle, as most newcomers cannot access one on arrival. Often, they must set up bank accounts and maintain those in good standing before lenders would extend a line of credit. Having a job and a residence – a pay stub and a bill with their address on it – helps immensely towards that goal.

For newcomers with children, finding their way through the school system is also, arguably, a part of this phase. Newcomers who arrive without permanent residence status might not be able to place their children in a school immediately. As this respondent explains:

... we came as tourists in December, and we received our status two months after. We couldn't wait. We couldn't stay in [country of origin] any longer. We were in the middle of war... It was not safe for the kids, we just had to go. And so, my daughter couldn't go to school because we didn't get our status yet. And we couldn't buy a car. We couldn't do our mobile phones. You can't do anything (Respondent 23).

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

Notably, orienting in the school system can be confusing for a newcomer, as such systems vary across countries. The lack of school choice might be confusing for some, for example. Newcomers need to know that their place of residence determines which school their children will be assigned to.

Many of the respondents used various supports on arrival in Saint John for managing their settlement. These supports came from, in descending order:

1. Employers
2. Family
3. Friends
4. Neighbourhoods
5. Schools
6. Settlement agencies

One should note that, of all these sources of support, the settlement agencies constitute the only available formal support structure. These agencies have government funding specifically for facilitating settlement, unlike, for example, schools, or employers.

Some used a mix of many of these support functions, and some used only one or two options. Many respondents did not use settlement services at all. The agencies in the Saint John area have been concerned that some people who might need their services remain unaware of the existence of the settlement agencies. A few respondents did say that they were unaware of these services but many respondents explained that the reason they did not use the services was that the services did not exist when they settled in Saint John, or that they simply did not need the services. This is a good example of that position: "... I don't even know who they are and what they do...It's not like we're looked for them. It's just we didn't have any need to bother about this so it's not an indictment of anything they do-" (Respondent 18). This respondent came to Saint John because the company they worked for moved its operations to Saint John. Such newcomers do not need services to find work or housing.

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

This response provides another example:

I understand now that things have changed, compared to when I came in four or five years ago. I understand that, today, they have a lot of settlement services that people can go, that help them settle into the system. But when I came in five years ago, I don't know if those things existed, but nobody came to us and was like, "Hey... I think you can go to this agency ... and they will be able to provide you with all of this information to help you settle down." For me, it was from the day-to-day Saint Johners that I met on the street, and I tell you that, for me, that was very good. It actually helped me settle in pretty well (Respondent 37):

This quote captures that it may not always be easy to find the settlement services, but also that the service agency infrastructure has developed considerably over the past five years, so respondents who arrived five to ten years ago may have struggled more to find access to services than those who will arrive in the near future.

When respondents used the services of settlement agencies, they mostly used language courses, services that could help them find a job, such as resume writing, professional mentorship programs, and volunteering. This respondent provides an example: "...we tried to use as many services as we could, whether we were interested in those services or not because beyond the service itself, it was tremendous opportunity to get to meet people and well, to stay busy, I suppose, and get the most exposure possible. The services we used, I mentioned, employment services in order to adapt our documentation on applications" (Respondent 14). Further, volunteering with the settlement agencies did help the respondents develop the professional network they needed to find a good job:

I had a positive experience with them. They were very nice people and are ready to help. What else? I also had experience with... a mentorship program, the program that helps ... private entrepreneurs to start their business or to improve their business. I just was curious about making business in Saint John. This is a nice initiative, but actually it didn't help me much because, how to say it, they didn't provide any substantial help. They only help you meet some people, which might be useful, of course... I had some French classes ... (Respondent 2).

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# ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

For at least this respondent, the programming of the settlement agencies proved instrumental:

... the government help to settle down, because I went to [settlement agency] and they had language program for immigrants. After I graduated from that program, probably like three or four months, they had another program that offered job placement for the students who graduated it... where the government paid the minimum wage for that, and the employer would pay the difference. And that was helpful because Saint John is small city, especially if we have accents...I lived here in Saint John for already more than 13 years and I still have accent. So, people here a little bit careful to hire the person with accent, because they don't know how good you are in understanding and doing stuff.... (Respondent 5).

These conversations did not go in-depth into how the respondents found their way to the settlement agencies. An investigation of that could do much to improve settlement for newcomers who did not have a job with an engaged employer on arrival.

## PHASE TWO: LONG-TERM SETTLEMENT

This stage of settlement, which stretches into the first few years. Finding and maintaining a job is crucial now if the newcomer did not already have one on arrival. Respondents identified this as the single most important hurdle to settlement. While occupations among respondents varied considerably, the single most common career stream was as a business or government manager. Business consulting and IT work were also common. Other careers included civil engineers, work in the non-profit sector, tourism, healthcare, telecom, business owners, publishing, insurance, and higher education, to some.

A newcomer who cannot find an appropriate job in their field of competence, or adjacent to it, is likely to consider moving from Saint John to a place that can present such opportunities. As shown above, this has already happened with newcomers relocated to Moncton or other places in Canada for jobs. This respondent provides another example of that:

Yeah, so most of my family have moved away. When we came, we were around 55 family members here. Of those, only one of my brothers and I remain in St. John. Everybody has either moved. They are all either in Calgary, some of them in Fort McMurray. My other brother is in Nova Scotia.... everybody ended up moving out because of lack of work. That's kind of the main reason. (Respondent 34)

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

For many respondents, internships facilitated entry into the labour market, as these allowed employers to get to know them, and the interns could use the position as an opportunity to build a network and gain some Canadian experience.

We had the interview, and it was technically volunteering with no pay. I was like, "Okay, it's no pay. That's a good start...You got to give what you have so they would appreciate and see your value. Well, I stayed with him.... I was looking for work while I'm working with him as well because the first project was a volunteer and then the next project was paid (Respondent 1).

The difficulty of finding more permanent housing at this stage varies. For those who want to find rental solutions, it can be more challenging, depending on suitability. For example, this respondent was looking for housing in Millidgeville specifically, as they wanted their children to access schools in this area.

So, this is a difficult thing. Particularly because we have kids and we wanted to put the kids not in any school but in a good school which, as far as we could tell, here means in Millidgeville. And Millidgeville barely has anything [housing]. Actually, scratch that, has a lot of available living space for students. But not for families. So, it should have been very difficult, but we got very lucky and we got an apartment in that big tower over there for very cheaply and it was a big apartment. And we lived there for, I don't know, three years, something like that. And when, so the owners sold the apartment, so we had to move and then we are looking for place again. And it was more or less impossible to find anything in Millidgeville to live in, to rent I mean. So, we ended up buying this place (Respondent 18).

The conundrum here arises from the lack of school choice in this area. To choose a school for their children, the entire family has to move to the area with the school they want to send their children to, and if that area does not have affordable and suitable housing, problems ensue. However, most respondents did not seem to experience housing as a long-term problem, as they found prices for home ownership very manageable in the Saint John area, as this respondent who had owned homes in other parts of North America attests:

... going back to Los Angeles the same house size I'll compare. So, the same house sizes in Los Angeles at the time that I left was about 900,000 dollars. I moved to Toronto it was about 300,000 dollars. Same size ... in the four years that I was there that 300 became 500. During

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

that four-year period that I was there. ...here everything was 200 to 250. So, it was half the price when I came to Saint John. And then within a few months I actually bought my house here also. And I have been in that house since then. So, settling down and buying a property is very, very easy if you have been in North America (Respondent 10).

Respondents who owned houses in Western Europe found it likewise easy to acquire a home in this region, as well.

A second significant hurdle is getting access to health care. New Brunswickers are well familiar with the debate about waiting lines for family doctors, the urgent need for more nurses in health care, and for more specialists in various fields. Newcomers, as new residents in the province, naturally end up last in line for a family doctor and might have to wait years to get access to one. Even if they can get access to health care through other clinics, lack of access to specialists can have adverse effects on health, if conditions that need attention quickly develop into serious chronic health problems because of the delay in treatment. At least one respondent had experienced such an outcome: the waiting time for a specialist meant that their health condition deteriorated and became chronic. An earlier intervention could have prevented this. Another respondent comments on how much faster health care was in their country of origin, which is a middle-income country, poorer than Canada:

Yeah, because actually in [country of origin] when you are sick, you can go to the doctor the next day, and you get treated right away so you don't have to wait. In Saint John, the waiting time for me, when I got really sick and I had real problems with my health, was half a year. That was crazy (Respondent 2).

When New Brunswick cannot perform well in this regard, a push factor is created, incentivizing newcomers to seek another location to settle down in.

In this phase, many settling newcomers will also start looking to purchase their first home. This is a much smoother process than access to health care. The low cost of houses is one of Saint John's primary assets for attracting newcomers, as it allows them to live with a low cost of living and a high disposable income.

So far, this account has covered the material dimensions of settling in a new community: clearing through bureaucracy, finding a job, access to health care, and housing. These issues matter a great

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

deal for initial settlement. For long-term retention, however, it is important to consider the social and cultural aspects of settlement as well.

The social dimension of settlement includes networking – getting to know people, both in the newcomer’s ethnic community, if there is one, and among the native-born population. The cultural dimension includes learning more about Canadian culture in general, workplace culture, learning how to manage potential cultural clashes or surprises, and developing a sense of belonging in the Saint John region. If these processes go poorly, the potential for newcomers making Saint John their permanent home goes down. Notably, the three aspects – material, social and cultural settlement – feed into each other and depend on each other. Thus, if the material part of settlement goes poorly, chances are that social and cultural dimensions will suffer, too, and vice-versa. For example, as was shown above, building a professional social network facilitates finding better and more appropriate job opportunities over time.

Notably, most respondents expressed great appreciation for living in the Saint John region. The sense of belonging was thus strong:

I love this place, because all my needs are met. I have a good community here; I have a decent job. And there are some other things that I like about Saint John, which are known to everyone. The benefits of living in a small city, like no commute time. That's why I get a lot of time to invest in my personal things, hobbies and family and that's it (Respondent 6).

So, we waited until then, we get the work permit and then we start to work there. I started to work there and was lovely. I loved Saint John; I still love Saint John. I have been around visiting some friends in Halifax or in Montreal or in Toronto, it's too busy. I was born and raised in the capital of my city and probably am too tired of being too loud or I'm getting old. One of them must be, but I love Saint John (Respondent 7).

...when we came for a visit, it was mandatory to come for a visit to meet the community. We came across super nice people, and it was a big change from what we knew, and we immediately ... We fell in love with the people... (Respondent 23).

One key dimension of this, for newcomer parents, was that their kids had settled in well and felt like they belonged in Saint John and were at home here. That was a strong theme among many respondents.

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## ARRIVING & SETTLING IN SAINT JOHN

I will just start responding to that question by saying that Saint John has really become home. We feel extremely comfortable here. We came as a family, my wife, my two sons, which are now adults, 21 and 24, this year. When we arrived back in 2014, so they were 16 and 18, more or less at the time. They were challenged because life was so different, from different perspectives, but now they absolutely love it. So, the four of us are extremely happy (Respondent 14).

...we love schools here. Just kind of like the teachers, I don't know how to describe it. First of all, the programs that they have, when my daughter comes home and says, "Oh, we started what are the main components of happiness," and she described to me how to be a happy person... I think it was grade three or four when she did that (Respondent 21).

We like it here. It's safe for kids. Like when my kids going out, I'm not scared that they will not come back. Or beforehand we lived in (country of origin) and for example, after the [inaudible 00:25:16] my high school child called and we had to go and meet him, just so he would not walk home alone, because it was not safe. Here, he can just walk home (Respondent 5).

Second, we were looking for a good social community, not just for us, for our kids too. So, we wanted to place where they offer a lot of afterschool activities, where the kids are well educated to respect kids that are different, respect kids that weren't born in Canada, because that was my biggest fear. I didn't want my kids to be "Those kids." I didn't want everyone to point and say, "They're not Canadian." I was really afraid that would happen, and I must say that we're in Canada for four years, and I never came across anything like that. Yeah, no one ever ... Like my daughter ... I have a nine-year-old. She never came back home and said that someone offended her because she wasn't born in Canada. On the opposite, they were very intrigued by that (Respondent 23).

The children had settled in well, and that, by extension, meant that the parents felt that settlement had proceeded well. It also meant that the parents were very reluctant to move. This suggests that the cultural dimension of settlement has gone well, for the most part.

The social dimension of settlement seems to have been more challenging, at least in terms of building professional networks to help in the job search. While almost every respondent had managed, eventually, to acquire a job, it was clear that this was a hurdle that took longer to overcome.

# DISCUSSION

Saint John, like other smaller urban centres elsewhere in the world, has experienced population decline during the past decade. Saint John's situation reflects that of the province. One way to reverse that negative trend would be to attract immigrants to the region, who can take available jobs and help spur economic growth. As examples from other jurisdictions show, this has been done successfully in the past.

This study has presented the data collected from semi-structured interviews with 39 respondents to find ways to respond to the two challenges:

1. Attract more immigrants to the Saint John region.
2. Increase the retention of immigrants who decided to move to Saint John. To accomplish this objective, stakeholders in the region need to know more about how the push and pull factors act on immigrants during the initial years after arrival.

The respondents spoke about their experiences of settling in the Saint John region. They discussed barriers and support systems as well as how push and pull factors play into their decision to stay or leave the region. Such initiatives will be facilitated by more knowledge about the immigrants who have remained in Saint John over the past years and decades.

This researcher's interpretation of the collected data is that the Saint John region has a strong potential for attracting and retaining immigrants. Community stakeholders should be encouraged to continue their efforts to do so. However, community stakeholders should take several key factors into account when designing their action plans for the short and long term.

First, the data reveals that, over the short term, Saint John is not a place for everyone. Some categories of newcomers found it more fitting to their lifestyles than others. Community stakeholders should thus consider the push and pull factors at play when potential migrants make their decisions to migrate and how they choose a destination that suits their needs.

Push factors are the factors that encourage a potential migrant to decide to leave their country of origin. The push factors mostly concern circumstances in that place. Push factors include lack of career opportunities, poor service infrastructure, including health, safety and schooling for any children, as well as more dramatic circumstances like civil unrest, government oppression, persecution or wars. Community stakeholders in Saint John usually have little power over these push factors but should take them into account when calibrating recruitment actions.

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## DISCUSSION

Pull factors include positive economic opportunities, democracy and human rights, good service infrastructure, including health care, public transit, a strong safety net, better environment, a strong ethnic community that can offer support, a welcoming community, low levels of racism and discrimination, low barriers to settlement. Community stakeholders in Saint John should pay attention to these for improvement of retention.

Potential recruitment efforts should be focused on regions where the economic push factors are strong enough to encourage a lot of people to consider moving, yet these regions should at the same time have strong enough educational infrastructure so that the immigrants from these regions already have work experience and credentials that are as easy as possible to transfer to the Saint John labour market. That means that the migrant should ideally be able to take a job immediately on arrival, without having to complete bridging training or more.

High-income countries, like the USA, Japan, the UK or EU member states, have a strong educational infrastructure and as the data from research on settlement in New Brunswick has shown, people from such countries, the US and the UK specifically, with Western European countries close, too, are the most likely to remain in the province (MacDonald et al,2018). In this study, respondents from such countries in this study have generally encountered few barriers. However, Saint John recruiters should consider that the step up in quality of life between, say the Netherlands and Saint John, is not that big. People living in such countries generally have access to the same level of services as here, and potentially even better when considering the New Brunswick health care system, or the sophisticated public transit infrastructure of major European metropolitan areas. The number of potential recruits from high-income countries is therefore relatively few, most likely people who seek a quiet lifestyle close to nature and away from big cities but who also cannot find such a lifestyle easily in their own country of origin, or who actively seek to find a place to live far from their country of origin. Investing a lot of effort into a recruitment drive in Western Europe might not find much success.

Middle-income countries, however, have a greater potential to fulfill the relevant criteria. Middle-income countries are those who are not yet fully post-industrial countries like the norm in Western Europe or North America, but rather emerging economies that have seen a sharp reduction of poverty in the past 20 or 30 years. Canadian incomes offer people from middle-income countries a substantial step up in the standard of living compared to what is available in their country of origin. That is a strong push factor. At the same time, middle-income countries also often have comparatively well-developed educational systems, close to, or on par with those of high-income

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## DISCUSSION

countries. Many of the respondents in this study come from such countries in Eastern Europe, East Asia, and South Asia. Nigeria is also such a country. Notably, some of the emerging results echo findings on immigrant retention on the provincial level. MacDonald et. al found that the most likely to leave the province are immigrants from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. The researchers argued that limited career and employment opportunities, small ethnic communities and limited social networks for these groups are push factors, driving immigrants away from New Brunswick (MacDonald et al, 2018).

People from low-income countries would see an even more substantive improvement in standards of living by coming to Canada, and such countries are more likely to be oppressive or have various levels of civil unrest, so the push factors would be even stronger. However, the educational infrastructure might not be sufficiently developed to make work experience easily transferable to the Canadian environment, or, just as significantly, barriers like systemic racism that people from such countries would encounter are therefore higher, making it more likely that they would leave Saint John and relocate to major metropolitan areas like Toronto or Montreal. For example, Canadian employers might not recognize the work experience that migrants from such countries have as valid. To pave the way for such recruitment, community stakeholders should engage with employers and other key gatekeepers to strengthen the recognition of foreign qualifications. Too few of the respondents in this study came from such low-income countries, which probably is because it is very hard to enter Canada from such a country, and the immigrants from such countries face higher barriers than others, for the reasons listed above.

Aside from considering general push-and-pull factors, Saint John stakeholders should also take care to represent Saint John accurately during recruitment. Saint John is not Toronto, a major metropolitan area, and should not present itself as such. Its prime attraction, judging by the respondents' narratives, is that it is a small, friendly community that offers opportunities for a quiet life, close to nature, with a low cost of living, high quality of life; a safe place to raise children. Those qualities are not for everyone. People who love the busy lifestyle of a major metropolis might not find Saint John that attractive, as displayed in some of the responses here. However, none of the major cities are likely to be able to compete with the real estate prices or short commutes – allowing for more quality time with the family – that Saint John can offer for those who do enjoy these qualities.

Moreover, Saint John community stakeholders can take action to strengthen the welcoming of newcomers during the newcomers' initial days in the Saint John region. For example, a comprehensive welcoming package would be helpful. Likewise, seeking ways to coordinate with landlords so that

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## DISCUSSION

newcomers can sign short-term leases for rental units before arriving in the country would make life easier during the first few weeks, as newcomers would not have to rely on a Bed and Breakfast or a motel.

Most of the respondents who succeeded and stayed in the Saint John region feel a strong sense of belonging. Their children have settled in well, they find that native-born Saint Johners are very welcoming and hospitable, and the region has a strong potential for enabling a high quality of life. To draw upon the New Brunswick license plate – one can...” ...be in this place”. This shows that the region also has the potential to be an attractive place for newcomers to stay permanently. However, the single most important factor remains the immigrants’ ability to find a job. Likewise, the community stakeholders must acknowledge and address the existence of systemic racism and discrimination. The University of New Brunswick Saint John has a strong MBA program that is attracting students from Nigeria. The Nigerian community in this region has grown over the past few years. Building on this already existing infrastructure to expand recruitment of immigrants to the Saint Jon region would be highly cost-effective, but as these interviews have shown, that requires paying attention to racism and discrimination against Black people, lest the area lose these young, talented and highly educated people to other regions.

Hiring practices that privilege native-born people with personal connections to employers or HR staff need to be reformed so that candidates without such social capital also have a reasonable opportunity to get an open position. The same goes for career development. It must be clear that organizations do not block Black or People of Colour from advancing to the top. When newcomers look at potential employers and notice that nobody who looks like them has made it to higher ranks, they are likely to feel less than welcome and could search for opportunities elsewhere. Gaining access to appropriate health care is also important for long-term retention, according to respondents. Without access to family doctors or appropriate specialists, newcomers with health needs might be pushed to leave for other areas that can offer such services. This is a provincial issue, not a municipal one, so local stakeholders are limited in how much they can do on their own, but the issue should be acknowledged, and awareness raised with the provincial government whenever possible. If other municipalities have had similar experiences, there might be a possibility to form a coalition to communicate with the provincial government to address this issue.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous work on improving the welcoming communities have developed a series of generally consistent sets of recommendations:

- The municipal council to have a clear, actionable policy vision for this purpose (Valade 2019).
- Promote a sense of belonging (Esses et al. 2010).
- Meet diverse individual needs (Esses et al. 2010).
- Identify and remove barriers to settlement. (Esses et al. 2010).
- Incorporate the immigrant communities as stakeholders for a higher likelihood of success. (Wulff et al., 2009)
- Coordination of settlement services (Valade 2019).
- Develop retention strategies in a partnership with all community stakeholders (Wulff et al., 2009)
- Offer services that promote successful integration, where successful integration is defined as “the ability to contribute, free of barriers, to every dimension of Canadian life – economic, social, cultural and political” (Esses et al. 2010).
- Direct involvement of employers in diversified HR policies and hiring (Valade 2019).
- Focus on matching newcomer skill supply with employer demand (Wulff et al., 2009)
- Create opportunities for immigrants and non-immigrants to connect and develop relationships (Wulff et al., 2009)

Keeping these goals and organizational principles in mind, the following policy recommendations are divided into short-term and long-term recommendations for actions. The short-term recommendations consist of actions that can be implemented relatively quickly with available resources and infrastructure, including recommendations for how to direct the most immediate recruitment efforts. Long-term actions focus on addressing systemic and institutional issues through in-depth reforms and developments to ensure that immigrants who have been recruited stay in the Saint John region. Systemic and institutional reform cannot be addressed quickly. Such work takes time to complete, sometimes years of effort, and sometimes such work can encounter resistance. Nonetheless, stakeholders should undertake the work to maximize the potential for retention and make Saint John a more welcoming community.

The following presents a value proposition for attracting immigrants and suggestions for making Saint John a more welcoming community based on respondent replies, as well as policy recommendations for short-term and long-term actions.

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# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## **IMMIGRANT ATTRACTION: VALUE PROPOSITION**

Respondents say that these factors make Saint John an attractive place to live:

- The welcoming and warm local people. This is the single strongest theme in the responses when it came to Saint John's attraction. Almost uniformly, respondents say that Saint Johners are very welcoming and nice in so many ways, and that this good quality is one of the most attractive parts of living in this region.
- The region is very family-friendly. A further powerful theme is how important it is for parents that their children have settled in well and feel at home in the Saint John region.
- The low cost of living and low property prices. Respondents were pleased to note that their disposable income lasted much longer in Saint John than they would in some other locale. More than one had asked friends in other places about the economic situation, and the impression was that their friends might find more professional opportunities, but their material standard of living was probably lower because of higher residential costs.
- A short commute. This had great significance for parents, as the short commute meant spending more quality time with their families.
- Being close to nature. This had significance for some respondents, who emphasized how beautiful this region was. Respondents often invoked this value in combination with peace and quiet.

In summary: Saint John is a friendly city, a good place to bring up a family, safe for the children, characterized by friendly locals and ample access to plenty of nature experiences and beautiful countryside.

## **STRENGTHENING RETENTION**

When respondents were asked what would make them move away from Saint John, they overwhelmingly replied that the major push factor would be a lack of jobs or career opportunities for themselves and/or their spouses. No other reason came close. Indeed, the second most common response was that nothing could make them move away at this point.

Thus, work to enhance retention in the Saint John region should be focused on developing job growth and, just as importantly, connect newcomers to available job opportunities. Some such activities could include:

- Outreach to employers: help grow their confidence in hiring without knowing the applicants personally. It must be possible to hire staff without that informal connection.

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## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recognizing that personal connections are especially important to acquire a job in Saint John: work to develop those for newcomers, for example by creating meeting places for potential employers and job seekers. Activities like Job Fairs already exist, but those might not be sufficient to establish a deeper network of professional contacts. Mentoring programs might be more effective for that.

These are two examples of activities that stakeholders can engage in. Making this a top priority for settlement service programming should go a long way to address retention issues in Saint John.

### SHORT TERM ACTIONS

The following section starts with suggestions for actions that community stakeholders can take over the short term, specifically:

- Factors to keep in mind when calibrating recruitment efforts
- Coordinating with employers to facilitate the recruitment of immigrants
- Coordinating with landlords for short term residency for the first stay for recent arrivals

It then moves on to the three most common respondent suggestions for how to make Saint John a more welcoming community were:

1. Develop a stronger welcoming package with practical information for newcomers.
2. Employers should focus more on diversity in hiring
3. Develop a unified community centre so that all ethnic groups have a place to gather.

### Factors for calibrating recruitment of immigrants

Turning first to how the regional stakeholders should direct their recruitment efforts, and what value statements they should focus on in the immediate future, the Saint John region's primary assets, according to the respondents are:

- Friendly population
- Family-friendly
- Peace and quiet
- Low cost of living
- Low real estate costs
- Close access to nature

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# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This is consistent with findings from other smaller centres, internationally, like the Limestone Coast in Australia (Feist, et al. 2015). These traits will be attractive to people whom:

- Are no longer young adults seeking the intense lifestyle of a major metropolis
- Are in the phase of life where they are considering starting a family or have started a family and have children in elementary school age or younger
- Seek peace and quiet and want quality time with their family (facilitated by the short commute) and enjoy spending time in the outdoors.

Moreover, the people in question should be coming from middle-income countries as discussed above. Countries like China, Vietnam, Korea, Nigeria, and regions of Eastern Europe and Latin America could be suitable for such efforts, particularly if the country in question already has an ethnic community presence in Saint John. Thus, Ukraine seems like a continued good candidate for recruitment. Belarus and Lebanon might also offer opportunities for recruitment, given the domestic situations in those countries, which create powerful push-factors.

There are some high-income countries, that might also be suitable due to their special circumstances. Other areas for opportunities could include countries that are going through a political metamorphosis that creates uncertainty for the future, such as the United Kingdom. As Brexit creates deep economic uncertainties, there will be people looking for more secure opportunities elsewhere. Saint John's strong historic ties with the United Kingdom could be helpful there, as might the compatibility of our economic and educational institutions as Commonwealth countries.

Likewise, countries and regions that are experiencing political instability could be good sources of recruitment. Hong Kong is experiencing increased repression from the Beijing government. Some Hong Kongers are already looking for places to emigrate to avoid that, primarily to Taiwan. While Vancouver has an edge by already having a strong Hong Kong community, Saint John could offer something that Vancouver cannot with its lower cost of living and short commute.

The text now moves on to the three respondent suggestions for how to make Saint John a more welcoming community over the short term.

## **Coordinate with employers that are recruiting internationally**

In several of the narratives, companies that recruited employees internationally also provided early settlement housing for newcomers. In some cases, they even paid the rent for their new employees

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# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

for the first month or two. Companies that moved their operations and offices to Saint John would likewise coordinate the move for the staff that went with them. If stakeholders in Saint John could encourage employers recruiting internationally to be more involved in finding early settlement housing solutions, the early stages of arrival would be facilitated in a similar fashion as for the suggestion above.

The Stakeholders of the Saint John region can take inspiration from best practices across the country. For example, Maple Leaf in Brandon, MB, provides pre-arrival services to its internationally recruited staff, including 160 hours of English language training, and orientation on Canadian culture and settlement information (Blower, 2020). Coordinating the development of the Welcoming Package with employer stakeholders and distributing the package through employers who recruit internationally could be a path towards stronger retention.

## **Coordinating with landlords about short term or temporary housing solutions for newcomers**

Many respondents have commented on the difficulty of organizing housing arrangements from outside Canada, as landlords are typically, they say, not prepared to reserve rental units for foreigners. Some newcomers have navigated this by talking to already settled families or using motels or a bed and breakfast for the first couple of weeks.

## **Develop a comprehensive welcoming package**

The respondents proposed that a comprehensive welcoming package would make initial settlement easier for newcomers. This, they argue, should include practical information for newcomers in their first languages:

- a. How to set up bank accounts
- b. How to find basic services, like plumbers or electricians
- c. How to get access to transit, including how to pay for transit
- d. A list of landlords and information about various neighbourhoods.
- e. Information about activities and schools for kids
- f. Information about public services: schools, social and health services.

This was by far the most common respondent recommendation, suggesting that there is a need to address how newcomers are met during the first few weeks in the region.

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## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Further, 14 of the respondents spoke about how important it was for them to manage their expectations to become successful in the region. What they meant by that was that a newcomer with too high expectations might get disappointed when those expectations did not materialize and end up leaving because of that, even when the too high expectations had been unrealistic. That suggests that the welcoming package should be factual and grounded in the sense that it does not misrepresent the opportunities and possibilities of the Saint John region. Thus, it should not try to present the Saint John region as a major metropolitan region.

Indeed, for many people in countries that are appropriate for recruitment, such as China and India – countries with large cities and populations – Saint John would count as a large village, or rural area. It is important that the welcoming package is adapted to their perspectives and how they might experience Saint John on arrival.

Stakeholders in the Saint John region could produce some of the tools the respondents in this study identified as welcome reforms to make Saint John a more welcoming community. Specifically, steps could be taken towards an improved welcoming system, facilitating the initial weeks and months for newcomers. Various stakeholders have discussed the Welcoming Package the respondents talked about in various formal and informal contexts. This is a matter of curating key information and making it accessible. There is thus an infrastructure to draw upon to continue to develop this so that it meets needs accurately.

### **Diversify the staff**

When immigrants see themselves reflected in the public and private organizations they interact with daily, they will have increased confidence that people like them can have a successful career in this region. Here, public employers can act as role models in their hiring practices.

This would require designing some form of a project directed to employers to raise their awareness regarding immigrants' potential skills and assets to the organizations. Since the respondents came from a variety of different professional backgrounds, the present material does not provide sufficient evidence as to which sectors could be appropriate for initial targeting. Research in other regions would suggest that immigrants often cluster in some industries which become more diverse while others remain relatively monochrome. More research would be required to identify which sectors should be targeted. That type of research could also identify role models within the economy that have spearheaded diverse requirements to demonstrate to employers how they might benefit from looking over their recruitment and promotion practices to avoid missing out on key competence.

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## **Developing a unified community centre for all immigrant communities**

The third proposal is interesting given the demographics of the region. Saint John still has a low proportion of immigrants in general, certainly compared to the major metropolitan regions in Canada. While there are some communities that have grown in size over the last five to ten years, including Korean, Chinese and Syrian, most immigrants in the Saint John region today belong to an ethnic group that is too small to have its own association or community centre. This is particularly important for the immigrant communities that have not yet achieved critical mass to set up their own associations or organizations.

## **LONG TERM REFORMS TO STRENGTHEN RETENTION**

While the implementation of the actions recommended above will likely be useful and easier to do over the short term, they would not be sufficient to have confidence that the region will achieve long-term retention and population growth successes. For such results, the short-term actions should be supported with the long-term reforms. These actions target systems on various levels of government jurisdiction and across private and public institutions and organizations. Unlike previous lists, this list is not presented in order of importance, as all of these areas should be given attention. Best practices from other smaller locales can be studied for the benefit of the Saint John region.

- Addressing systemic racism and discrimination: Review hiring and promotion practices to diversify staff and facilitate career opportunities for People of Colour among both public and private employers
- Strengthen the development of community social capital
- Improve access to the health care system
- Improved transit access

It is particularly important that there is continuous evaluation of how these long-term reforms of various service providers and key stakeholders like employers make progress over time (Valade 2019). Without assessment, it will be challenging to know whether objectives are achieved.

## **Improving transit and health care access**

Health care is under the jurisdiction of the provincial health authority, and thus more challenging for stakeholders in the Saint John region to address alone. Transit is easier in that regard, though budget constraints do limit what is achievable in the short term. This researcher has limited experience of organizational solutions for health care and transit access specifically, beyond

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recommending these organizations to study the subject and for stakeholders to engage in further study of what type of organizational solutions could improve access for newcomers to the area. That said, other locales have studied these issues to make their communities more welcoming to newcomers and developed best practices. For example, Halifax provided newly arrived refugees with the Welcomed In Halifax (WIH) Pass, providing them with access to public transit and municipal recreational facilities and programs, and local museums also provided WIH pass holders free access. Ottawa likewise provides an example of stronger outreach to newcomers. The Somerset West Community Health Centre is operated in collaboration with a settlement agency, allowing the health care professionals to deliver services in a culturally sensitive manner, with multilingual guides who support newcomers by helping them navigate the health care system (Blower, 2020).

### **Addressing systemic racism and discrimination: Review hiring and promotion practices to diversify staff and facilitate career opportunities for People of Colour among both public and private employers**

Addressing systemic racism and discrimination will not be easy, as some of the systems that act as barriers to settlement operate on a provincial level, rather than local. The primary such system of concern here is the credentials recognition process, which has been identified as an issue of systemic and institutionalized racism elsewhere (Colic-Peskier and Tilbury 2007) and has been discussed as a barrier by settlement scholars all across Canada for decades. Opening these systems will require a long-term process of negotiations with key stakeholders. Strengthened recognition of foreign work experience requires engagement with employers to properly identify which types of experiences are transferable to a Canadian environment, and which ones are not. Meanwhile, stakeholders should take steps to ensure that newcomers get correct information about the challenges with foreign qualifications recognition as part of their pre-arrival preparations (Guo, 2009).

Diversifying the staff is here addressed together with the issue of systemic racism and discrimination, as the long-standing monochrome demographics of the Saint John region implies that the first step forwards is simply to diversify the staff within the various organizations. Valade recommends creating a direct interface between newcomers and frontline workers in all public services, and training the frontline workers so that they understand their role for retention and can provide services in a culturally sensitive manner (Valade, 2019). Another way of improving the quality of frontline services could be to make relevant skills considered special assets during hiring, including knowledge and experience of language and cultural knowledge from significant immigrant communities.

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Many best practices have been developed on hiring and promotion for increased diversity within the staff. Saint John employers in the private and public sectors are encouraged to adopt the available methods that fit their respective organizations best. Some such methods would include reviewing how foreign training and work experience is evaluated by the hiring team and take steps to avoid making relevant, transferable experience invisible, as well as ensure that foreign-sounding names or diplomas do not trigger unconscious biases. Some employers have, historically, explored if de-identifying the job application could be helpful in that process.

Although no such work has been done for this study, regularly surveying the general population's attitude to immigration is recommended to track shifting attitudes (Valade 2019).

## **Strengthen the development of community social capital**

Social capital is a scientific term describing the value of connections between people, and as this material has made clear, connections are especially important for newcomers during their settlement process. Social capital is framed as capital because these connections are a resource that can be leveraged to make settlement easier and gain access to employment opportunities, for example. Research describes two primary types of social capital – bonding and bridging (Putnam 2007). Bonding social capital is valuable for ethnic minority communities, which use it for mutual assistance and developing self-help. Bridging social capital consists of reaching out between communities to develop connections that lead to mutual understanding, such as between ethnic minorities and the dominant culture.

The narratives have described a great variety of connections that can be helpful. That includes having already established friends, family members or an ethnic community that can help, informally, with advice about housing or all sorts of information about Canadian everyday life and institutions. This is consistent with previous research on settlement, for instance on Somali and Ethiopian refugees in Toronto (Danso, 2002). Alternatively, an employer or a settlement agency can provide such advice and connections in a more formal setting.

Communities can develop the social capital of various forms and some of the suggestions that the respondents presented would have that effect. The proposal to launch a multicultural community centre for those ethnic communities that are too small to be able to develop their own, for example, would be a way to create both bonding and bridging social capital at the same time. The small ethnic communities would use such a centre to develop their own internal resources to mobilize and provide each other with social support (Simich et al.2003), while at the same time meeting

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representatives from other ethnic communities. Thus, they can pool their talents and competencies and draw upon each other for mutual support. Meanwhile, representatives for Canadian mainstream society would have an easily accessible place for community outreach, creating opportunities for the development of bridging social capital between ethnic minority communities and the rest of society.

Coordinating with employers and landlords would also accomplish this, specifically developing bridging social capital between newcomers and their communities and key actors within mainstream society. Employers and landlords in mainstream society may not be aware of the needs and competencies of ethnic minority communities. Notably, those connections will benefit the employers and landlords, as well, as they provide access to new markets and a new pool of talent to recruit competence from. Several other suggestions made by respondents also raise social capital, like professional mentorship and volunteering.

This is consistent with recommendations for improving settlement elsewhere. The recommendations for improving settlement in smaller centres in Western Canada including involving newcomers in recreational activities, family mentoring and developing social networks (Rural Development Institute, 2015). Moreover, the development of social capital is particularly important for finding job opportunities and career development in areas where informal networks and the hidden job market are key for economic self-sufficiency (Akkaymak, 2016), and this study has shown that this is how respondents characterize Saint John.



# FUTURE WORK

This study could not answer all questions pertaining to the recruitment and retention of immigrants, due to its limitations. Interviewing immigrants to the region, it is firmly grounded in their perspective, but that also means that the questions the respondents had about the community infrastructure in the region remain to be answered. Future work could pursue those questions. Some areas stand out as more interesting for an immediate query.

Post-secondary education is a significant source of immigrant recruitment to the Saint John area. One way to check how powerful it is, a study should be completed to identify how many alumni from these programs might still be in the region, and how many might have left, and investigate to what extent they might have experienced racism or discrimination, and the contexts in which they might have done so. Such a study could become a first step in designing a program for addressing racial discrimination so that the full potential of these programs can be properly harnessed.

A survey of employer practices, particularly in terms of hiring and promotion, would also be helpful. Several of the respondents have argued that employers rely too heavily on informal social networks, making it hard for newcomers to find a job, that employers might avoid hiring people with accents, as they might consider accent a proxy for low competence, which would skew their recruitment, and that it is hard for People of Colour to advance through the ranks. It could be worthwhile to investigate what standard operating procedures employers use for hiring and promotion in the Saint John region and whether these practices enforce system discriminatory barriers.

The same could be said for resolving the issue of credentials recognition. Comparing the practices of New Brunswick professional colleges and associations with their equivalents in other provinces and other countries can reveal much about best practices for developing fast bridging programs that can resolve staff shortages without risking public safety.

Several respondents said that they did not know about local settlement services. An exploration of how newcomers learn about settlement services could therefore be worthwhile. Do they search for the settlement services on the Internet, or do they learn about the agencies through word of mouth?

Reforming access to health care and transit can also benefit from further study. These two systems are not part of the services that the settlement agencies typically deliver and are thus not normally seen as settlement services. Nonetheless, as the narratives in this study show, they matter greatly for settlement, and the organizations that deliver the services should be encouraged to consider how they might make their services more accessible to newcomers.

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