




Eastern Ontario Immigrant Attraction & Retention Strategy.

Supporting a Strong, Healthy, Vibrant, and Diverse Future for The County of Renfrew, Lanark County, City of Ottawa, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry United Counties, and the United Counties of Prescott and Russell



Eastern Ontario Immigrant Attraction and Retention Strategy Partners



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Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

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Executive Summary

The Eastern Ontario region is currently experiencing an exciting period of growth, with the potential for an increase in population through coordinated efforts and collaboration. Although the Canadian and local economies have seen a rapid recovery from the impact of COVID-19 compared to other advanced economies, an acute labour shortage creates uncertainty for both businesses and workers.

To address this shortage, the 2022-2024 Immigration Levels Plan aims to continue welcoming immigrants at a rate of approximately 1% of Canada's population, with plans to admit 431,645 permanent residents in 2022, 447,055 in 2023, and 451,000 in 2024. The community and business leaders involved in the Eastern Ontario immigration strategic planning process recognize that the region's growth will require a greater reliance on newcomers from outside of Canada rather than the sources of population growth the region has been experiencing in recent years.

The sustained fiscal capacity of a government relies on a mutually reinforcing relationship between population and economic growth. In the case of urban centers like Ottawa and the surrounding rural communities in Ontario, driving economic and demographic expansion is crucial to enhancing the government's fiscal resilience and providing critical public

services and infrastructure. It is essential to emphasize that the goal of this growth should be rooted in the pragmatic imperative of strengthening fiscal capacity rather than being driven solely by a desire for status or reputation.

The movement of people in Canada and globally has sparked discussions on how to engage best and mobilize actors at all levels to provide safe and inclusive environments for newcomers. At the forefront of this action are municipalities, which possess significant assets such as proximity to citizens and the ability to act quickly.

Economic and demographic expansion is crucial to enhancing the government's fiscal resilience and providing critical public services and infrastructure.

Urban areas have traditionally attracted newcomers due to established social, economic, and community networks. However, in recent years, smaller municipalities and rural areas have become increasingly popular destinations for newcomers. This shift in settlement patterns is driven

by federal policy and will impact rural communities' municipalities and their citizens, requiring advance planning and resource mobilization to maximize the contribution of newcomers to the local labour market and foster their inclusion in the community's social fabric through various equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.

Skilled and unskilled labour shortages are a major concern across Eastern Ontario. Our municipal leaders, economic development partners and business owners recognize that immigrant attraction and retention can play a pivotal role in helping to address these shortages. Local Immigration Partnership - Lanark & Renfrew, in partnership with The Eastern Ontario Training Board, Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership, Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'est de l'Ontario and St. Lawrence-Rideau Immigration Partnership - Leeds and Grenville believe the region can succeed with a holistic regional immigration strategy.

This immigrant attraction and retention strategy aim to showcase the promising practices that Canadian municipalities are currently implementing to welcome newcomers. It also aims to provide municipal leaders and the Eastern Ontario community with a blueprint to attract newcomers and strengthen their integration in regional communities over the next three to five years.

To enhance immigrant integration, municipalities can implement three key objectives: establishing a shared vision and priorities, leveraging Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and Réseau en immigration francophone (RIF) for bottom-up insights, and building relationships with higher levels of government. By doing so, they can create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for newcomers. In addition, through collaboration and coordinated efforts within the first 12 months of this strategy, the regional partners within Eastern Ontario can leverage existing digital content to establish a comprehensive website portal to promote the area as a destination and streamline settlement and integration support.

The Eastern Ontario Immigration Strategy: Vision and Objectives

Eastern Ontario is increasingly becoming the growth engine of Ontario, with its abundant natural resources, expanding manufacturing sector, and growing tourism industry. Its strategic location, skilled workforce, and supportive business environment make it an attractive destination for investment and economic development in the province. The leaders of local government, community, and business sectors are determined to maintain the region's status as an Ontario growth engine. To achieve this objective, the vision for immigration is designed to serve as a supporting mechanism for the community's broader goal.

Ontario's vision is to create a dynamic and sustainable economy that leverages the region's unique strengths and advantages, such as its natural resources, skilled workforce, and diverse communities, to drive long-term growth and prosperity. This includes attracting new investment, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, and developing a highly skilled workforce to support the region's evolving industries and businesses. Attracting, retaining, and integrating new

immigrants is a crucial priority for Eastern Ontario's vision of becoming a prosperous and welcoming region while contributing to the provincial vision.

The strategy's goals are summarized into two principal categories: Attraction and the Retention and Integration of New Immigrants. The rationale and measurement framework for each of these objectives is found in Section 3.2.

Key Immigration Strategy Objectives: Overview

1. Establish a shared vision and set of priorities among regional municipalities and develop collaborative mechanisms that foster mutually beneficial planning and support the region's appeal to newcomers.
2. Leveraging the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and Réseau en immigration francophone (RIF) in the region as drivers of bottom-up ideas and perspectives from their respective stakeholders to inform how the region's immigrant attraction and retention strategy evolves over time.

3. Building/strengthening relationships with higher levels of government to align to favourable policies and plans and mobilize investments on priority actions determined collaboratively by the municipalities and LIPs/RIF.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 About Eastern Ontario

Eastern Ontario is a vast region of Canada that encompasses diverse communities, industries, and natural landscapes. Among the many counties and municipalities that make up this region are the County of Renfrew, Lanark County, Ottawa, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry United Counties, and the United Counties of Prescott and Russell. Each of these areas has its own unique character and offerings.

The County of Renfrew is a picturesque area known for its natural beauty and charming rural communities. The region is home to diverse recreational activities and attractions, including pristine lakes, scenic parks, and historic landmarks, offering visitors and residents a unique and authentic taste of country living.



Lanark County is a hidden gem known for its rolling hills, tranquil lakes, and vibrant arts scene. The region's dominant economic sectors include a thriving agricultural industry, artisanal food and drink offerings, and outdoor recreational opportunities, making it an ideal destination for those seeking a relaxed and authentic rural lifestyle.

As the capital city of Canada, Ottawa is a dynamic and cosmopolitan hub of culture, politics, and commerce. Known for its stunning natural setting along the Ottawa River and Rideau Canal, Ottawa is a vibrant city that offers something for everyone, from world-class museums and galleries to thriving culinary and nightlife scenes.

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, located along the St. Lawrence River, is a collection of rural communities that offer a peaceful and idyllic way of life. The region's dominant economic sectors include agriculture and manufacturing. With a rich history and heritage, the area is home to various charming towns and villages and scenic countryside and waterways that provide ample outdoor recreation and relaxation opportunities.

The United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry are communities that blend rural charm with modern conveniences. The region's dominant economic sectors include agriculture and manufacturing. In addition, it is home to various cultural and recreational attractions, including historic landmarks, festivals and events, and abundant outdoor activities such as fishing, hiking, and skiing.

Nestled along the Quebec border, the United Counties of Prescott and Russell are rural communities offering a relaxed and authentic way of life. The region's dominant economic sectors include agriculture and food processing, and it is known for its agricultural heritage and scenic countryside. The area is also home to a growing arts and culture scene and a variety of recreational opportunities such as golf, skiing, and fishing.

The region is home to a rich diversity of industries, including mining, forestry, agriculture, and manufacturing, as well as a growing tourism sector that showcases the area's natural beauty and recreational opportunities.

Home to a rich diversity of industries, including mining, forestry, agriculture, manufacturing, and a growing tourism sector.

1.1.2 About the LIPs and RIF in Eastern Region

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and Réseau en immigration francophone (RIFs) are collaborative initiatives between local governments, settlement agencies, community groups, and other stakeholders to enhance the successful integration of immigrants and refugees into their communities. These partnerships are critical in identifying local needs and developing strategies to support newcomers accessing services and opportunities, improving language skills, and building social connections.

The Local Immigration Partnership - Lanark & Renfrew is a collaborative effort to support the integration of immigrants and newcomers into the community. The partnership works towards improving access to resources and services, promoting intercultural understanding, and enhancing economic opportunities for newcomers by engaging with local organizations and stakeholders.

The Eastern Ontario Training Board is a non-profit organization focusing on workforce development and training initiatives in eastern Ontario. Through partnerships with employers, community groups, and other stakeholders, the board works towards improving access to employment opportunities, enhancing the skills and competencies of the local workforce, and addressing the needs of newcomers to the community.

The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership is a collaborative initiative to facilitate the successful integration of immigrants and newcomers into Ottawa. The partnership works towards identifying local needs and developing strategies to support newcomers accessing services, building social connections, and improving language skills by collaborating with local organizations and community stakeholders.

The Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'est de l'Ontario is a network of francophone organizations and stakeholders that aims to enhance the successful integration of francophone immigrants and newcomers into eastern Ontario. The network collaborates and partners with various organizations to improve access to services, promote intercultural understanding, and enhance economic opportunities for francophone newcomers.

The St. Lawrence-Rideau Immigration Partnership is a collaborative initiative between local governments, community groups, and other stakeholders to enhance the successful integration of immigrants and newcomers into Leeds and Grenville. The partnership works towards identifying local needs and developing strategies to support newcomers in accessing services, building social connections, and enhancing economic opportunities through collaboration and partnership.

1.1.3 The Need: Why do we need a Regional Immigrant Attraction & Retention Strategy?

The region is comprised of a dynamic urban centre and rural communities that would benefit from an influx of population to support ongoing economic growth and maintain their vitality. Skilled and unskilled labour shortages are a significant concern across Eastern Ontario, including the County of

Renfrew, Lanark County, Ottawa, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry United Counties, and the United Counties of Prescott and Russell. In addition, our communities can see that their economies are not doing as well as they had in the past: shops are closing, downtowns are not as busy as they once were, the population is aging, many youths are either leaving or unemployed/underemployed, and we are coming out of a global pandemic which changed the employment landscape in many instances.

Our municipal leaders, economic development partners and business owners recognize that immigrant attraction and retention can play a pivotal role in helping to address these shortages while also considering housing, welcoming attitudes, and relevant supports available to strengthen our attractiveness to immigrants. Immigration is one channel through which small and medium-sized communities can have more confidence in a viable future.

Since 2016, there has been a significant shift in the workforce supply in Eastern Ontario⁹. The number of available workers from within the region is decreasing, and with an aging local labour market population, many Eastern Ontarians are expected to retire soon. To maintain its strong economic growth, the region must seek out workers from outside the area and beyond.

To ensure the region's continued growth, ensuring the supply of talent to fuel local workforce needs will likely be the biggest challenge the six regions will face in the coming years. However, by collaborating and supporting one another, the six counties can work together to implement a unified immigration strategy to achieve greater success. This Strategy will address workforce needs and economic priorities and contribute to the community's social, cultural, and economic development, including those who come for compassionate or humanitarian reasons.

Although the federal government is responsible for setting immigration policies and levels, local decisions can significantly influence a community's ability to attract and retain immigrants. Effective immigration policies must reflect the needs and realities of the communities where new immigrants are needed. Therefore, this collective immigrant attraction and retention strategy for Eastern Ontario aims to support local immigration efforts while aligning with the provincial government's goals of attracting and retaining more immigrants to the region.

1.1.4 The Consultation and Research Methodology

The Eastern Ontario Immigrant Attraction and Retention Strategy was prepared after consultation with local immigration settlement agencies, community groups, businesses, and critical public service organizations across all regions led by Lockhart Facilitation.

Community consultation is essential, particularly when developing strategies to enhance the successful integration of immigrants and newcomers into a community. The Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and Réseau en immigration francophone (RIF) play a critical role in this process by engaging their partners and adapting the overall project goals to the specific needs and characteristics of their communities. Their work is an asset to the project, and acknowledging the effort and importance of community consultation adds tremendous leverage to its success. Through this work, the project gained a deeper understanding of the distinct challenges and opportunities facing each community, allowing for the development of tailored strategies that are more effective and responsive. Ultimately, community consultation is vital in building more inclusive, welcoming communities that support the successful integration of immigrants and newcomers. Therefore, it is essential to the success of any project focused on this objective.

12 community consultation sessions were hosted, ten delivered through English facilitation and two in French, to which the following organizations and community members contributed insights and guidance:

- Counties and municipalities (14)
- Post-secondary institutes (3)
- School boards (4)
- Social service agencies (6)
- Economic Development (9)
- Healthcare services (4)
- Employment support services (8)
- Workforce planning (3)
- Manufacturing sector (2)
- Retail sector (2)
- Francophone organizations (9)
- Newcomers, immigrants, refugees, and international students (15)

The Strategy project team conducted a customized survey to gather feedback from 40 respondents about their experiences and opinions on immigration in their community. The survey included questions on various topics, such as the significance of immigration to the community, the difficulties encountered in attracting and retaining immigrants, and

suggestions for implementing better strategies to support immigrant integration. The survey also asked about specific obstacles that immigrants may encounter while accessing services, such as language or cultural differences, and the types of services or programs that respondents believe would be most beneficial.

The Strategy project team also reviewed immigration strategies developed in other regions across Canada. In recent years, dozens of communities have developed plans for attracting, integrating, and retaining immigrants. These plans provided helpful insight into how other communities are addressing this issue.

1.1.5 The Immigration Strategy Development Process: Desired Outcomes

The project team led by Local Immigration Partnership - Lanark & Renfrew, in partnership with The Eastern Ontario Training Board, Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership, Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'est de l'Ontario and St. Lawrence-Rideau Immigration Partnership – Leeds and Grenville were tasked with developing the first collaborative immigration strategy for the six partnering communities that includes the following six key requirements:

- Formulate and effectively convey the necessity of immigration in the upcoming years.
- Propose strategies based on successful approaches to facilitate the necessary institutional transformations to make our region more inviting and desirable.
- Involve the business sector in recruiting and integrating immigrants into the labour force.
- Advocate for governments to revise their perspective on immigration to small and medium-sized communities and the dynamics between migration from rural and urban areas.
- Establish robust support systems for immigrants to facilitate their integration and wellbeing.
- Launch strategy within Eastern Ontario through a virtual summit, presentations to municipal leaders and community members, and ongoing meetings.

1.1.6 Municipalities and Immigration

The Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA) Agreement in 2005 marked a significant change in how municipalities in Ontario were involved in immigration. This agreement paved the way for the establishment of LIPs and RIFs as a way to implement this intention. The Federal government's regionalization policy has also been promoting immigrant settlement in small communities for some time now.

Although there has been growing recognition of the role of municipalities since COIA, it is important to note that their role is not new. Establishing LIPs and RIFs has allowed for greater collaboration and support among municipalities to facilitate the successful integration of immigrants and newcomers in their communities.

Immigration is a shared jurisdiction between the federal and provincial governments, and there hasn't been much of a role for local government – particularly outside the largest urban centres. However, in recent years the dynamics have changed as more immigrants settle outside of the Toronto-Montreal-Vancouver-Calgary urban centres, and municipal governments realize how important attracting talent is to their continued growth and vitality.

If Eastern Ontario and other communities are to attract and retain immigrants in the years ahead successfully, it will involve a true partnership of local government, settlement agencies, business groups and other local stakeholders.

1.1.7 Immigration: A Coordinated Approach

The six counties that comprise Eastern Ontario have never come together with a coordinated approach to address this critical regional challenge. As a result, the project team believes that ensuring the supply of workers will grow to meet the local economy's needs is truly a regional challenge.

Although the urban centre of Ottawa and rural communities in the surrounding five counties possess their own unique traits, they share many similarities in terms of their economies and job markets, which underscores the importance of collaboration between municipalities in attracting and retaining immigrants to the region. However, various organizations form an ecosystem beyond local governments crucial to ensuring successful immigrant integration into our communities. This ecosystem includes immigrant service providers, hospitals, schools, churches, and other public institutions. Additionally, the business sector in the urban centre of Ottawa and beyond must recognize the significance of immigration to the region's future workforce. Reluctance to hire immigrants by businesses could contribute to a tight labour market and impede the region's growth potential.

**The successful
integration of immigrants
and newcomers
in communities.**

Nonetheless, beyond local governments, the ecosystem of organizations mobilized and galvanized by the LIPs/RIF plays a crucial role in ensuring we can appeal to, retain, and integrate immigrants into our communities. These entities include immigrant service providers, hospitals, schools, churches, and other public institutions. Similarly vital is the business sector, which must recognize the significance of immigration to the region's future workforce. Should businesses display reluctance to hire immigrants, this could contribute to an increasingly tight labour market and, ultimately, impede the growth potential of our region. The LIPs and RIFs serve as local engagement and strategy groups, bringing together various organizations across multiple sectors to coordinate and amplify their efforts toward shared goals. These entities include immigrant service providers, hospitals, schools, churches, and other public institutions. Similarly vital is the business sector, which must recognize the

The provincial and federal governments play essential roles in the plan.

significance of immigration to the region's future workforce. Should businesses display reluctance to hire immigrants, this could contribute to an increasingly tight labour market and, ultimately, impede the growth potential of our region.

Lastly, the provincial and federal governments play essential roles in this plan. The federal government must consider the potential impact on the availability of workers in the Eastern Ontario economy when implementing changes to the national labour market and immigration policies to avoid any unintended reduction in the workforce. In addition, the federal government has helped with immigration in small and mid-sized urban and rural areas across the country through initiatives like LIPs and RIFs. The provincial government is also an important partner because they want to see rural areas grow and thrive, which means it will need to bring in more new immigrants in the coming years.

A key objective of the Eastern Immigrant Attraction and Retention Strategy is to align and coordinate the policy objectives and aspirations of the federal and provincial governments to the needs of the region's communities. An important asset in this alignment is the connection between the LIPs and RIF in each partnering community, as they have the unique position of building local strategies and engagements.

1.1.8 Key Language & Definitions

What is the difference between an immigrant and a refugee? Immigrants are pulled to leave their home country in search of economic opportunities or personal reasons, but they also have the option to return. In contrast, refugees are pushed out of their homes due to persecution, war, or violence and cannot return until their safety can be guaranteed, which could take many years or even decades.¹

Recent Immigrant or Newcomer²: This term refers to landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years before a given census year. For the 2021 Census, recent immigrants are landed immigrants who arrived in Canada between January 1, 2016, and Census Day, May 11, 2021.

Migrant³: While there is no formal legal definition of an international migrant, most experts agree that an international migrant changes their country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or

temporary migration, covering movements between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for one year or more.

Refugee⁴: A refugee is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

Asylum Seeker⁵: An asylum-seeker seeks international protection but has not yet been granted refugee status. When an individual fleeing conflict or persecution arrives in a new country, they must submit a formal claim for refugee status. This claim is evaluated by the host country, after which asylum seekers may be legally recognized as refugees.

¹ UNCHR. 2018. Frequently Asked Questions. "What is the difference between a migrant and a refugee?", <https://www.unhcr.ca/newsroom/faq/>.

² Statistics Canada. 2023. Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2021 Census: Definitions. "Recent Immigrants", https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/subjects-start/immigration_and_ethnocultural_diversity

³ UNCHR. 2018. Definitions. "Refugees and Migrants", <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/definitions>

⁴ 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html>

⁵ UNCHR. 2018. Frequently Asked Questions, <https://www.unhcr.ca/newsroom/faq/>

1.2 Immigration Level Trends in the Region

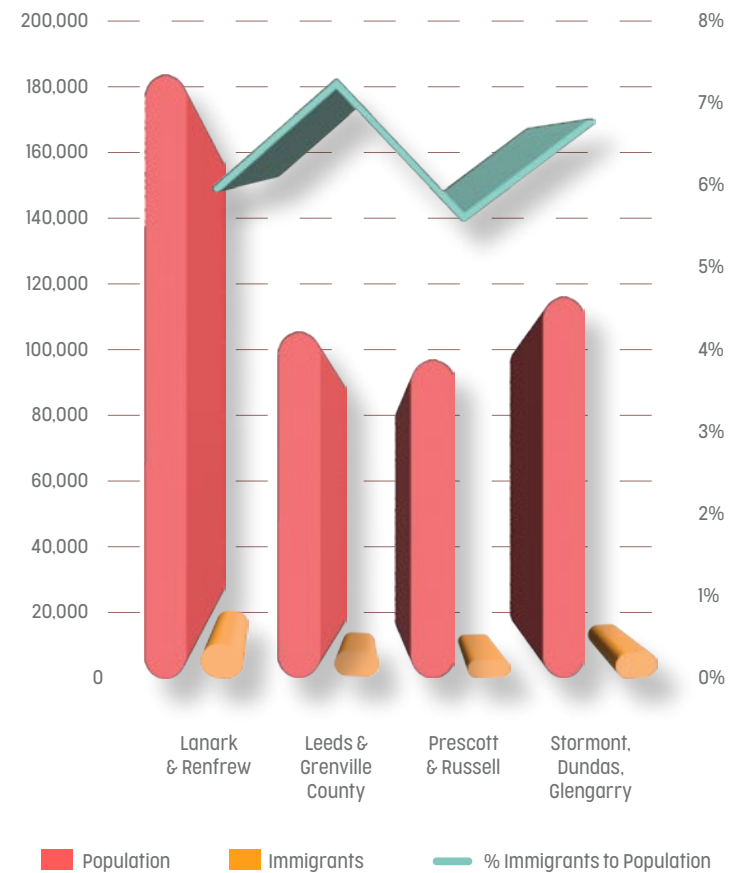
Why should immigrants consider Eastern Ontario?

Eastern Ontario is an amazing place to live, work, and have fun because of its natural beauty, outdoor recreation opportunities, friendly communities, and vibrant arts and culture. The region has a strong economy with diverse mining, forestry, and tourism industries. There are also many festivals and events throughout the year, showcasing the region's rich cultural heritage, including francophone culture.

However, the region also faces some challenges. One of the main challenges is attracting and retaining skilled workers, particularly in remote and rural areas. This can impact the region's economic growth and competitiveness. Another challenge is the aging population, which can pressure healthcare and social services. Additionally, the region's vast size and its scattered population can create logistical challenges for the delivery of services and infrastructure development. The following charts reflect the percentage of immigrants in the total partnering community, comparing rural and urban trends to that of the provincial and trends of the country as a whole.

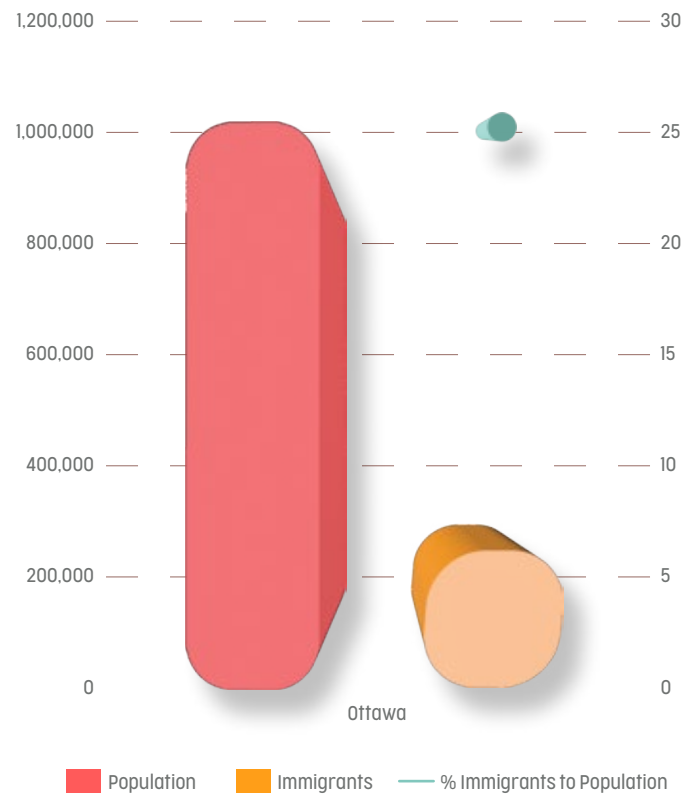
1.2 Immigration Level Trends in the Region

**Percentage of immigrants to total population -
Lanark and Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville,
Prescott and Russell, Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry.**

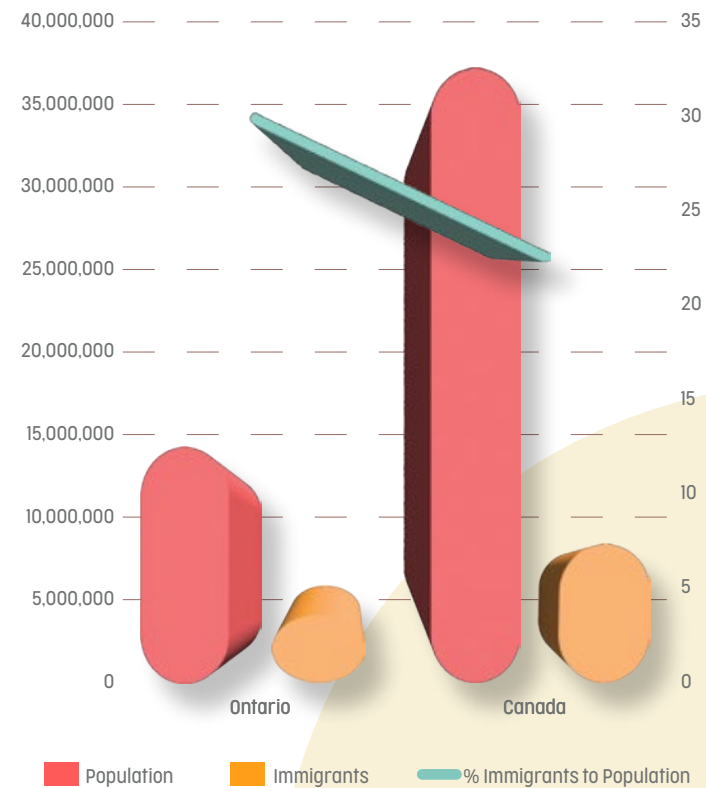


1.2 Immigration Level Trends in the Region

Percentage of immigrants to total population - Ottawa



Percentage of immigrants to total population - Ontario & Canada



(Source: Statistic Canada 2021. Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, annual and Labour force status by visible minority, immigrant status and period of immigration, highest level of education, age and gender)

Most importantly, Eastern Ontario has a bright economic future due to its abundant natural resources, including minerals, forestry, and renewable energy sources such as hydroelectricity and biomass. The region also has a diverse economy, including healthcare, education, and tourism. The government is investing in infrastructure projects such as transportation, broadband, and community development to support economic growth. Furthermore, the region has a strong entrepreneurial spirit and innovation culture, with numerous startups and incubators. Overall, Eastern Ontario has the potential for sustainable growth and development. Its location in Ontario and neighbouring Quebec is a big advantage and has helped industries like transportation, tourism, and retail grow steadily to serve the local population. Also, the region has many successful small and medium-sized businesses, which has helped the economy keep growing.

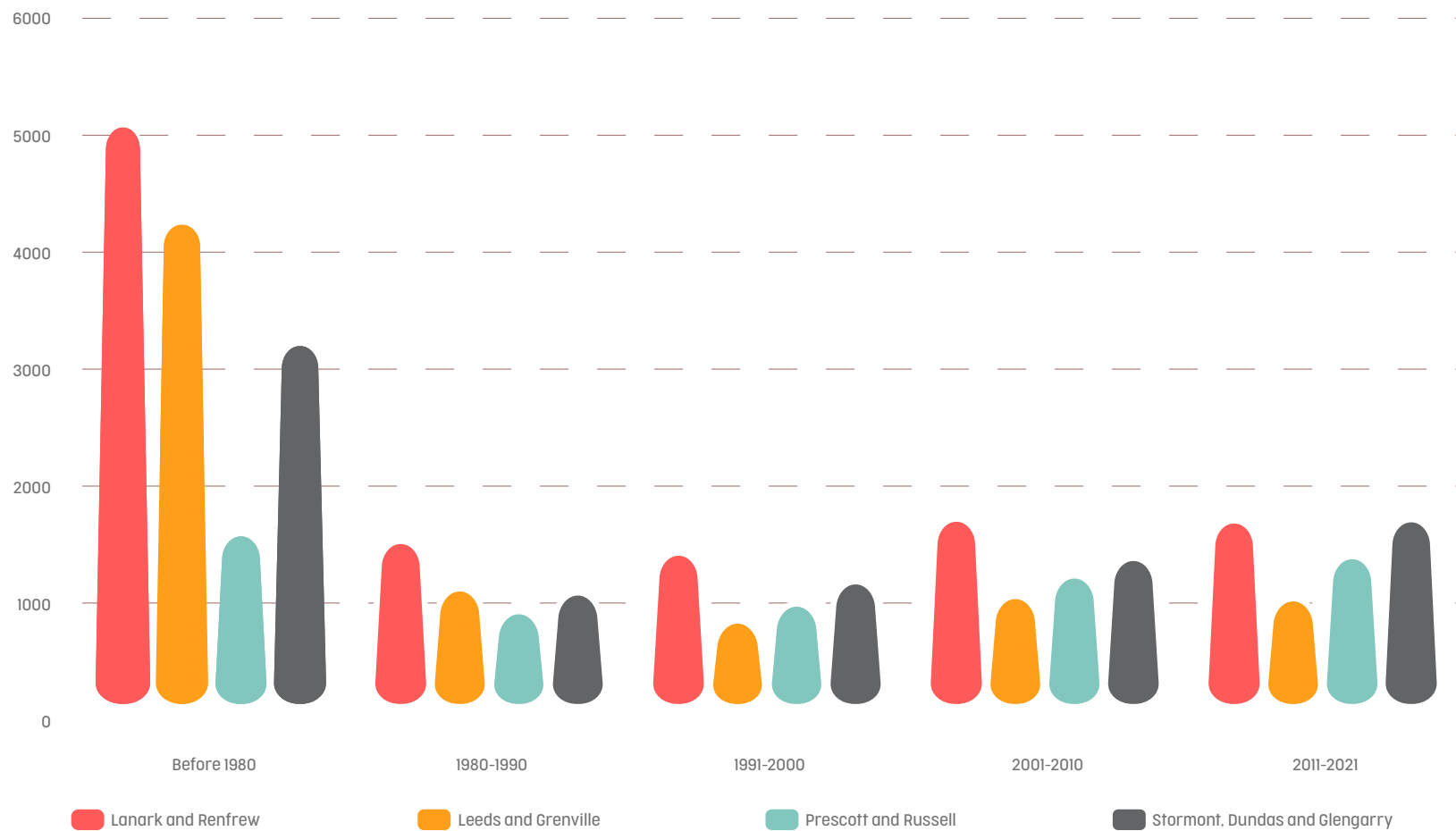
The Eastern region's communities have had varying levels of success in attracting immigrants, with differing social, cultural, and human capital characteristics among those who choose to live there. As well, while there are similarities among the region's rural communities, there are significant differences between rural and urban areas. The following charts and paragraphs will compare rural and urban centres and examine how the region compares to Ontario and Canada.

1.2.1 When did the bulk of immigrants arrive in each region?

While there was a surge in immigration in Canada before 1980, this trend declined after the initial surge, particularly in Lanark and Renfrew Counties. However, between 2000 and 2010, the number of immigrants climbed in Lanark and Renfrew Counties and slightly decreased in the following decade. Overall, there has been a steady growth in immigration in recent years, which can be attributed to the increased number of programs and incentives designed to encourage settlement in the country.

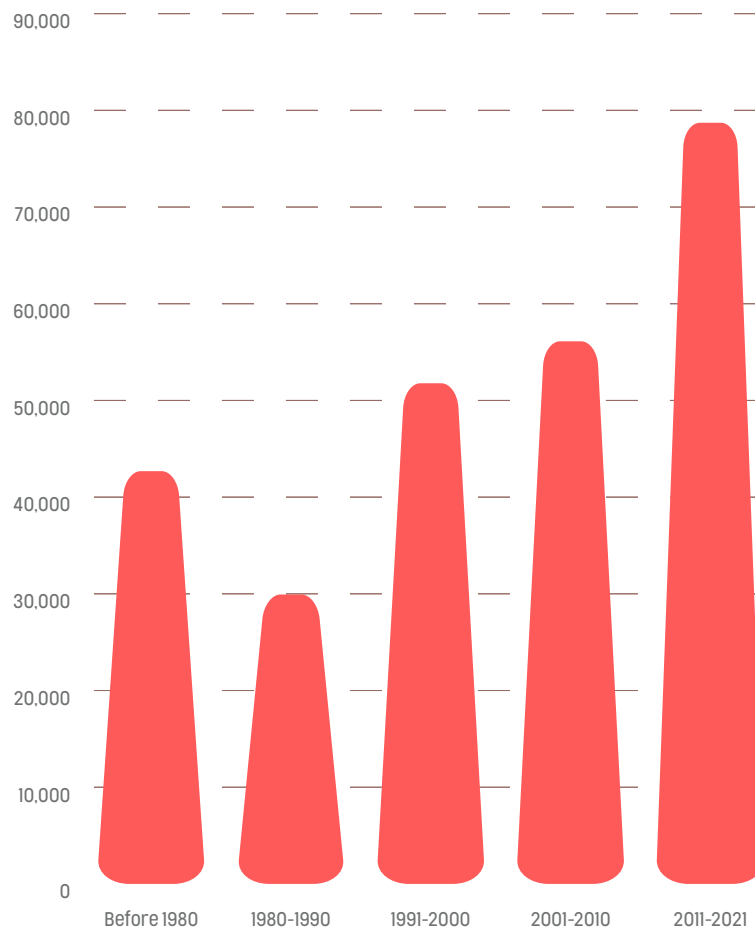
1.2.1 Immigrants by period of arrival (cont'd next page)

Immigrants by period of arrival - Lanark and Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott and Russell, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

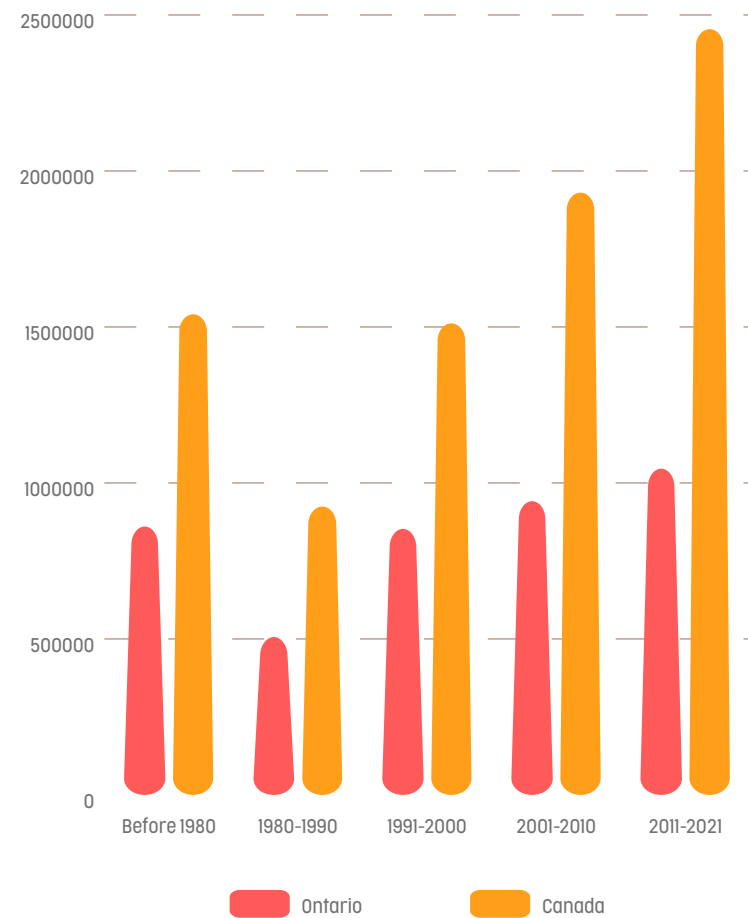



1.2.1 Immigrants by period of arrival

Immigrants by period of arrival - Ottawa.



Immigrants by period of arrival - Ontario, Canada.





Before 1980, Canada experienced a surge in immigration at the county, city, province, and national levels. However, this trend declined after the initial surge, with the county level withstanding the worst of it.

Specifically, the Lanark and Renfrew Counties saw a drop in the percentage of immigrants after this, with this trend continuing more or less until the 2010s.

Although immigration slightly increased in the counties in the 2000s and 2010s, the growth was not as robust as in the City of Ottawa, the province of Ontario, or the country as a whole.

However, between 2000 and 2010, the number of immigrants climbed in Lanark and Renfrew Counties and slightly decreased in the following decade.

Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County and Leeds and Grenville County also saw most immigration occur before the 1980s. However, it is nearly twice as many as there have been in recent years. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note in the chart that while the number of immigrants is higher before 1980 Prescott and Russell, it is not that much more than in later periods.

Lanark and Renfrew Counties did see a slight decrease between 2011 and 2021 from 1,555 in 2001-2010 to 1,540 in the more recent slice of time. There was no drastic leap in immigration for the counties through the past decades, though Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry matched pace with Lanark and Renfrew Counties.

Overall, while most partnering countries saw their main surge in immigration before the 1980s, Ontario, Ottawa, and Canada have experienced a larger influx of newcomers in recent years.

The charts indicate that there has been very steady growth as time goes on. This can be attributed to the increased number of programs and incentives designed to encourage settlement in the country.

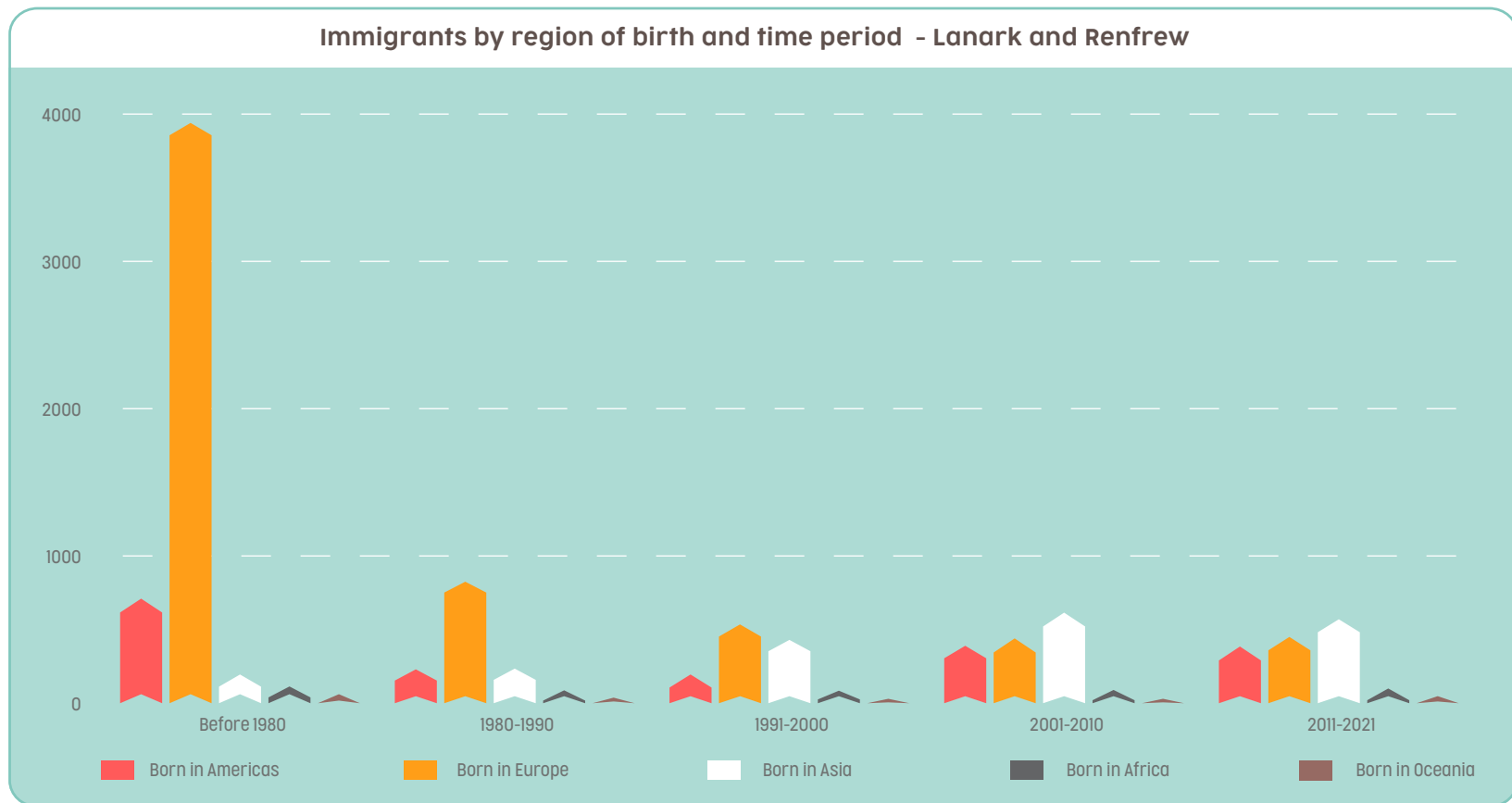
(Source: Statistic Canada 2021. Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, annual and Labour force status by visible minority, immigrant status and period of immigration, highest level of education, age and gender)

1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and period of arrival

The source regions of immigrants arriving in rural counties within the Region have undergone a significant change. Before 1980, most immigrants came from Europe, but since 1991,

a significant portion has been coming from Asia and Africa. This shift in demographics indicates a rapid evolution of the cultural landscape. The influx of new customs, traditions, and ways of life is diversifying the local cultural scene.

1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and time period

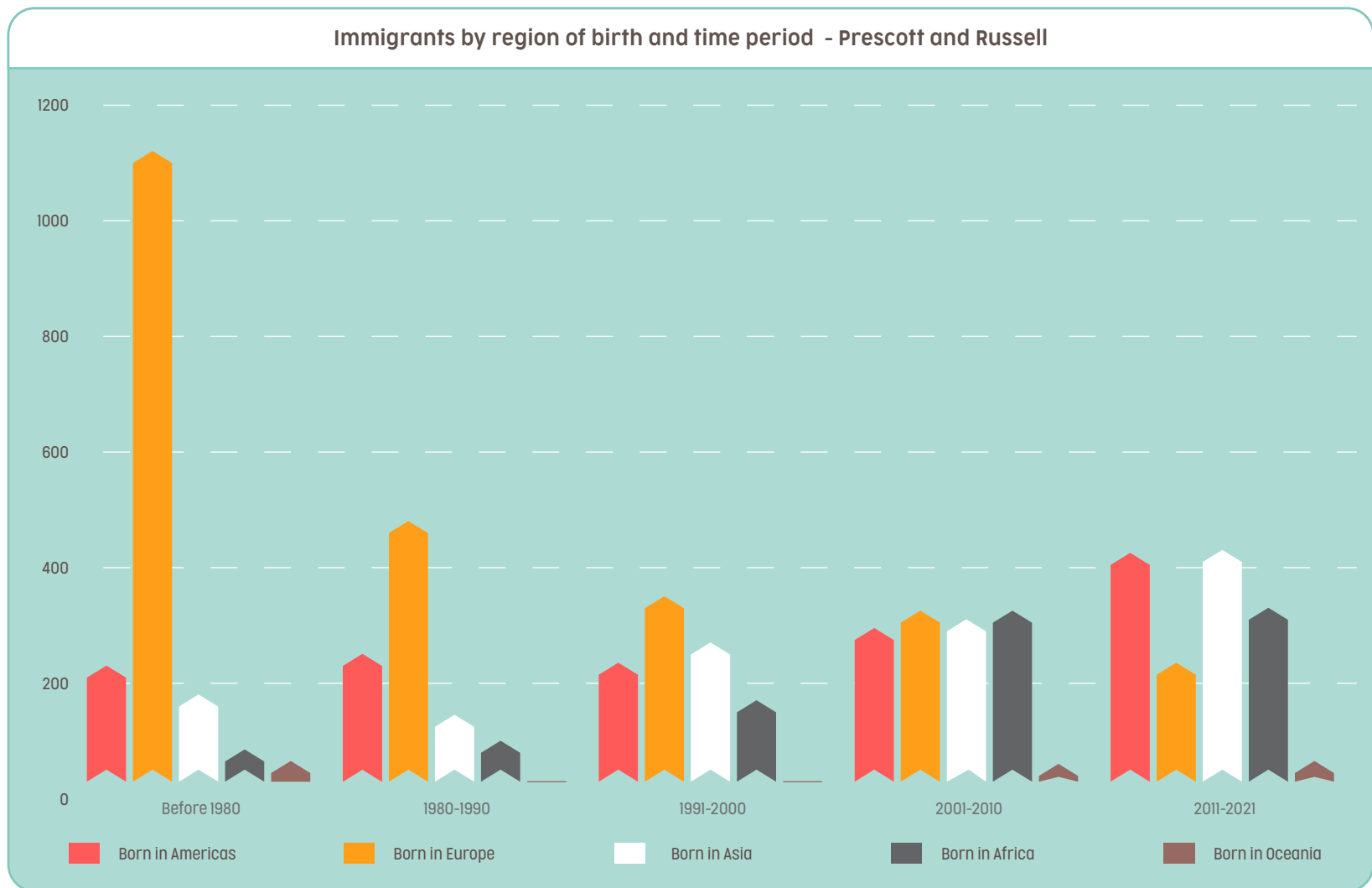


1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and time period (cont'd next page)

Immigrants by region of birth and time period - Leeds and Grenville



1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and time period

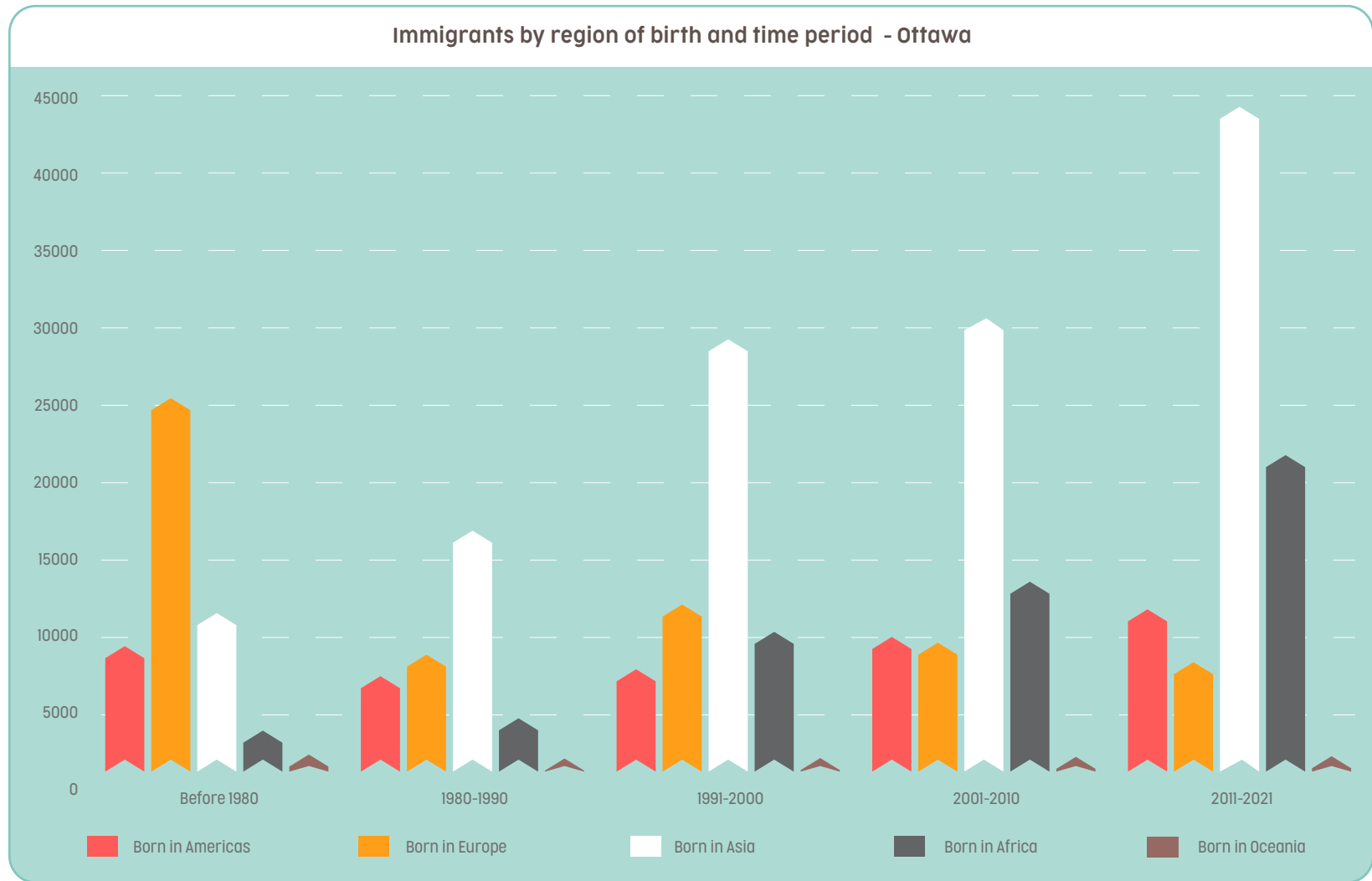


1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and time period (cont'd next page)

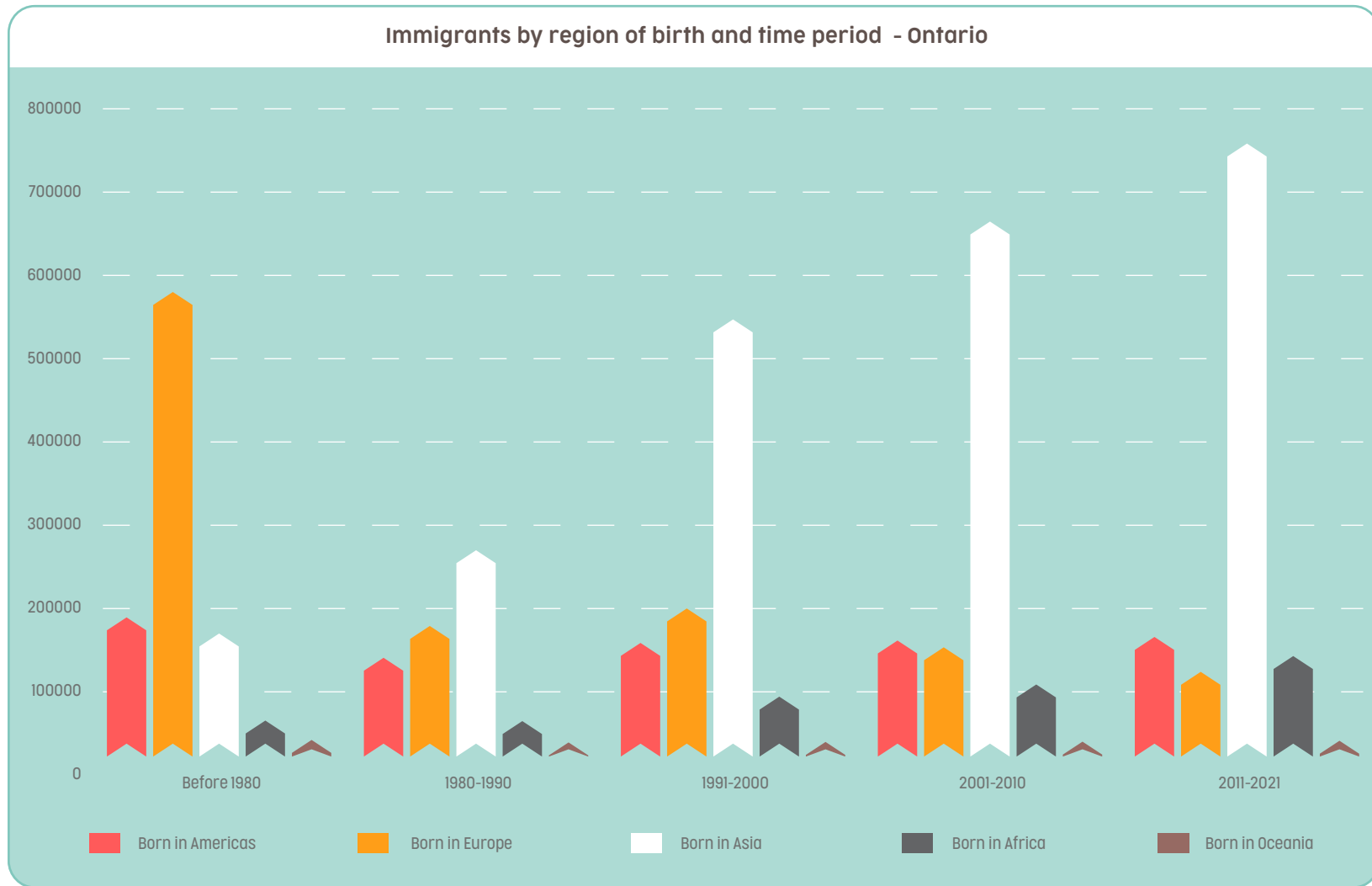
Immigrants by region of birth and time period - Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry



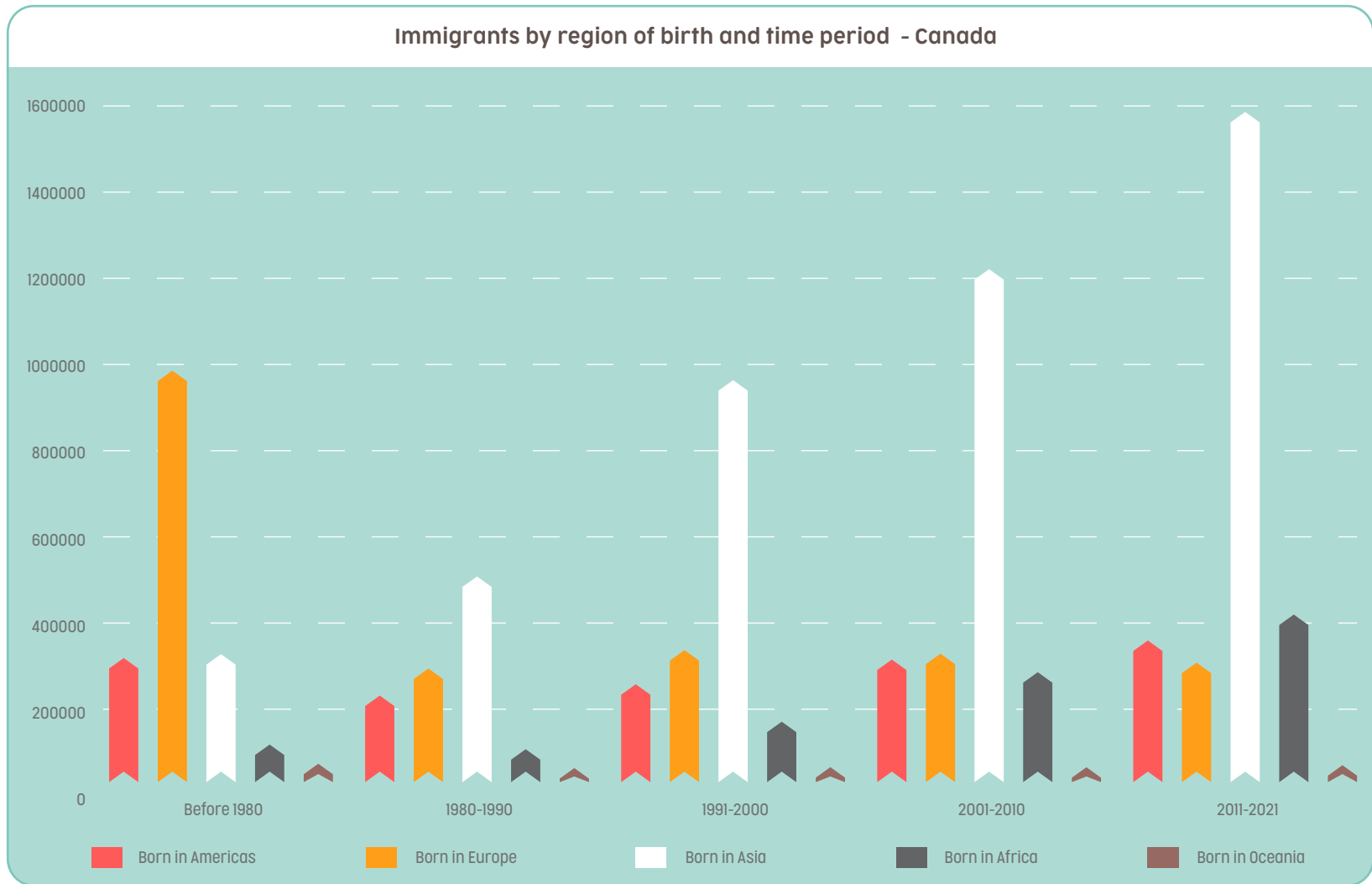
1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and time period




1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and time period (cont'd next page)



1.2.2 Immigrants by region of birth and time period





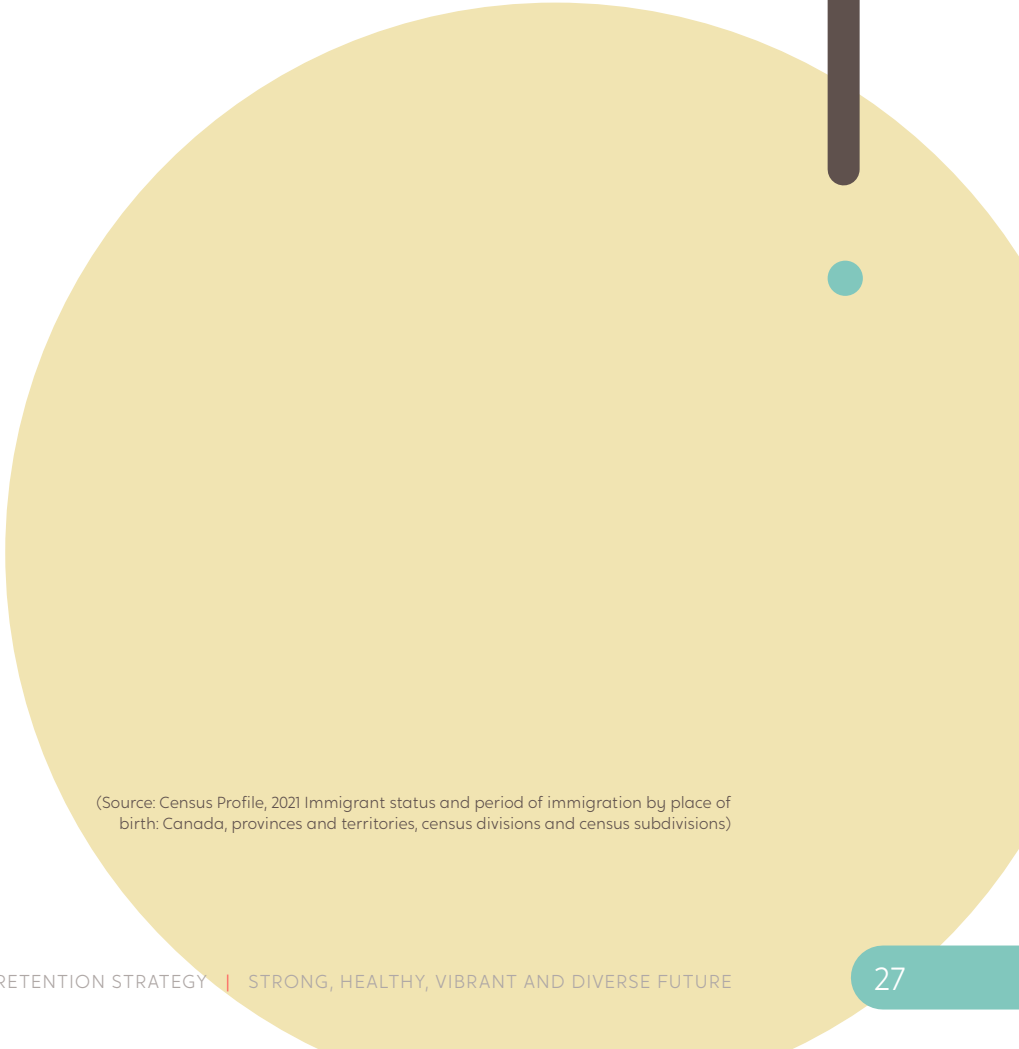

The data shows a notable shift in the source regions of immigrants arriving from all world regions in recent years. While most immigrants before 1980 came from Europe, the data reveals that most immigrants have arrived from Asia and Africa since 1991.

This suggests that the cultural landscape of rural counties in the Region is evolving rapidly: new customs, traditions, and ways of life increasingly diversify the makeup of the local cultural scenes.

The span between 2001-2010 saw a surge of immigrants from Africa in all counties, potentially due to the aftermath of conflicts that occurred in the continent during the 90s and early 2000s. During this period, there was also a notable increase in the number of immigrants from Asia, a trend that is continuing to today.

This trend in the counties is consistent with what is happening in Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada, where newcomers from Asia now constitute most of the data. Immigrants from Oceania are statistically insignificant in all three areas, while newcomers from the Americas and Europe are now remarkably similar. The number of African immigrants has also increased, although it is still significantly smaller than those from Asian countries. This represents a significant departure from the

historical trend, where European immigrants made up most of the data before the 1980s. Overall, the data highlights a rapidly changing immigration landscape in Canada, with immigrants from Asia and Africa arriving in greater numbers after the 1980s.



(Source: Census Profile, 2021 Immigrant status and period of immigration by place of birth: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions)

1.2.3 Immigrants by age group

According to the data, there has been an upward trend in the number of young immigrants settling in the Lanark, Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, and Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry regions, with a significant portion falling within the 25-54 age

range. This demographic shift is a promising sign for the region's economic growth. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to prioritize non-permanent residents, especially those in the working-age bracket, as they hold significant potential for impact.

LANARK AND RENFREW					
Age/status	0-14	15-25	25-54	55-64	65 and old
Non-immigrants	99%	97%	94%	94%	88%
Immigrants	1%	2%	5.5%	6%	12%
Non-permanent residents	0% *	1%	0.5%	0% *	0%
* So few as to be statistically insignificant.					

LEEDS AND GRENVILLE					
Age/Status	0-14	15-25	25-54	55-64	65 and old
Non-immigrants	99%	97%	94%	92%	85%
Immigrants	1%	2.2%	5.8%	8%	15%
Non-permanent residents	0% *	0.8%	0.2%	0% *	0%
* So few as to be statistically insignificant.					

PRESCOTT AND RUSSELL					
Age/Status	0-14	15-25	25-54	55-64	65 and old
Non-immigrants	98%	96%	96%	94%	92%
Immigrants	1.5%	3.4%	3.6%	6%	8%
Non-permanent residents	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%	0% *	0%
* So few as to be statistically insignificant.					

STORMONT, DUNDAS, AND GLENGARRY					
Age/Status	0-14	15-25	25-54	55-64	65 and old
Non-immigrants	98%	96%	91%	93%	89%
Immigrants	1.6%	2.6%	8%	7%	11%
Non-permanent residents	0.4%	1.4%	1%	0% *	0%

* So few as to be statistically insignificant.

OTTAWA					
Age/Status	0-14	15-25	25-54	55-64	65 and old
Non-immigrants	89%	77%	66%	69%	65%
Immigrants	9%	16%	31%	30%	35%
Non-permanent residents	2%	7%	3%	0% *	0% *

* So few as to be statistically insignificant.

ONTARIO					
Age/Status	0-14	15-25	25-54	55-64	65 and old
Non-immigrants	91%	77%	61%	63%	56%
Immigrants	7%	16%	35%	37%	43%
Non-permanent residents	2%	7%	4%	0%	0%

* So few as to be statistically insignificant.

CANADA					
Age/Status	0-14	15-25	25-54	55-64	65 and old
Non-immigrants	92%	79%	68%	73%	70%
Immigrants	6%	16%	28%	26%	30%
Non-permanent residents	1%	7%	4%	1%	0%*

* So few as to be statistically insignificant.

1.2.3 Immigrants by age group (cont'd)

The data shows that although older immigrants still make up the majority in Lanark and Renfrew Counties, as well as in Leeds and Grenville County, the proportion of younger immigrants is increasing. Notably, in Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry, younger and older immigrant groups are just a few dozen people apart.

The data highlights a significant trend in recent immigration as it primarily targets the young population, particularly those in the working age group of 25-54 years old. This is a positive sign for the region's economic growth, implying an influx of young and potentially skilled workers. In addition, it is worth noting that younger immigrants are likely to arrive with their parents or guardians instead of travelling alone. Therefore, it can be inferred that immigrants under 24, especially those under 14, are likely coming with their families.

Ottawa, Prescott, and Russell have charts demonstrating that most immigrants entering those areas are younger. This is the same as the charts for Ontario and Canada. They also show that immigrants in the same age range make up the majority of newcomers, which aligns with the federal government's focus on attracting working-age individuals to settle in Canada.

Although there is a significant population of newcomers in the 24 and under category, as mentioned above, most are likely dependents of immigrants who came to Canada. It is worth noting that there is still a considerable number of individuals aged 55 and over among all charts. This is likely due to immigrants who settled in the area at a younger age and have aged naturally while living in Canada.

It is important to prioritize non-permanent residents in our Strategy, as they have significant potential for impact. In the partnering regions, it is interesting to note that the number of non-permanent residents is relatively low, even among working-age people. For instance, within the 55-64 age bracket, there are very few non-permanent residents and none among those 65 and above. However, in contrast to this, cities such as Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada have a considerably higher number of non-permanent residents, even among the senior population. It is worth noting that this is likely due to factors such as aging while living in Canada or holding work Visas rather than being invited as Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) for the first time. Given the federal government's policy of transition to permanency, focusing on non-permanent residents could yield quick results.

(Source: Statistic Canada. Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population - Lanark, Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott and Russell, Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada)

1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth

While there has been an increasing diversity of immigrants in several counties, there remains a dominant proportion of European immigrants, particularly from the United Kingdom. However, recent trends show a shift towards more diversity,

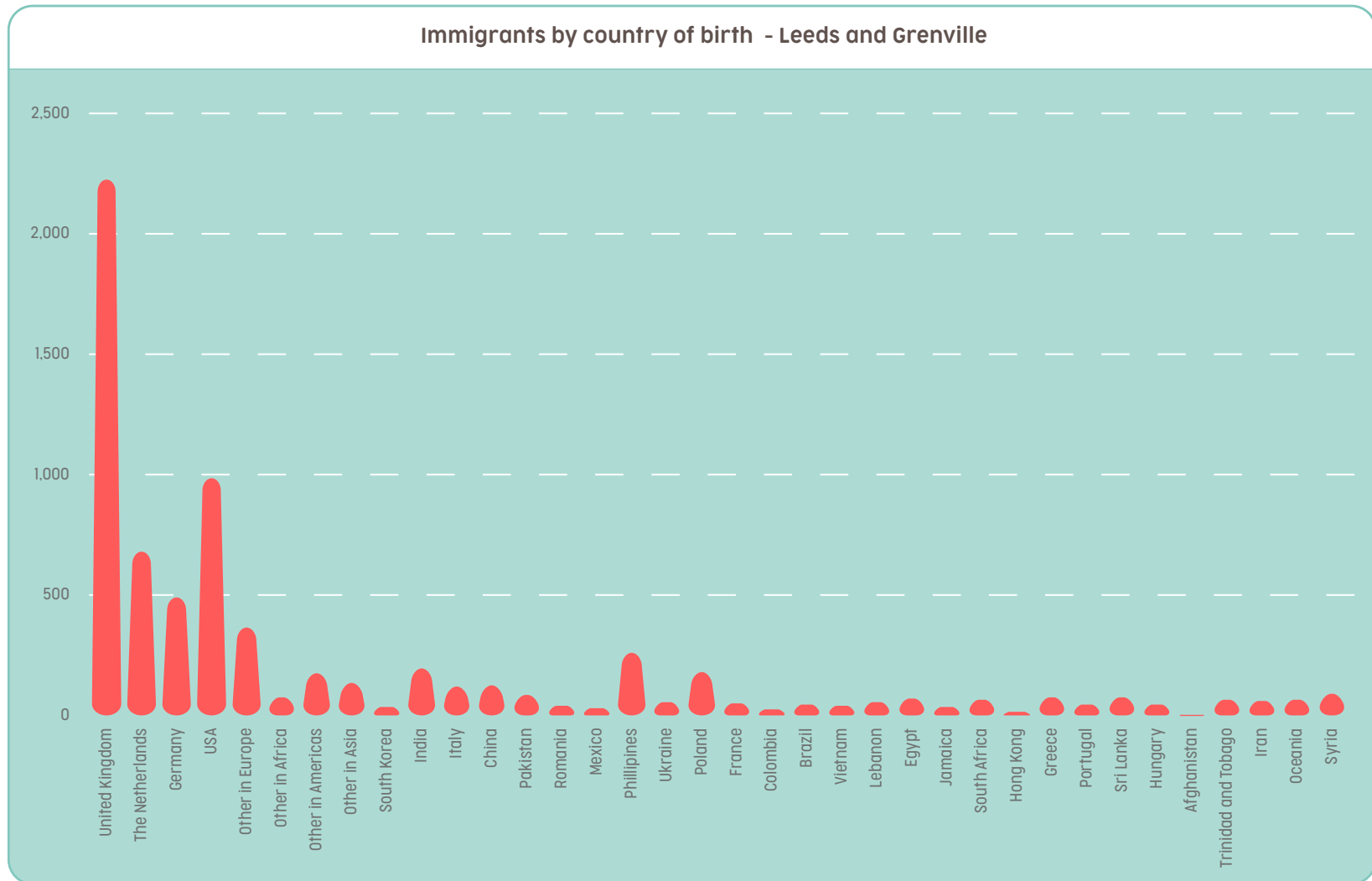
with growing numbers of immigrants from Asia and other parts of the US. Additionally, there is a significant presence of African immigrants, particularly in Ontario and Ottawa as a whole.

1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth (cont'd next page)

Immigrants by country of birth - Lanark and Renfrew

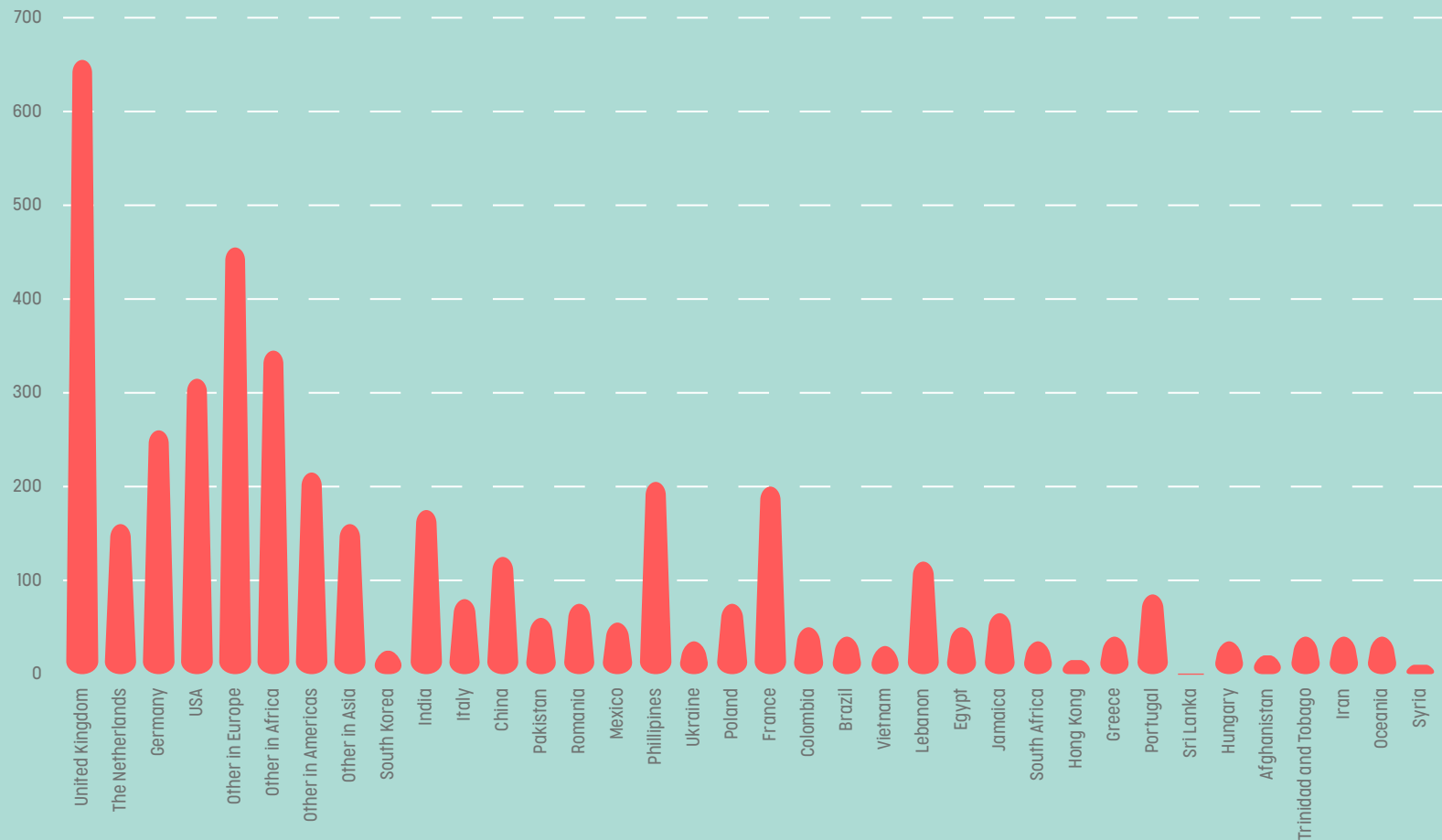


1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth



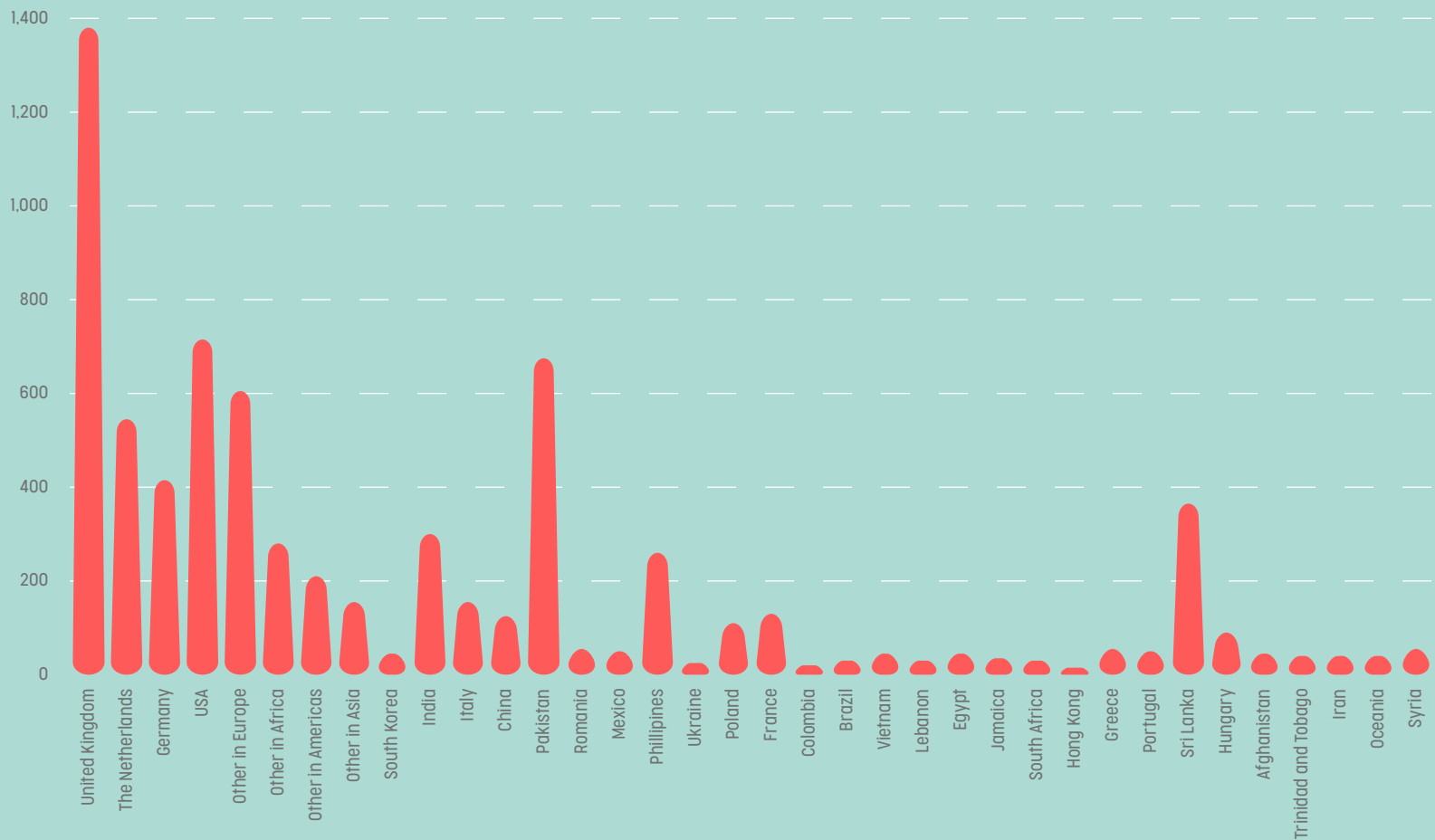
1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth (cont'd next page)

Immigrants by country of birth - Prescott and Russell



1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth

Immigrants by country of birth - Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry

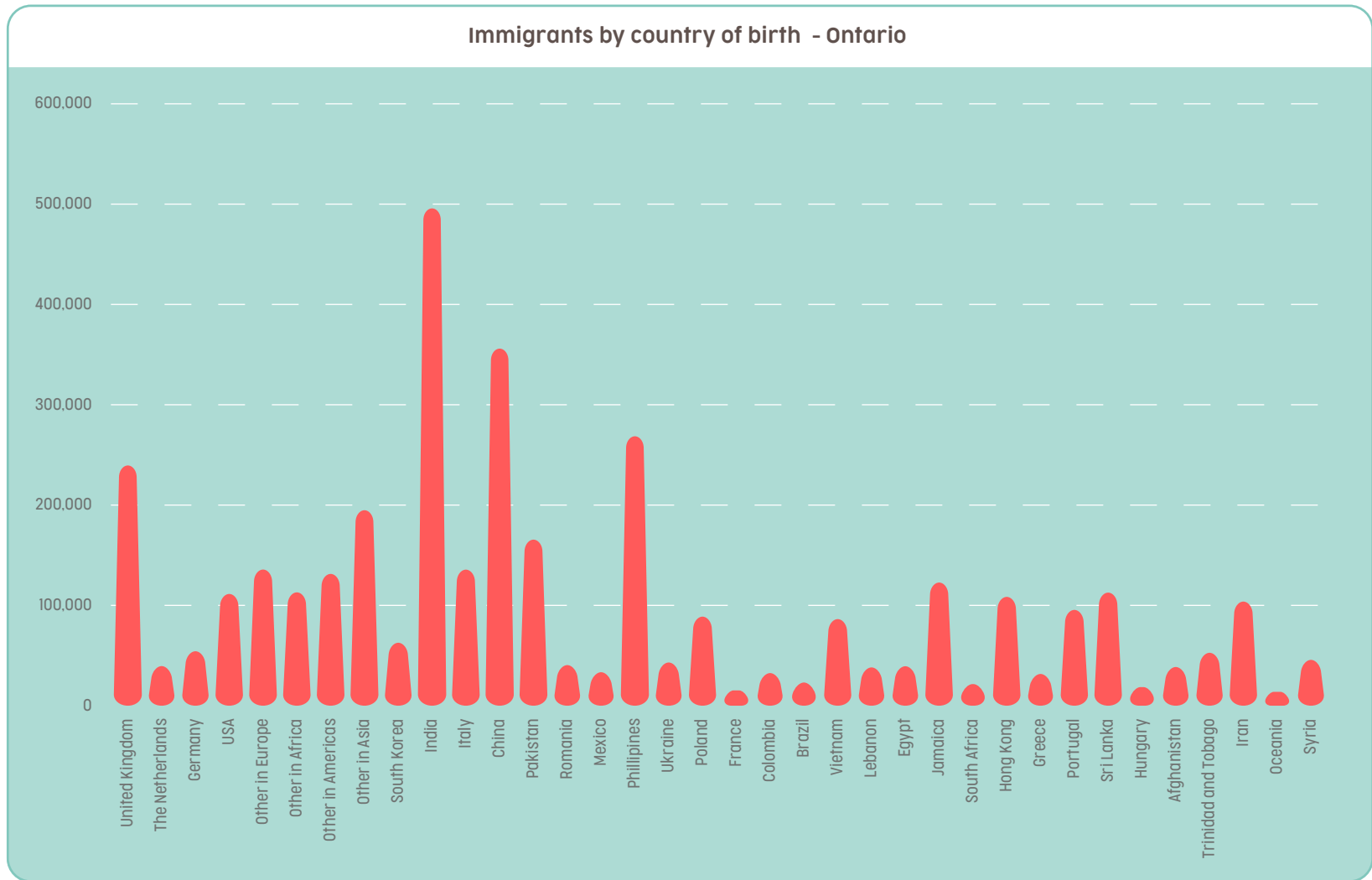


1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth (cont'd next page)

Immigrants by country of birth - Ottawa



1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth



1.2.4 Immigrants by country of birth

Immigrants by country of birth - Canada



The data suggests that the historical European immigration boom, particularly in the partnering counties (excluding Ottawa), has led to a dominant proportion of immigrants with origins from the United Kingdom. The influence of the Netherlands on farming in these counties is also noteworthy.

While the immigrant origins are diverse in all charts, it is clear that European backgrounds still dominate in Lanark and Renfrew Counties. However, recent years have seen a shift towards more diversity, although these counties may not have been perceived as welcoming to immigrants from Asia and Africa.

Despite the lack of Syrian immigrants in Renfrew County, there are about 60 in Lanark County. In addition, there is a growing population of Filipinos in both counties, likely due to increased temporary foreign workers (TFW) and local business initiatives.

As noted, the dominant place of birth for Leeds and Grenville is the United Kingdom, with 2,225. It surpasses all other countries of birth, even those that are popular in Europe. However, there is a strong presence of American immigrants (985). And while Europe remains the most popular origin, there is a growing number of new immigrants coming from areas like the Philippines (269), India (195), and other countries in North and South America (175).

While the European influence (UK, France, Germany etc.) in Prescott and Russell is undoubted, there is a very large population of immigrants from other regions. Much like all charts, there is a noteworthy number of Americans (315), Filipinos (205), Indians (175), and other parts of America (215). Still, in this region, there is more Lebanese folk (120) than in some of the other charts.

**It is important
to consider the diverse
backgrounds of recent
immigrants when developing
attraction strategies**

Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry again show a significant slant towards Europeans (particularly the British). However, they have 675 immigrants from Pakistan, 365 Sri Lankans and then 300 Indians, 260 Filipinos and 125 Chinese, among many other origins. As a result, they are the most culturally diverse of the rural regions.

In contrast, the charts for Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada reveal significant changes in immigrant backgrounds. While the impact of the UK and Europe remains prominent, there are large spikes in immigrants from India, China, and the Philippines.

Ottawa, in particular, has many immigrants with African backgrounds, which may be attributed to its reputation for bilingualism. Many African countries were colonized by the French, resulting in a strong tradition of French as their mother tongue, making bilingual Ottawa an attractive place for them to settle. In all charts, there are few newcomers from Oceania, whether recently or historically.

It is important to consider the diverse backgrounds of recent immigrants when developing attraction strategies.

(Source: Census Profile, 2021 Immigrant status and period of immigration by place of birth: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions)

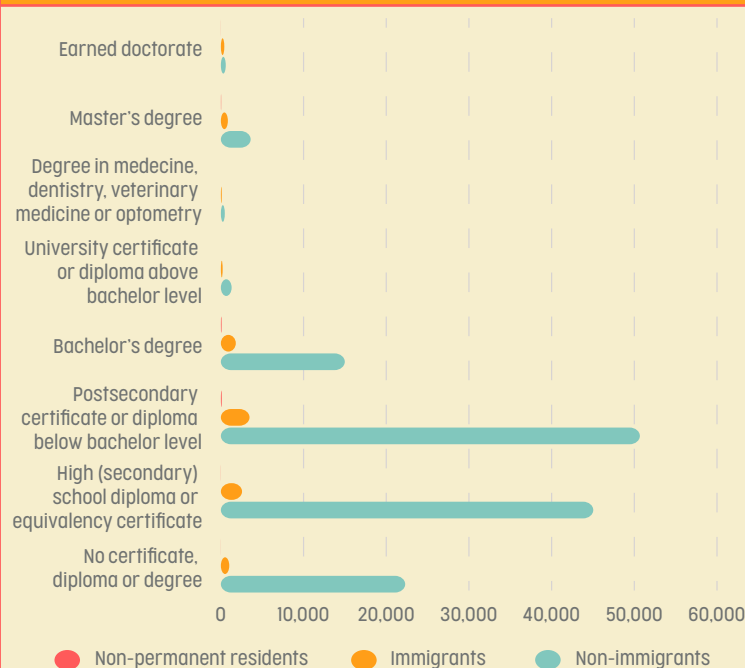
1.2.5 Immigrant status by the level of education

Ottawa and other partnering counties in Ontario and Canada boast a highly educated population, with many government jobs requiring a post-secondary degree and many immigrant applicants also expected to hold such qualifications. The

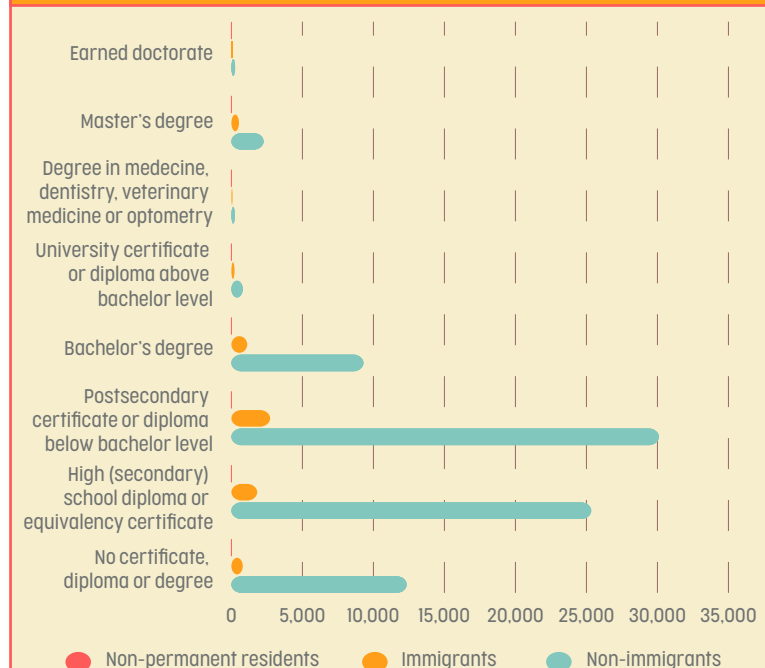
emphasis on education in Canada, which is seen as crucial for career success, and the additional points awarded for educational attainment in the immigration application process, likely contribute to this high level of education.

1.2.5 Immigrant status by the level of education

Highest level of education by immigrant status -
Lanark and Renfrew

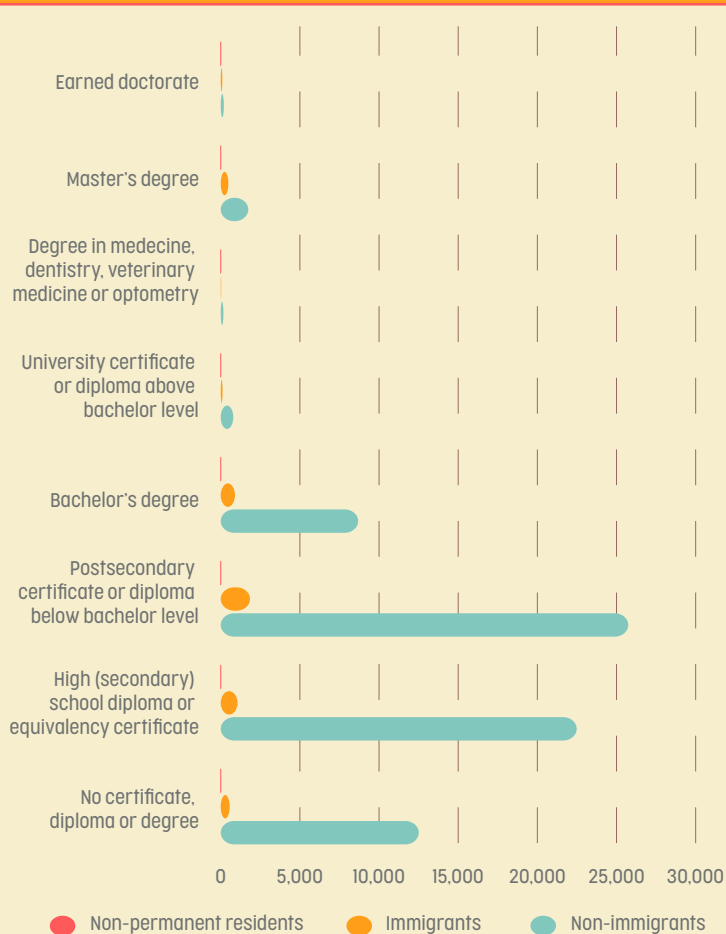


Highest level of education by immigrant status -
Leeds and Grenville

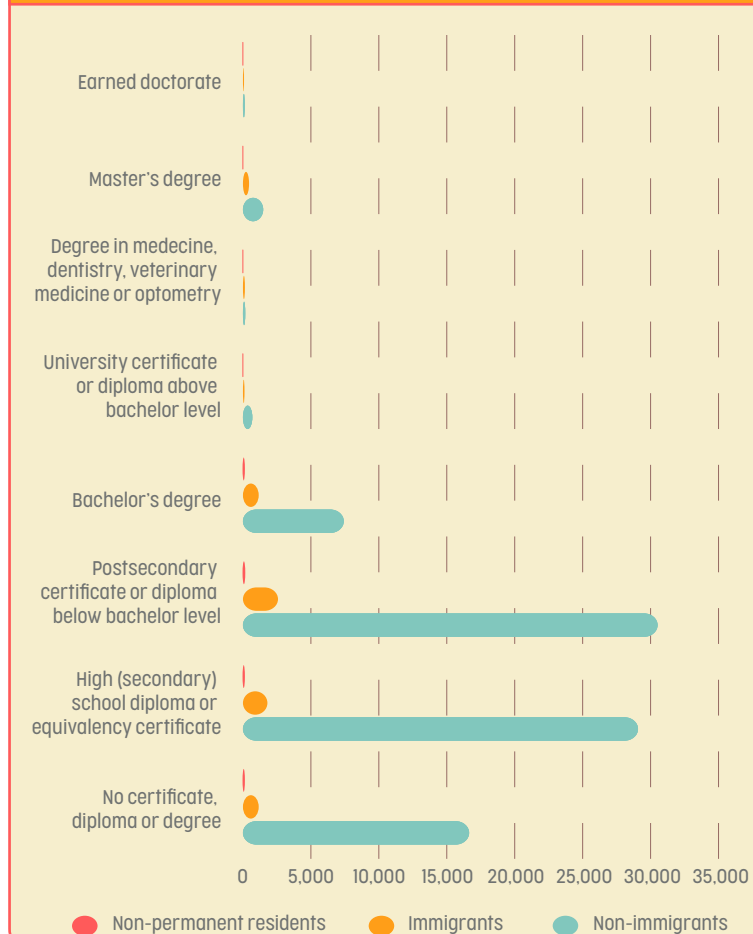


1.2.5 Immigrant status by the level of education (cont'd next page)

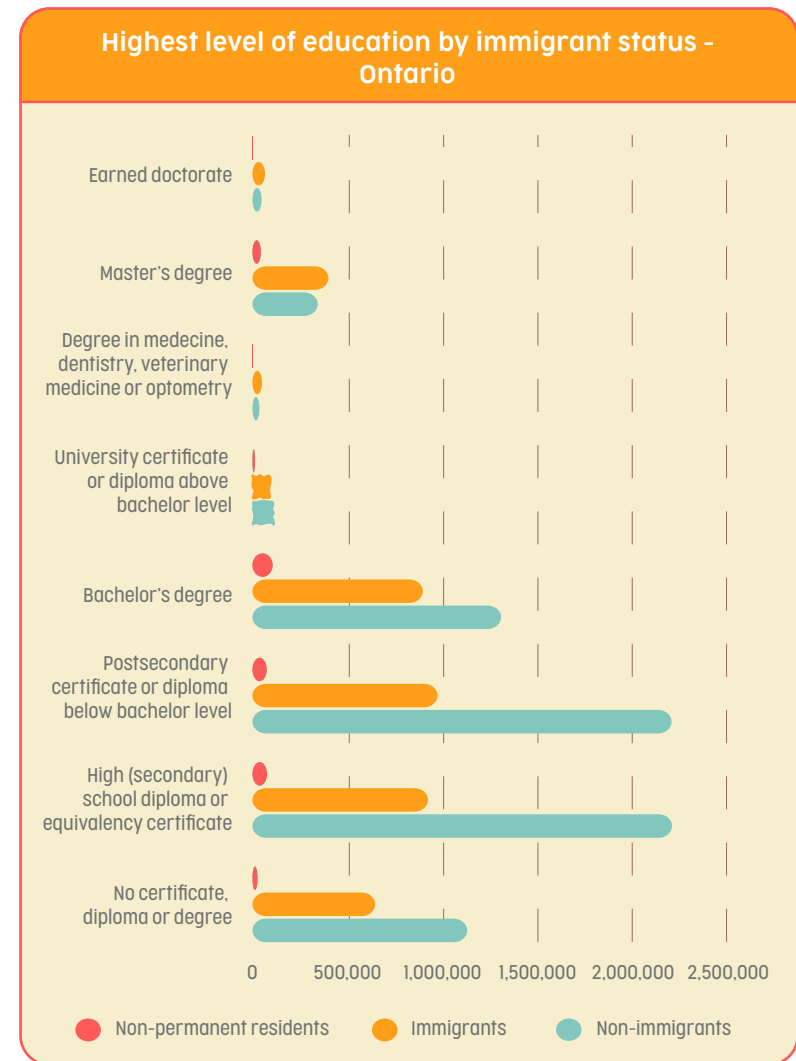
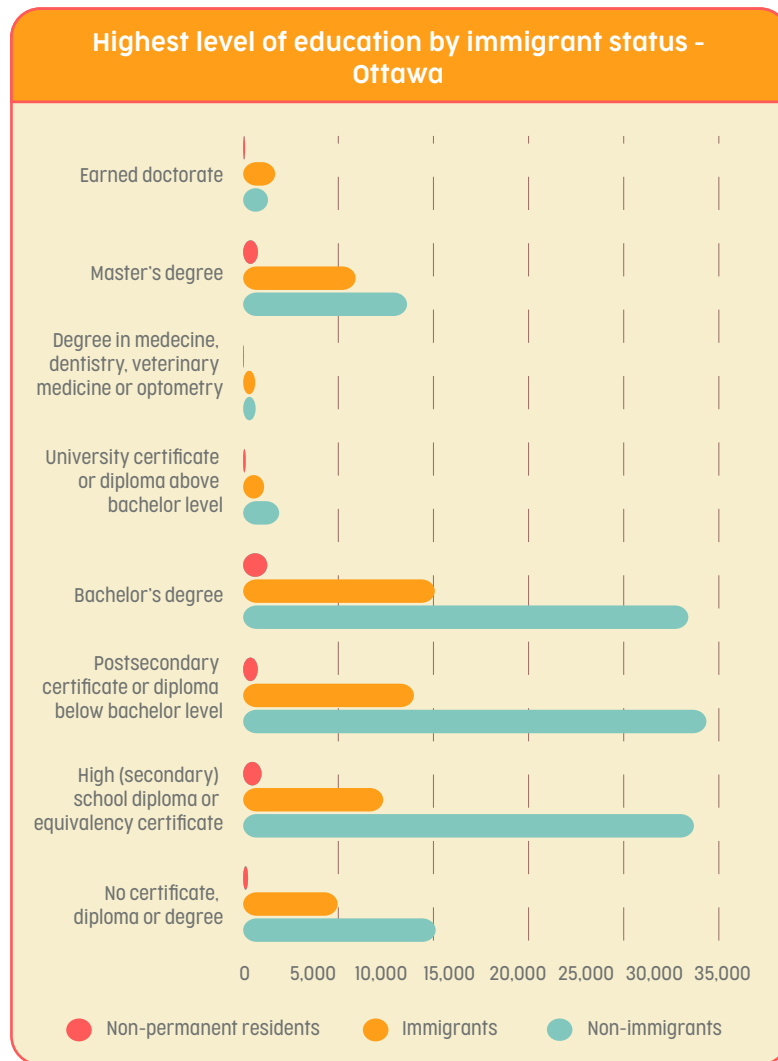
Highest level of education by immigrant status -
Prescott and Russell



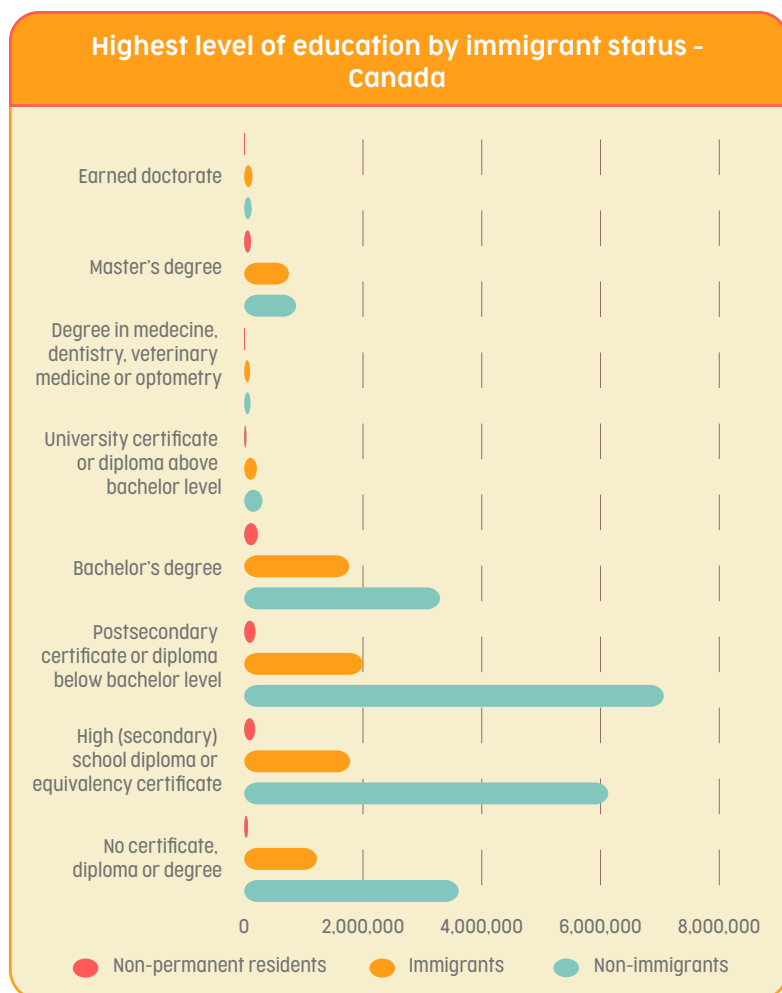
Highest level of education by immigrant status -
Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry



1.2.5 Immigrant status by the level of education



1.2.5 Immigrant status by the level of education



The data shows significant differences in educational attainment levels between regions, with some having a higher proportion of highly educated individuals than others.

In general, higher levels of education are associated with higher wages and better employment opportunities. Therefore, regions with a higher proportion of highly educated individuals may have stronger and more resilient economies.

The Ontario and Canada charts demonstrate comparable results across all categories, matching numbers observed in a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree attainment.

The Ottawa chart, while displaying many similarities, exhibits variations possible due to the presence of two universities and several colleges in the city, including Algonquin College, as well as another university and various CEGEPs in nearby Gatineau.

A post-secondary degree is also needed to work in most government jobs, a major industry sector in Ottawa. Overall, the population displays a relatively high level of education. As well most immigrants to these regions also have a very high level of education, with many possessing a bachelor's or master's degree.

(Source: Statistic Canada. Highest level of education by visible minority and immigrant status: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions with a population of 5,000 or more. Lanark, Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott and Russell, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada)

1.2.5 Immigrant status by the level of education (cont'd)

In Ottawa, over half of the population has a post-secondary education, and over a third has a university degree. This indicates that the city has a highly educated workforce that can meet the demands of a knowledge-based economy. Furthermore, it suggests that Ottawa has a high potential for innovation and entrepreneurship, as highly educated individuals are more likely to start their businesses.

On the other hand, in the partnering regions, notably Lanark and Renfrew Counties, only around a quarter of the population has a post-secondary education, and just over 10% have a university degree. This suggests that the region may have a lower capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship and a lower potential to attract highly skilled industries. This may lead to the outflow of highly skilled individuals to other regions, resulting in a brain drain and potentially negatively impacting the region's economy.

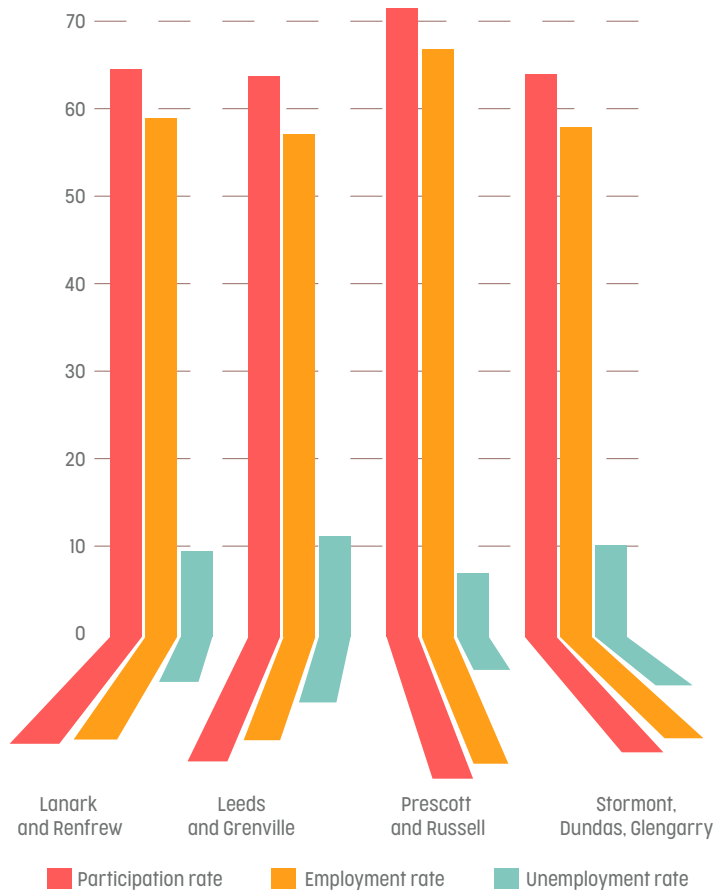
The immigrants who move to the partnering regions have a certificate or diploma, if not a bachelor's degree. The important level of education among immigrants is most likely due to the need for a degree to succeed in one's career within the country and the extra "points" it gives them in their application to Canada. Canada is a highly educated country, regardless of country of origin.

1.2.6 Immigrants by labour market activity (Estimate)

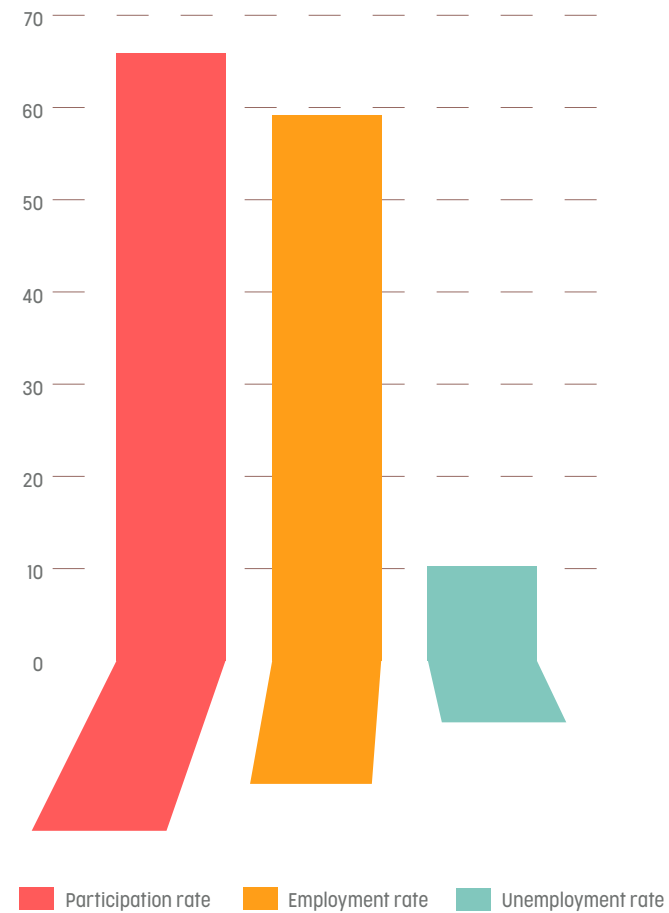
While the charts presented in the source are estimates, they are based on other Statistics Canada data, providing confidence in the findings. According to the data, immigrants have remarkably low unemployment rates, and there appears to be a strong correlation between employment and immigration status. This may be due to the critical connection between steady employment and the ability to remain in Canada. It is important to note that the proportion of immigrants not in the labour force includes individuals who have retired, are too young to work, have taken sabbaticals, or are unable to work due to long-term illness or disability.

1.2.6 Immigrants by labour market activity (cont'd next page)

Participation, employment and unemployment rates -
Lanark and Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott
and Russell, Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry

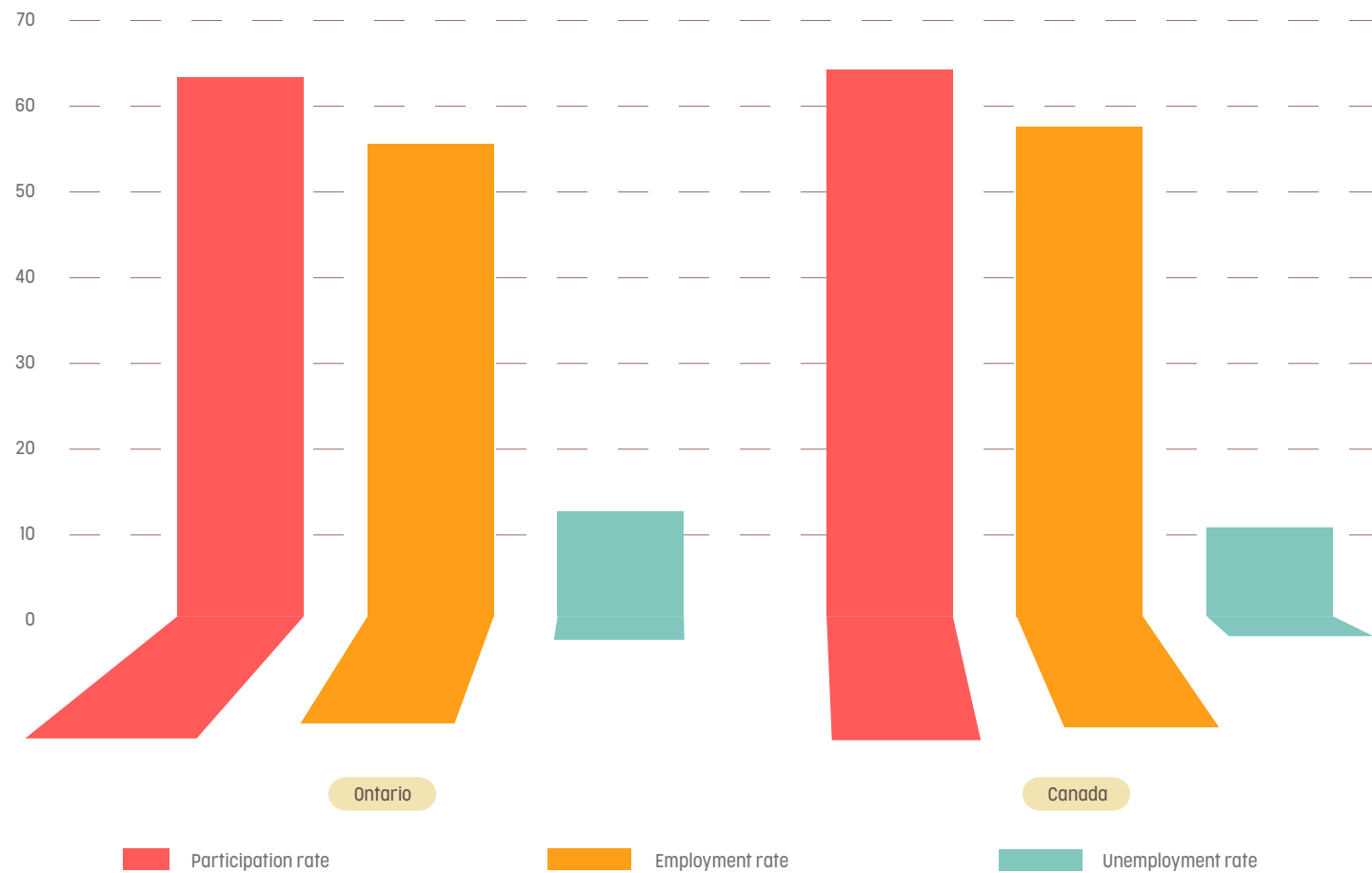


Participation, employment and unemployment rates -
Ottawa



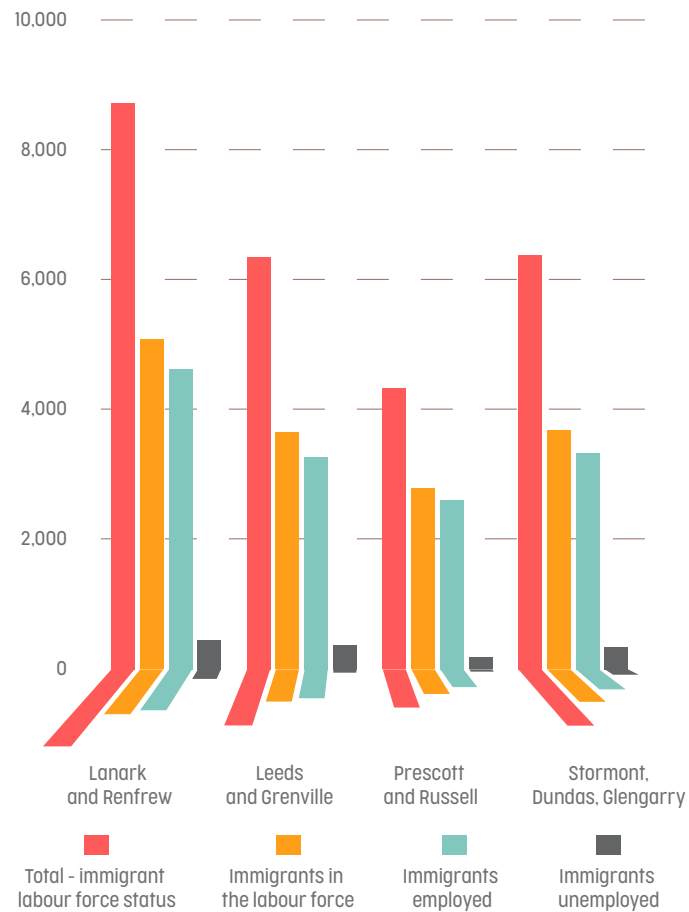
1.2.6 Immigrants by labour market activity

Participation, employment and unemployment rates - Ontario and Canada

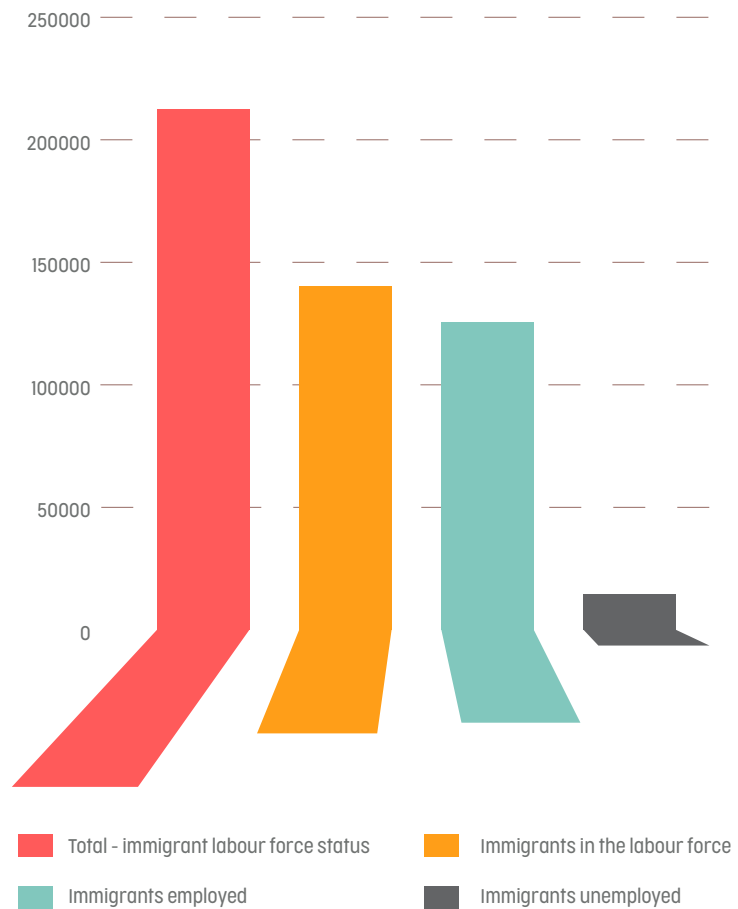


1.2.6 Immigrants by labour market activity (cont'd next page)

Immigrants by labour force status estimates -
Lanark and Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott and Russell,
Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry

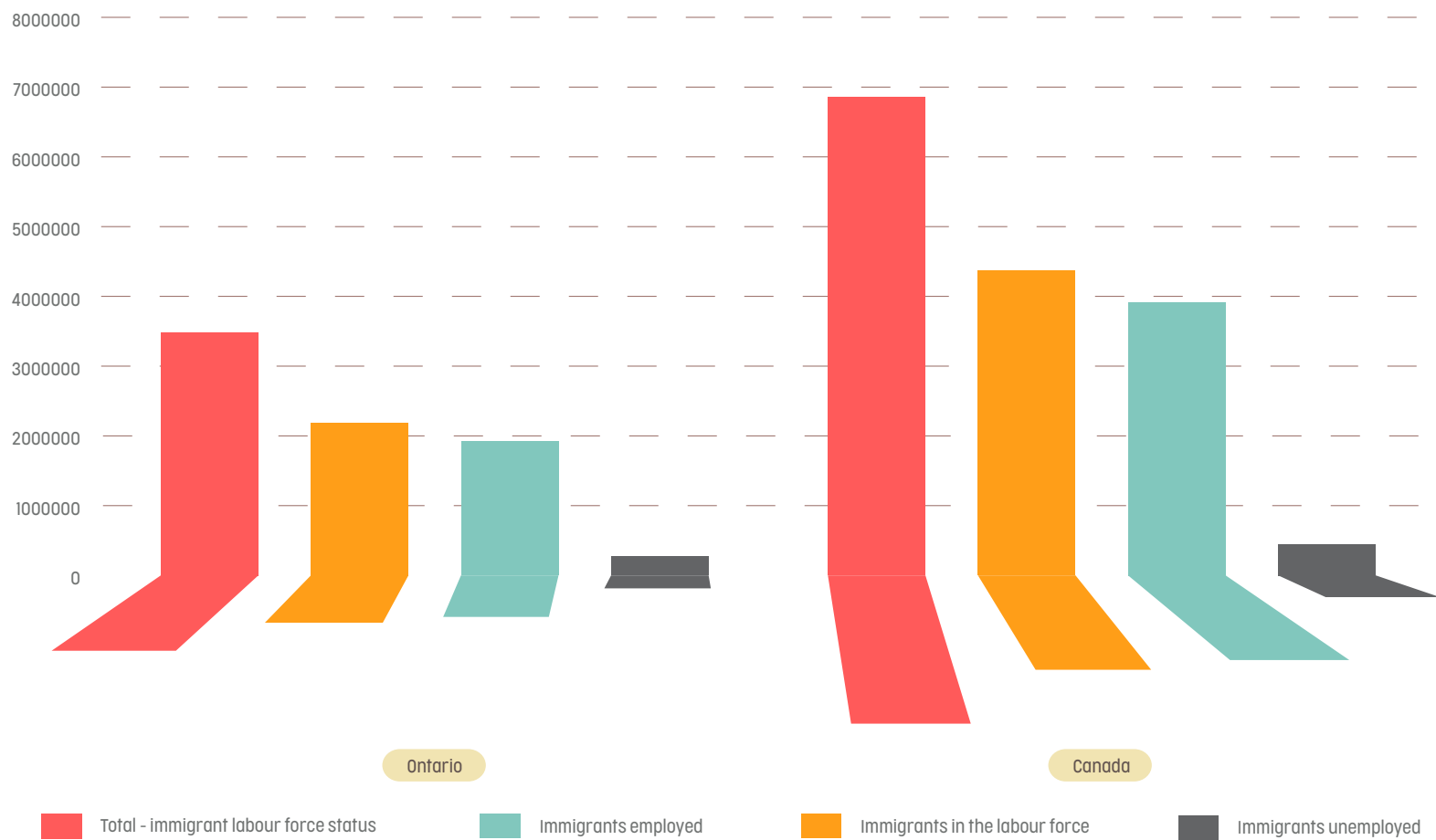



Immigrants by labour force status estimates -
Ottawa



1.2.6 Immigrants by labour market activity

Immigrants by labour force status estimates - Ontario and Canada






It is imperative to acknowledge that the above charts present estimates, and despite the researchers' best efforts to ensure accuracy, it remains challenging to reflect the reality of the situation. However, it is worth noting that the selected figures were grounded in other Statistics Canada charts and statistics, providing some level of confidence in the findings.

The charts indicate remarkably low unemployment rates among immigrants, which could be attributed to the crucial link between steady employment and the ability to remain in Canada. Notably, the number of employed immigrants nearly matches the total number of immigrants in the labour force in all charts. This correlation may partly explain the strong connection between people's employment and immigration status.

It is worth highlighting that the proportion of immigrants not in the labour force encompasses individuals who have retired, are unable to work due to long-term illness or disability, are too young to work, and have taken sabbaticals for distinct reasons.



(Source: Statistic Canada 2021. Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, annual and Labour force status by visible minority, immigrant status and period of immigration, highest level of education, age and gender)

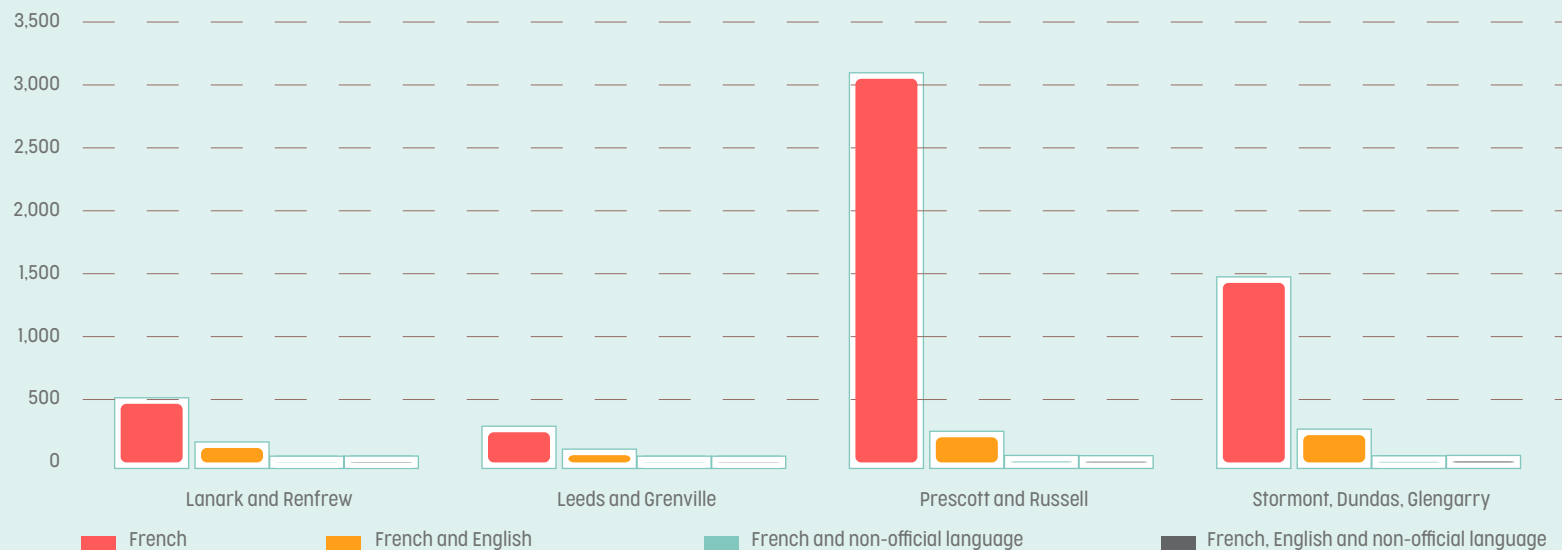
1.2.7 Immigrants with French as their Mother Tongue (Estimates)

Canada has a significant population of immigrants whose mother tongue is French, with over 1.6 million French-first speakers across the country. However, it is important to note that this group represents only a small fraction of the overall population in many areas, and the numbers may not accurately reflect the actual situation. Nonetheless, in regions

with established bilingual or francophone communities and services, such as Prescott and Russell, a higher percentage of French-first-speaking immigrants indicates the importance of such services in attracting and supporting francophone immigrants.

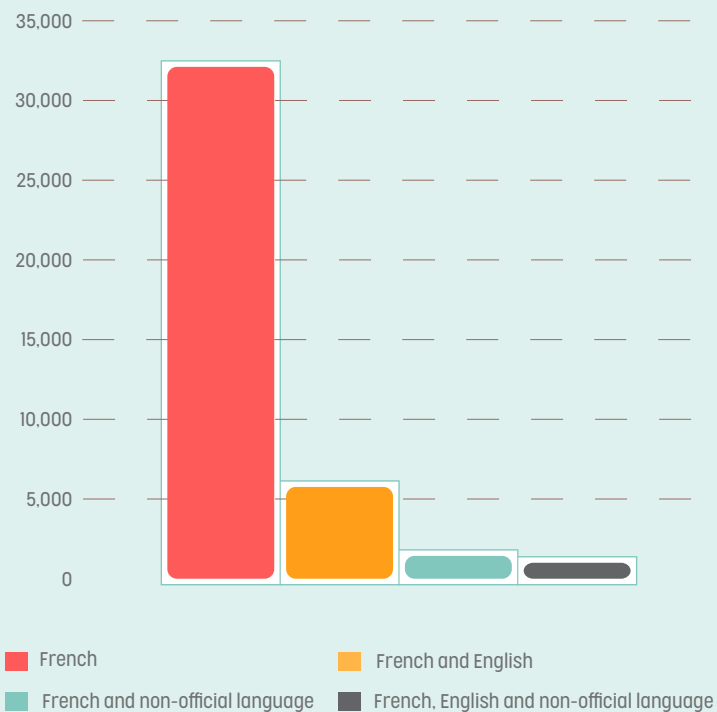
1.2.7 Immigrants with French as their Mother Tongue

Immigrants with French as mother tongue count estimates - Lanark and Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott and Russell, Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry



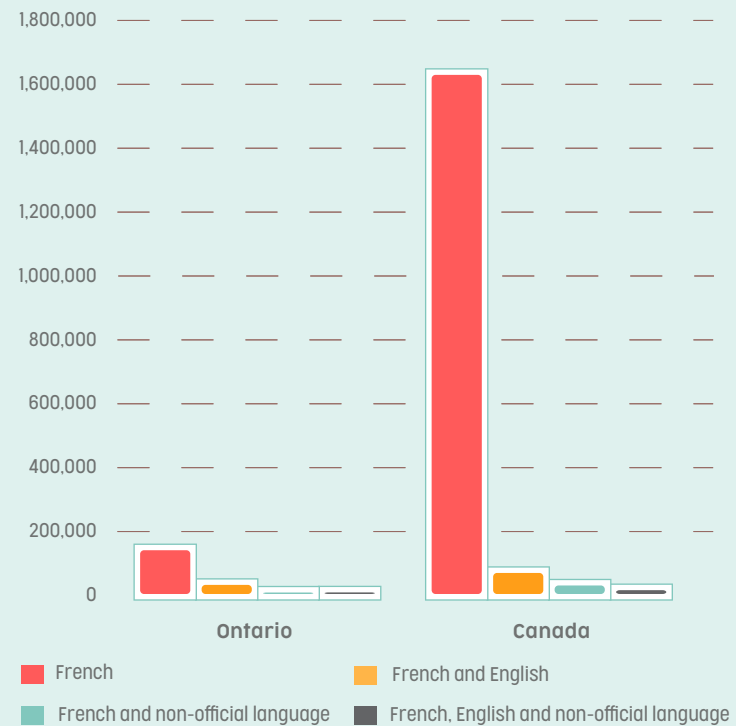
1.2.7 Immigrants with French as their Mother Tongue

Immigrants with French as mother tongue count estimates - Ottawa



It is important to recognize that the charts presented above are based on estimations. While the researchers have made significant efforts to ensure their accuracy, it can still be challenging to capture the reality of the situation. Nonetheless,

Immigrants with French as mother tongue count estimates - Ontario and Canada



it is worth noting that the figures presented are grounded in other Statistics Canada charts and statistics, providing some confidence in the findings.

1.2.7 Immigrants with French as their Mother Tongue (cont'd)

It is also worth mentioning that this analysis focuses on immigrants who speak French as their mother tongue. As such, there is no mention of English as a first language.

Interestingly, the number of immigrants who identify French only as their first language is significantly higher than those who are bilingual or trilingual.

In Canada, for instance, the number of French-first speakers immigrants is 1,625,025, compared to 136,963 in Ontario, 32,109 in Ottawa, 466 in Lanark and Renfrew Counties, 240 in Leeds and Grenville County, 3,049 in Prescott and Russell and 1,427 in Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

While these numbers may appear high on their own, it is essential to remember that they represent only a small fraction of Canadian-born French speakers and an even smaller fraction of the overall population of a given area.

Once more, these numbers are an estimate, but if the estimates were accurate, they would reflect the following.

For example, in Renfrew County, despite no francophone settlement services, 4.8% of immigrants have French as their mother tongue, which adds a 0.2% of francophones to their minority francophone population.

Similarly, in Lanark County, 3.8% of immigrants speak French as their first language, around 0.2% of the total population. French/English bilingual immigrants comprise 1% of newcomers and 0.06% of Lanark County's population.

In Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry, 18.3% of immigrants speak French as their first language, around 1.6% of the total population. French/English bilingual immigrants comprise 2.7% of newcomers and 0.19% of the county's population.

Numbers are significantly higher in Prescott and Russell; 57% of immigrants speak French as their first language, around 3.2% of the total population. French/English bilingual immigrants comprise 3.7% of newcomers and 0.21% of the county's population. The significantly higher percentage can be attributed to the availability of services fully in French and the bilingual nature of the area.

Furthermore, in all partnering countries, the number of those identifying with French as a mother tongue and another language is statistically small. Despite the numbers being small, there is still an attractive aspect for francophone immigrants to the region as an established bilingual or francophone community can be leveraged and grown. Bilingual services offer the opportunity to create a supportive and welcoming environment for the francophone immigrant population.

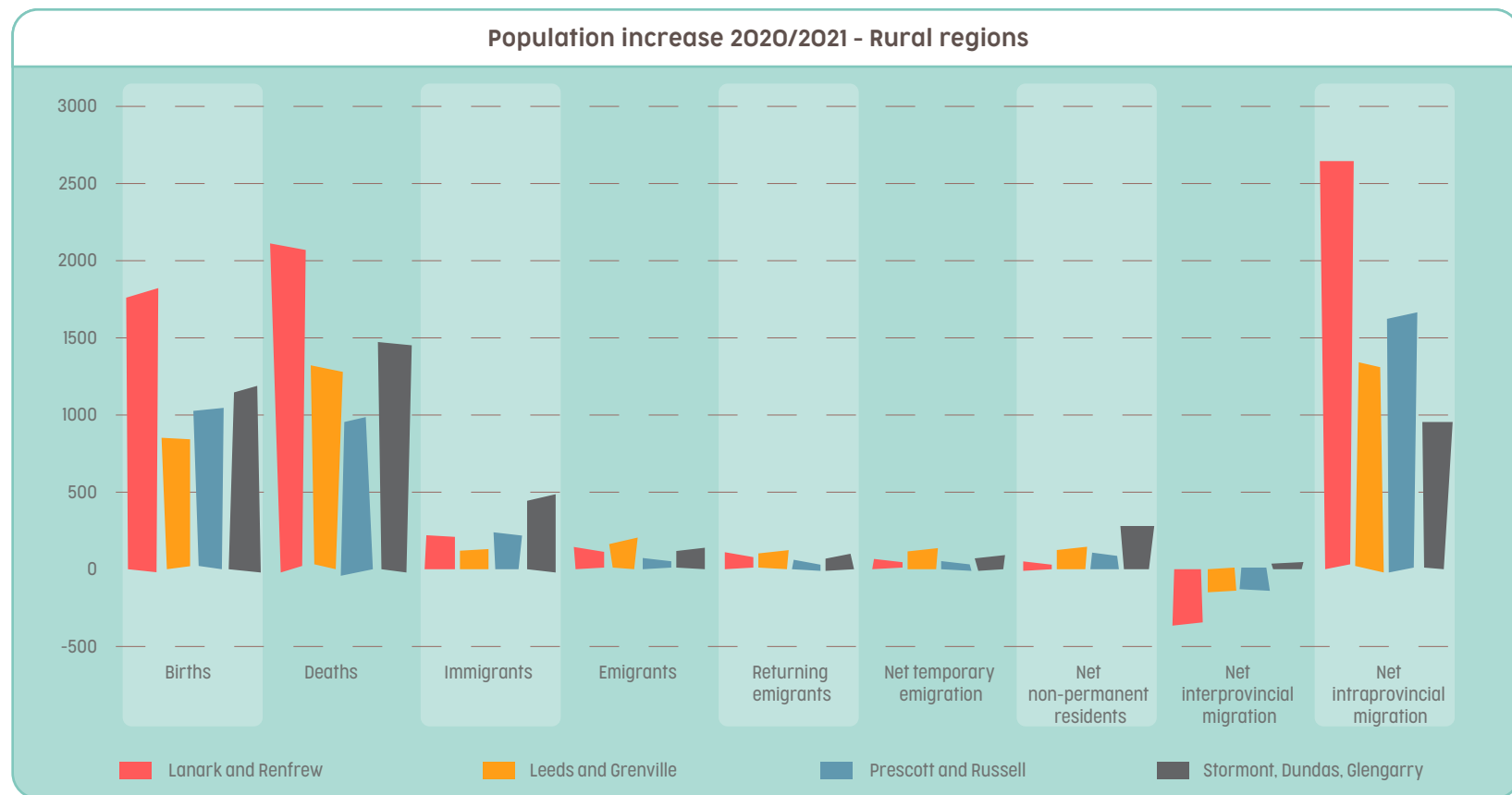
(Source: Statistic Canada. Immigrant status and period of immigration by mother tongue: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations and Census Profiles, Census 2021 Census of Population.)

1.2.8 Net Population Increase – by Component

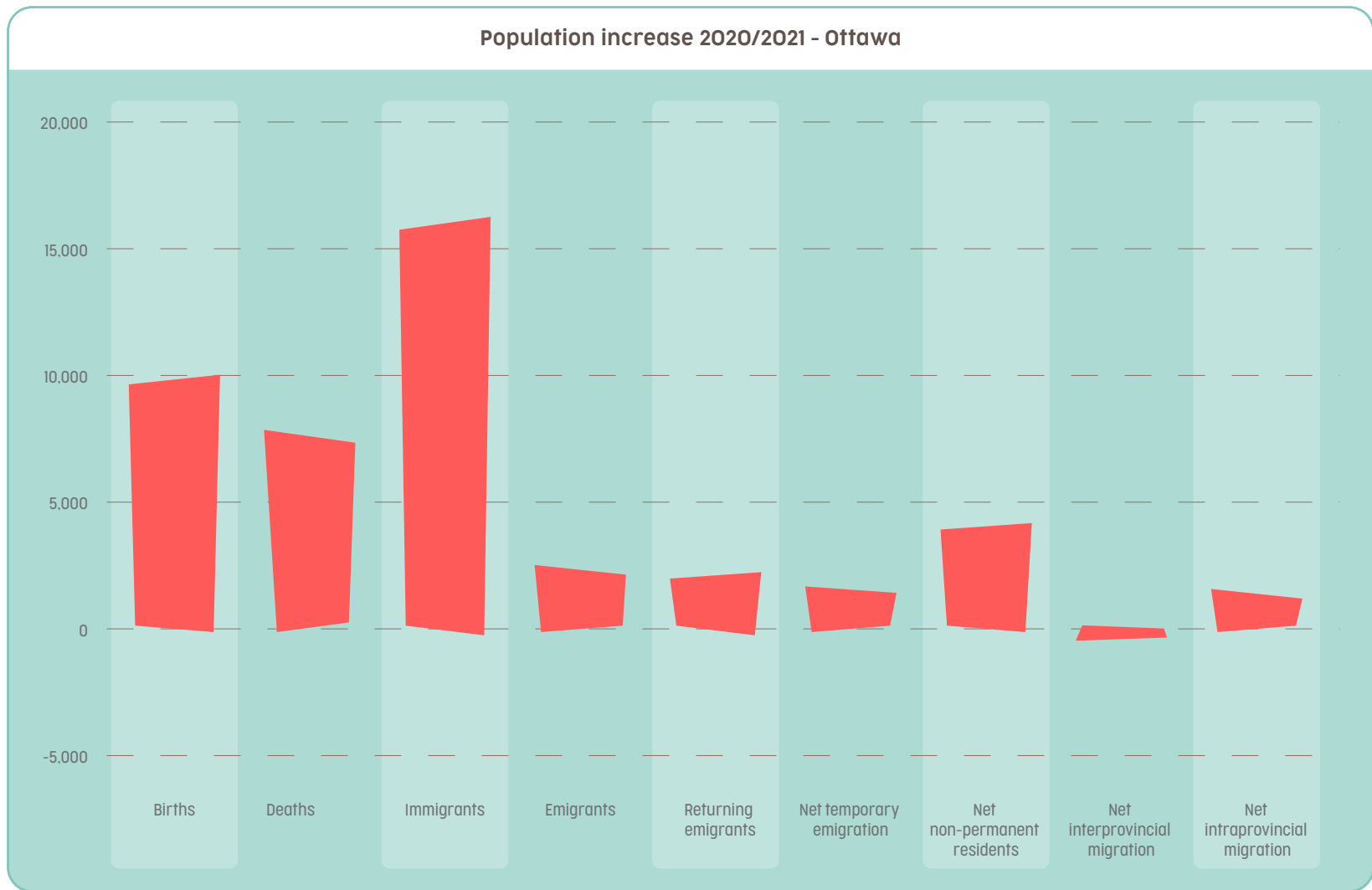
Immigration plays a significant role in population growth in Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada, surpassing the impact of natural births. However, the charts also reveal a troubling

trend in Lanark and Renfrew Counties and Leeds and Grenville County, where the number of deaths exceeds that of births. There is limited immigration to offset the decline.

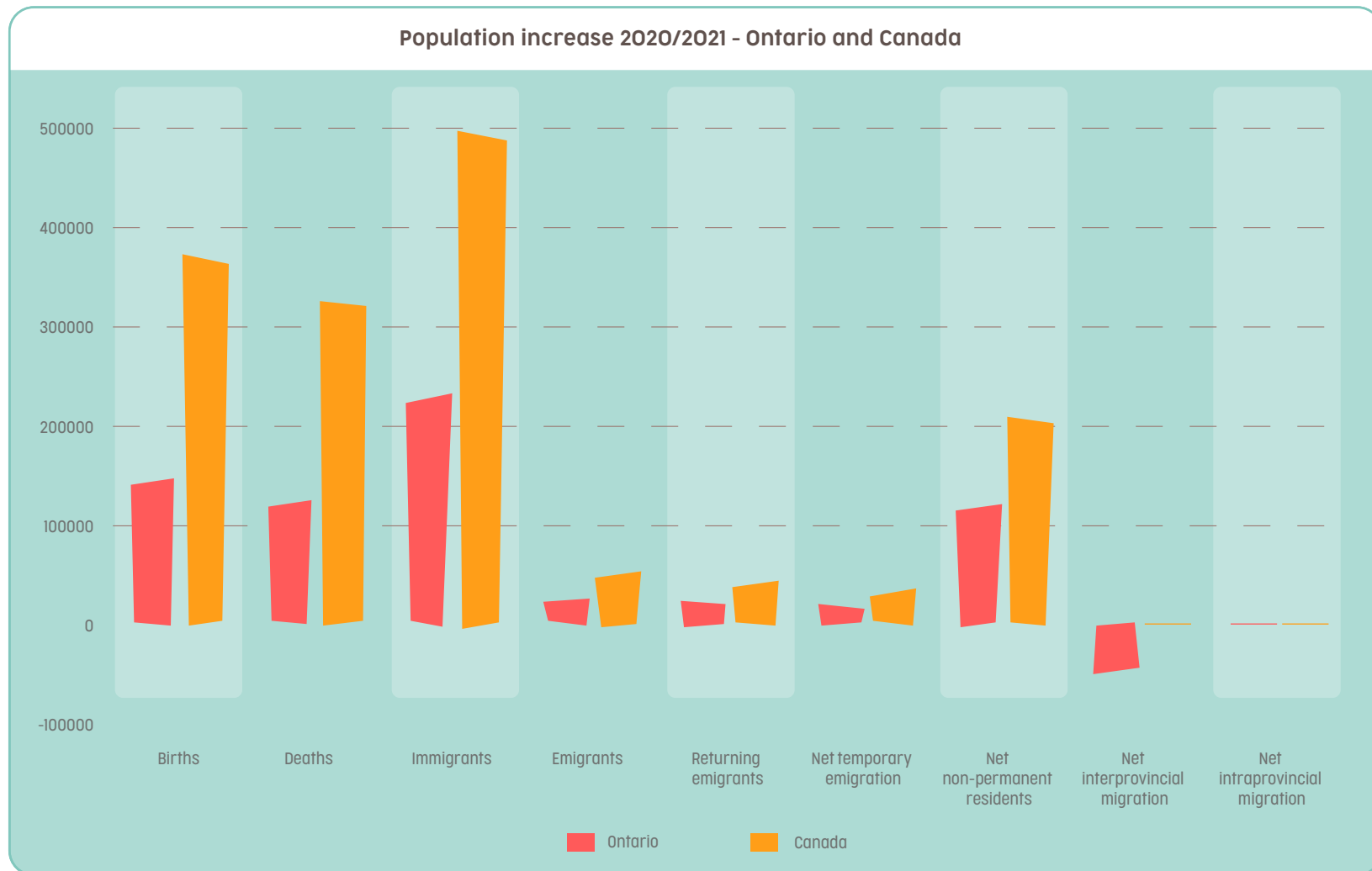
1.2.8 Net Population Increase – by Component (cont'd next page)



1.2.8 Net Population Increase – by Component



1.2.8 Net Population Increase – by Component



(Source: Statistic Canada. Components of population change by census division 2020/2021.)

1.2.8 Net Population Increase – by Component (cont'd)

The charts above provide a snapshot of the population trends observed in 2020-2021, albeit with the caveat that the COVID-19 pandemic may have significantly impacted these figures. Nevertheless, they offer valuable insights into the prevailing population dynamics.

Across the Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada charts, a consistent pattern emerges, wherein the number of births and deaths remains relatively stable, with births slightly outnumbering.

However, it is immigration that truly drives population growth.

In the case of Ottawa, for instance, while there were 2,174 more births than deaths, the number of immigrants arriving in the city in 2020-2021 was nearly twice as high, totalling 16,003. Although the Ontario and Canada charts exhibit a similar trend, the discrepancy is less pronounced.

Nonetheless, immigration has emerged as the predominant contributor to population growth, surpassing births in its impact. For example, when combining the figures for Lanark and Renfrew counties, there were only 199 new immigrants, compared to 2,090 deaths and 1,781 births. Additionally, the number of non-permanent residents in these regions is negligible, in contrast to the figures observed in the Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada charts.

Leeds and Grenville showed 842 births and 1,300 deaths, and Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry showed 1,167 births and 1,451 deaths. In all partnering regions, the deaths outpace the births by sometimes a relatively large margin. Without increased immigration, the counties will see their population drop. Due to insufficient immigration, the population will drop in Lanark and Renfrew Counties and Leeds and Grenville County.

It is important to recognize that the charts for Lanark County and Renfrew Counties and Leeds and Grenville County indicate a concerning trend. The number of deaths surpasses that of births, with limited immigration to offset the decline. Consequently, the population of these areas may be at risk of declining in the future. On the other hand, Prescott and Russell showed 1,026 births and 954 deaths, which has a naturally growing population in contrast but would still benefit from increased immigration.

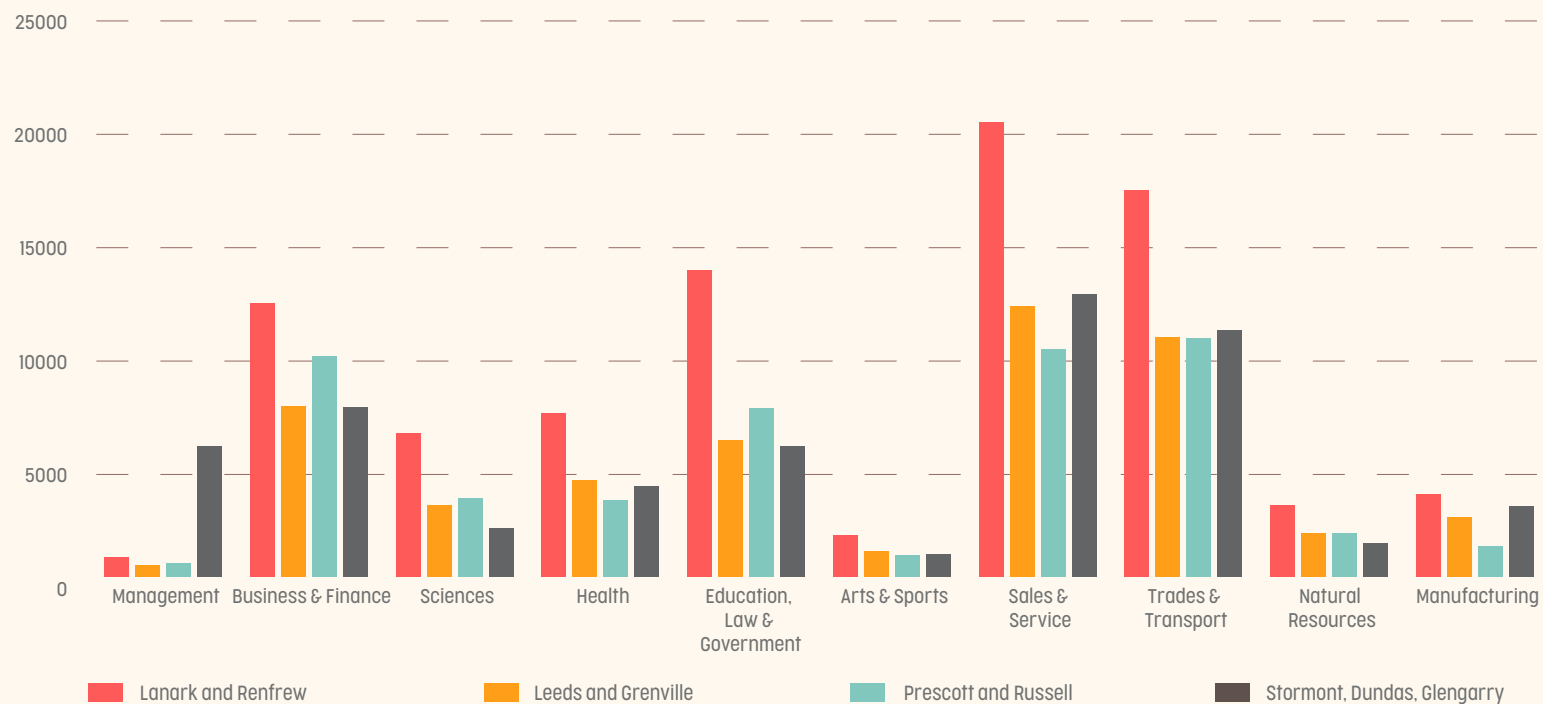
1.2.9 Number of Persons Working in Selected Occupations

Across all charts and regions, Sales and Service is the primary employment sector, with over one million jobs in this field in Canada, far exceeding the next largest sector, Business and Finance. However, there are also regional differences

in employment patterns, with some areas having a greater concentration of jobs in rural sectors such as Trades and Transportation. In contrast, others have a higher proportion of jobs in Education, Law, and Government.

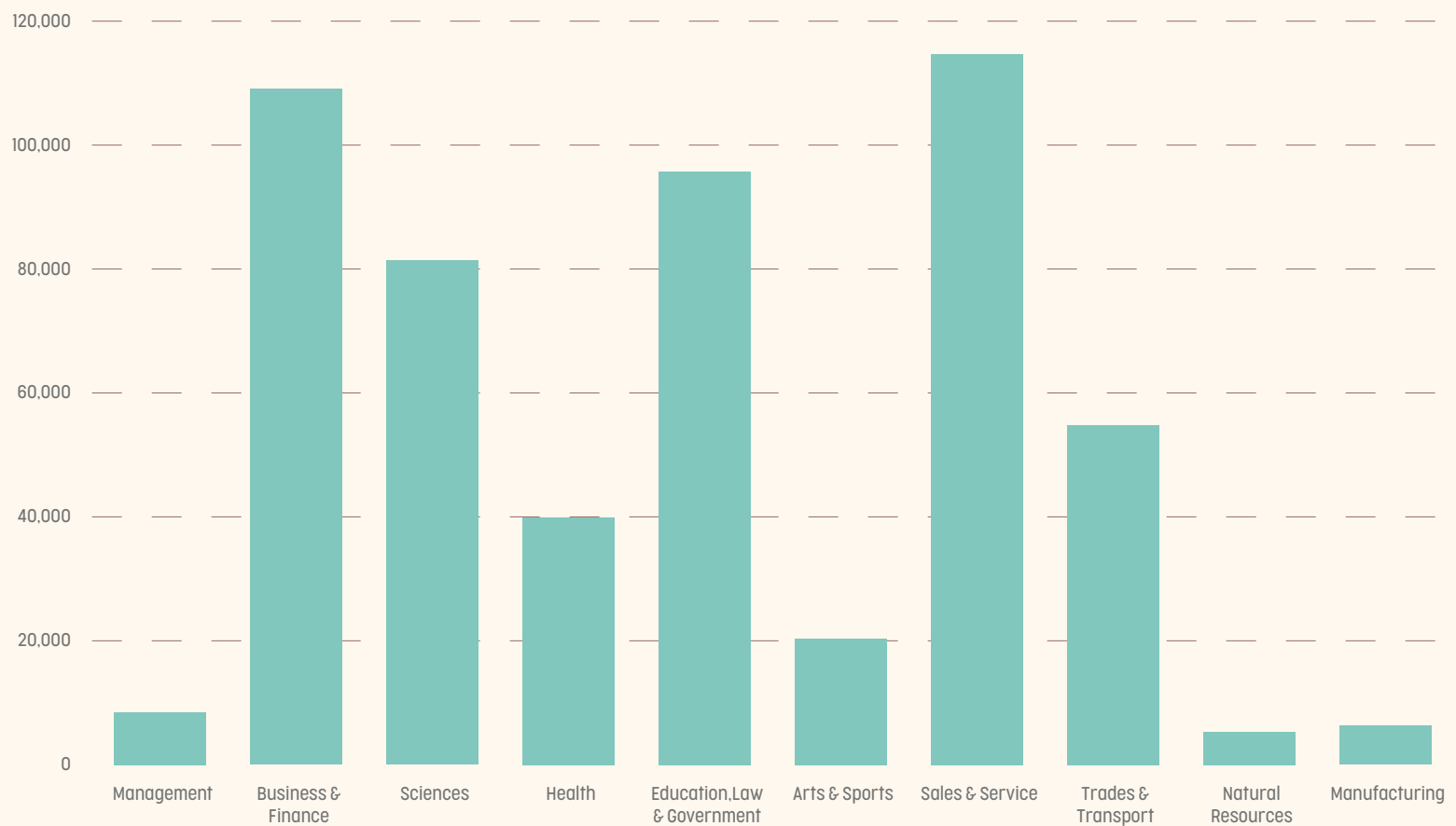
1.2.9 Number of Persons Working in Selected Occupations (cont'd next page)

Number of persons working in selected occupations - Rural regions



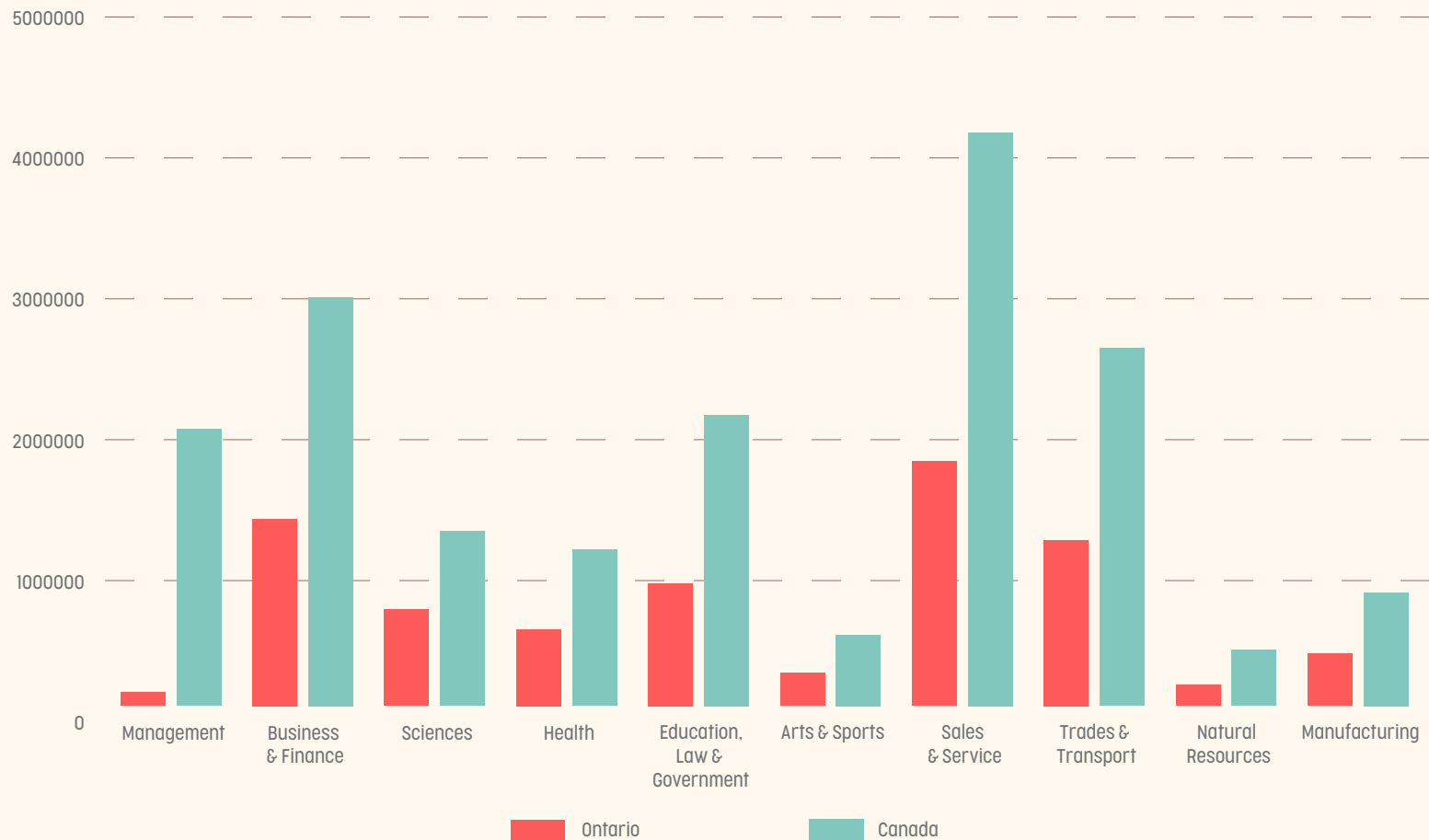
1.2.9 Number of Persons Working in Selected Occupations

Number of persons working in selected occupations - Ottawa



1.2.9 Number of Persons Working in Selected Occupations

Number of persons working in selected occupations - Ontario and Canada



1.2.9 Number of Persons Working in Selected Occupations (cont'd)

Employment opportunities exist in many different sectors. While some jobs may not fit within the chart's categories, it still provides a valuable overview of the job market in the Partnering Regions, Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

Sales and service careers dominate the nation, with over one million jobs in that sector, far surpassing the next field, business and Finance. Interestingly, the sales and service sector also generated the most jobs across all the charts.

In Ottawa, it is unsurprising that many people work in the education, law, and government sectors (95,710). However, the business and finance sector (109,065) employed more people, despite the city's reputation as a government hub.

A startling observation is Ontario's lack of management jobs (95,240) compared to the rest of Canada (1,963,600).

Lanark County and Renfrew Counties both display similar graphs, with the top industries being Sales and Services (20,065), Trades and Transportation (17,040), and education, law, and government (13,520). These results are unsurprising, given that these regions typically focus more on rural jobs.

In Leeds and Grenville County, Sales and Services dominate (11,910), with Trades and Transport (10,555) following. Business and Finance (7,515) comes up in third place.

In Prescott and Russell County, numbers are similar, but Trades and Transport (10,525) is the biggest employment sector, but it is very closely followed by Sales and Service (10,050) and then Business and Finance (9,730).

Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry County have Sales and Services (12,460) as their main sector. It is followed by Trades and Transport (10,870) and Business and Finance (7,460). Cornwall matches the trend with Sales and Services (5,945), Trades and Transport (4,005) and Business and Finance (2,810).

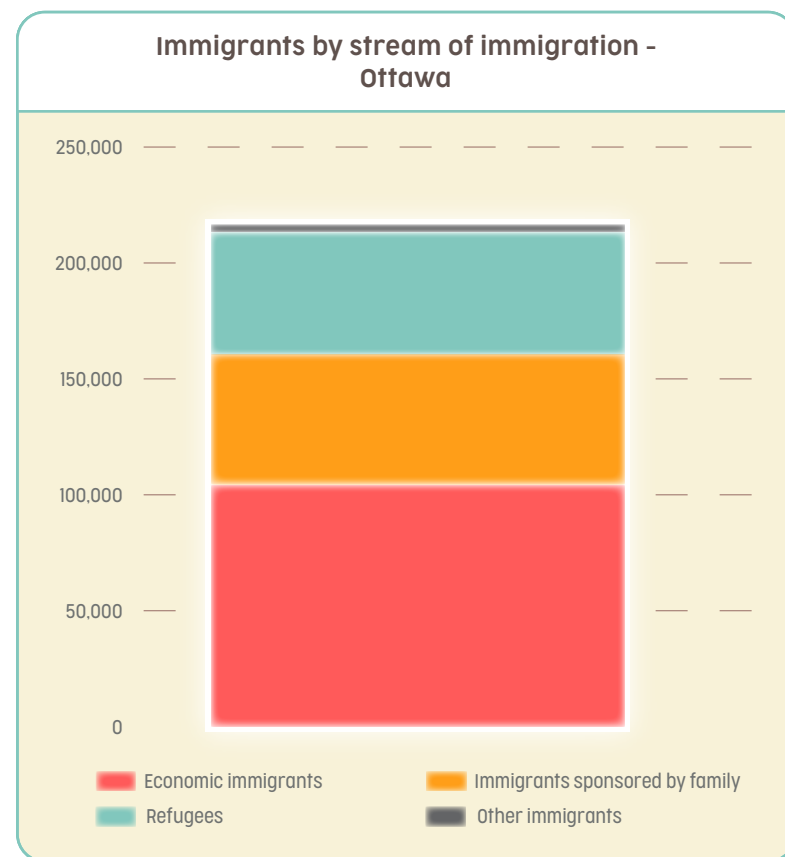
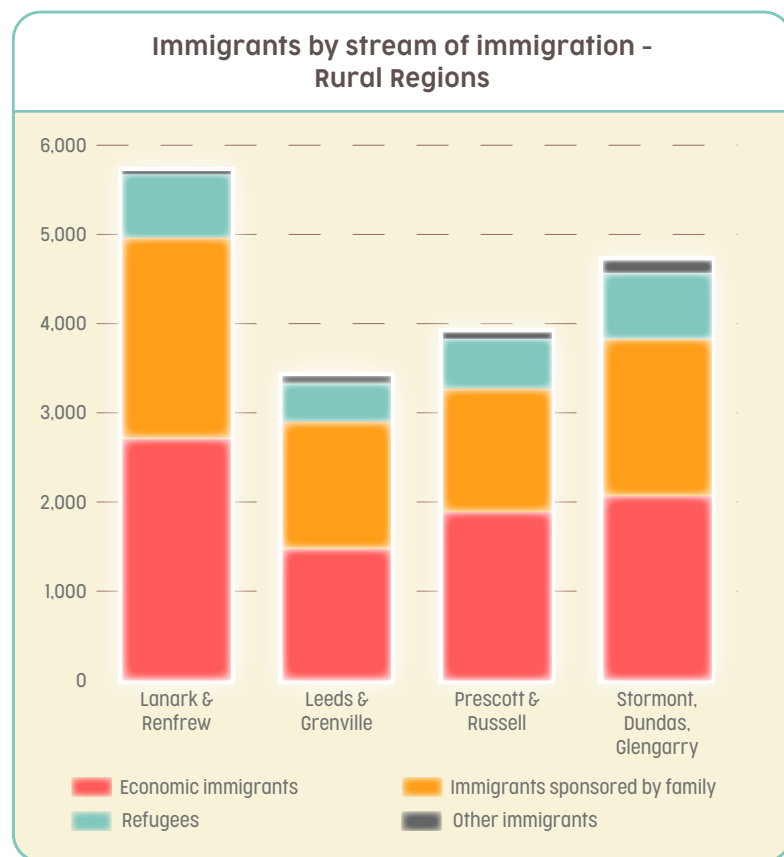
(Source: Townfolio 2022. Labour Force. Lanark, Renfrew, Leeds and Grenville, Prescott and Russell, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.)

1.2.10 Immigrants by Stream of Immigration

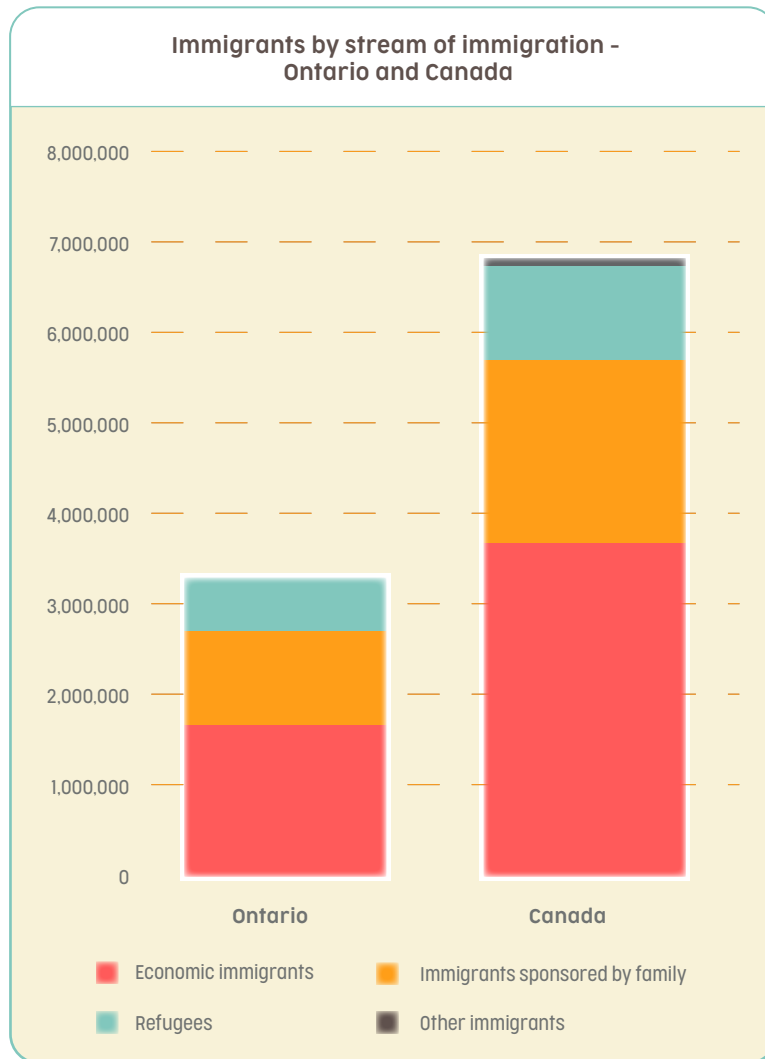
Across all regions in Canada, economic immigrants make up the majority of immigrants, while family-sponsored immigrants are almost equally represented in Lanark and

Renfrew Counties and Leeds and Grenville County. This underscores the significance of considering families' needs when developing an immigration strategy.

1.2.10 Immigrants by Stream of Immigration (cont'd next page)



1.2.10 Immigrants by Stream of Immigration

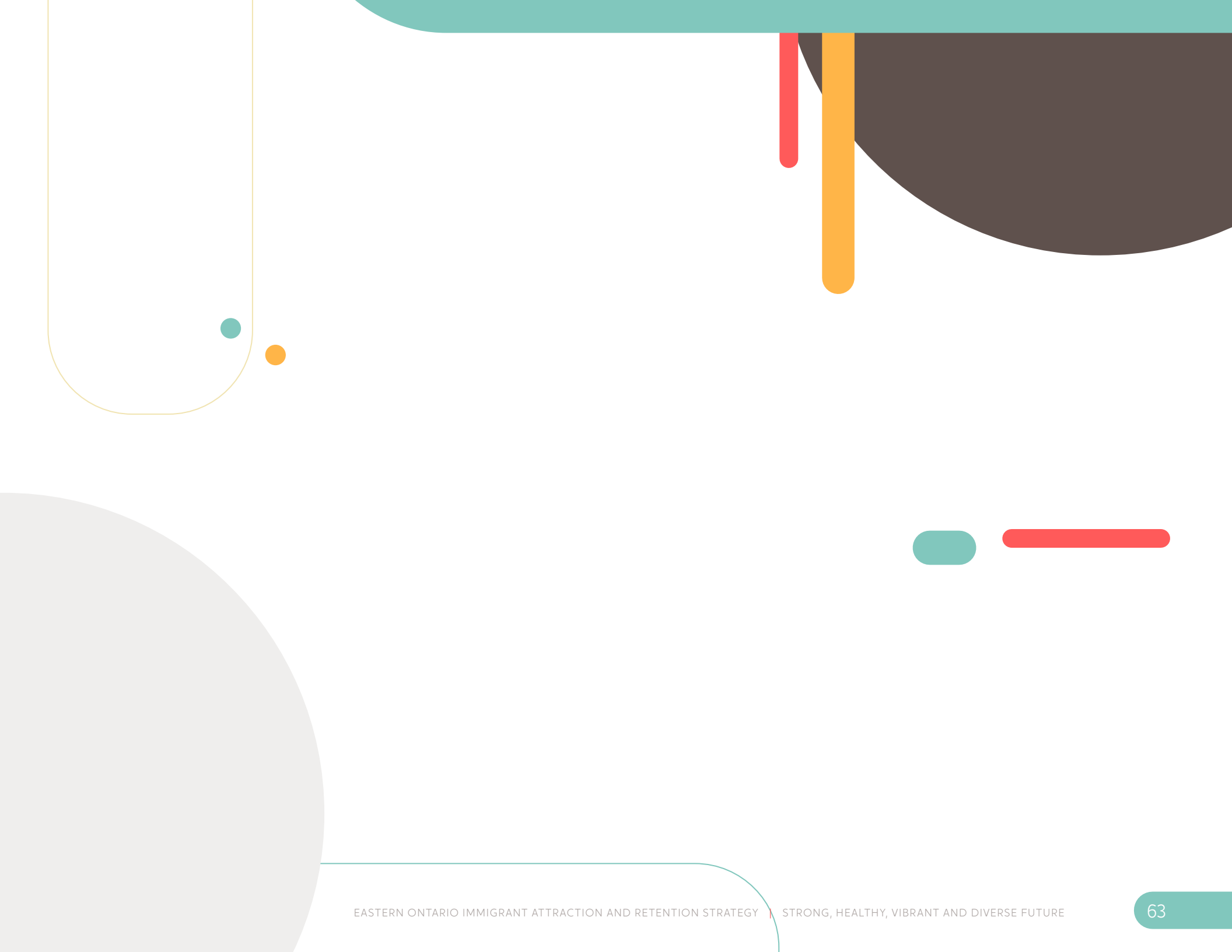


1.2.10 Immigrants by Stream of Immigration (cont'd)

In all charts, the majority of immigrants are economic immigrants. While the numbers due fluctuate between the regions, they are always the majority. However, family-sponsored immigrants are nearly on par in Lanark and Renfrew Counties and Leeds and Grenville County.

Following all the charts, it is clear that most immigrants are expected to come to Canada for economic opportunities. If they find it to their liking and/or become citizens, they bring their families. Therefore, families' needs must be considered when creating an immigration strategy.

(Source: Statistic Canada. Admission category and applicant type for the immigrant population in private households admitted between 1980 and 2021.)



Barriers Faced by Newcomers

Newcomers face a myriad of challenges that impact their integration and sense of belonging to Canada. The following are results from a focus group with 13 newcomers, immigrants, refugees, and international students living in Eastern Ontario, held by the Project Team in February 2023. Some of the questions asked included: What brought you to live where you currently reside? What were the reasons that made you want to stay here? What supports were available to you before or after you arrived in your community? What challenges have you faced in your community? What improvements would you like to see in how newcomers are supported in your community? What supports would you recommend? These questions aimed to elicit information about the factors influencing newcomers' decisions to settle and stay in communities and the challenges they face during the settlement process. The responses to these questions provided valuable insights into the needs of newcomers, informing and validating the strategic objectives of this Strategy.

Finding an Adequate Job Can Be Difficult for Recent Immigrants

Forty-six percent of focus group participants cited it as the greatest difficulty in their communities. Many recent immigrants also have trouble getting their foreign education credentials or experience recognized, forcing them into lower-paying jobs outside their field of study and expertise. Sometimes they are unable to find work at all and are unemployed.

Language Barriers

Language remains a significant barrier for newcomers with limited proficiency in Canada's official languages (English and French). The inability to converse in these languages can severely limit one's job prospects and hinder access to health and social services in the community.

Lack of "Canadian Experience" in the Workforce

Lack of Canadian experience can be compounded for newcomers as most employers seek this experience. Qualified applicants may find that the years of experience they bring from their country of origin are not enough to fill this gap. Many even rely on "survival jobs" to pay the bills. In addition, in small communities and rural areas, newcomers may be "discounted" for being different in a variety of ways, such as language accents, different names, personal presentation and physical appearance, printed presentation (e.g., résumés and letters that might not be consistent with Canadian norms).

Racism and Discrimination

Newcomers to Canada often face significant challenges related to racism and discrimination within their host communities. Despite efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, many newcomers experience hate crimes, racial profiling, and other forms of discrimination. Studies have shown that as many as one-fifth of newcomers to Canada

face discrimination in various situations after they arrive¹.

The Ontario Commission of Human Rights has recognized employers' requirement of "Canadian experience" as discriminatory. In addition, a survey conducted by the Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration² in March 2017 found that 78 percent of respondents reported hearing negative comments about immigrants in Canada either "often or occasionally." These statistics highlight the ongoing challenges newcomers face in integrating into Canadian society and the urgent need for continued efforts to promote inclusivity and combat discrimination.

Transportation

Transportation is a roadblock for recent immigrants, especially in rural communities which lack public transportation.

Transportation challenges were also experienced in more urban centres within Eastern Ontario, with transportation cited as unreliable.

¹ Statistics Canada. 2021. Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) Interactive Application: Economic Outcomes, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/nl/pub/71-607-x/71-607-x2019003-eng.htm>

² Canadian Institute for Identities and Migration. March 2017. "Public Perceptions on Radicalization and Resilience", https://www.ciim.ca/en/view_survey.php?id=10

Housing

Finding quality, adequate, and attainable housing is also challenging for newcomers, who are almost three times more likely to be in a 'core housing need' than non-immigrants. Across Eastern Ontario, there is a housing shortage, both rental and for purchase, and affordable housing options.

Addressing the lack of housing and transportation is crucial to retaining immigrants and non-immigrant populations. The ROMA Task Force on Attainable Housing and Purpose-Built Rentals report⁸ proposes solutions the Province can implement without significant financial expenditure. These include supporting purpose-built rental housing, enabling "tiny homes" as affordable and attainable housing options within municipalities, more home-sharing initiatives, and considering rural subdivisions. In addition, municipalities in the region actively seek innovative solutions to address the housing disparity many residents face. To this end, some municipalities have opted into services such as Sparrow, which aims to provide affordable housing to those in need. Others are engaging in the Tiny Homes Project, which explores alternative housing options that can be built quickly and cost-effectively. By taking these innovative approaches and leveraging new provincial policies and funding related to attainable housing, municipalities are working to address the urgent need for

lower and middle-income affordable and accessible housing in the region and improve the quality of life for residents struggling to find adequate housing options.

Municipalities are actively seeking innovative solutions to address many residents' transportation barriers, such as limited public transit options and the high cost of owning a personal vehicle. For example, Lanark and Frontenac Counties have implemented a community carpooling initiative to provide residents with an affordable and convenient transportation option. By taking these innovative approaches, municipalities have an opportunity to collaborate and develop coordinated systems to address rural transportation barriers rather than working in isolation. This approach can lead to a more efficient and effective transportation system that benefits all residents in the region.

The Path Forward in the Eyes of Our Community

The Eastern Ontario region's economy can benefit from strategic growth driven by the attraction and retention of a diverse and skilled immigrant population. To achieve this goal, it is crucial to ensure that the skill sets of newcomers are aligned with the current labour market gaps in the region. By strategically matching the skills of immigrants with the needs of the local labour market, the region can promote economic growth and innovation while creating new opportunities for newcomers and existing residents. This approach can lead to a more dynamic and resilient economy that benefits the community.

We need the economy to keep growing steadily to pay for Ontario's important public services and infrastructure. Urban areas like Ottawa in Eastern Ontario are well-positioned to help with this economic and population growth. We need to take a long-term view on immigration, even though some short-term challenges and problems make it hard for Eastern Ontario to attract and retain immigrants. We address those issues in the plan below. Still, it is imperative to get everyone - the federal, provincial, and local governments and community

groups - to agree that immigration is not just a way to fill short-term labour gaps but a critical part of the region's long-term growth plans.

3.1 The Vision for Immigration into Eastern Ontario

The attraction, retention and integration of new immigrants is a key priority for all communities in the Eastern Region, integral to each community's vision and plans for economic growth and equity and inclusion.

3.1.1 Becoming an equitable, inclusive and welcoming community

The results from the community consultations held by the LIPs and RIF recognized that becoming an equitable, inclusive, and welcoming community is essential to attracting, retaining, and integrating new immigrants. The characteristics of welcoming communities, as identified by Pathways to Prosperity, provide a guide for measuring progress toward this vision. While

economic security remains the top priority, numerous other factors contribute to a welcoming community, including access to services and supports, positive attitudes towards diversity, and social and civic engagement opportunities. Therefore, municipal leaders and community organizations need to collaborate and coordinate efforts to create a welcoming environment for all newcomers and to continue to address challenges and barriers to integration. By prioritizing the characteristics of welcoming communities, Eastern Ontario can ensure that all residents, including newcomers, thrive in a diverse and inclusive society.

In 2022, Pathways to Prosperity updated the characteristics of welcoming communities. This report, commissioned initially by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Integration Branch, reviews the current knowledge concerning welcoming communities. The characteristics of welcoming communities in order of priority are as follows:

1. Access to affordable, adequate, and suitable housing
2. Employment and entrepreneurship opportunities
3. Access to suitable health care, including mental health care
4. Access to immigrant-serving agencies that meet immigrants' needs
5. Positive attitudes toward immigrants and racial, cultural and religious diversity
6. Access to transportation
7. Educational opportunities
8. Access to services and supports for French-speaking immigrants by French speakers
9. Immigrant-friendly municipal features and services
10. Ongoing commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression
11. Coordination and collaboration among community organizations and different levels of government working toward welcoming communities
12. Equitable neighbourhoods
13. Opportunities to form and join social and community networks
14. Positive Indigenous-immigrant relations and understanding
15. Immigrant-friendly police and justice system
16. Access to diverse religious and ethnocultural organizations
17. Civic and political participation opportunities
18. Access to inclusive public spaces and recreation facilities
19. Equitable media coverage, representation, and content

The most critical factors are economic security – employment, housing, and social capital followed by services and attitudes relating to integrating new immigrants into the community. Immigrant-friendly services and institutions round out the list.

This list represents 19 guideposts to check our progress toward our vision of becoming welcoming communities that are attractive to newcomers. How are public attitudes changing towards new immigrants and the role of immigrants in our community? Are public services becoming more relevant to immigrants' needs and accessible? Is there broadening social engagement? How does the media address the changing demographic dynamic in our community?

3.1.2 Guiding Principles

The 16 key objectives developed below are meant to define how we will make progress toward our vision on a localized level and collaboratively in some instances using the following guiding principles:

- Involve newcomers as key players
- Work with what you have
- Build and maintain relationships
- Gain political will
- Plan with the long-term horizon in mind
- Ensure research-based decision making
- Emphasize process and build capacity

3.2 Key Objectives: Overview

Using the insight from the local stakeholder consultations, 16 key objectives have been developed to help us collectively and locally work towards the vision of becoming an inclusive community leveraging immigration to support our economic and social goals.

The most critical factors are economic security: employment, housing, and social capital.

This strategy acknowledges that different regions in Eastern Ontario may have varying readiness levels to grow and retain their newcomer population effectively. Due to resource limitations, not all regions may be able to pursue all 16 recommended key objectives within the next three to five years. The primary aim of this strategy is to serve as a flexible framework that community leaders can use as a reference point and modify to suit their local context. We recognize that certain key objectives may necessitate financial backing, and we see this strategy as a means to obtain funding for

joint initiatives or targeted local projects. Municipal leaders are encouraged to convene annually over the next three to five years to review progress and chart the next steps in their region's implementation of this strategy.

Each objective has seven components: timeframe, lead, partner/resource, priority level, why, how and accountability/measurement, as described below.

1. **Timeframe:** This was determined based on input from the key immigration stakeholders in the region, including government, settlement service providers, employers and industry associations, community organizations and academic institutes, and on the logistics and effort required to achieve the objective.
 - Short-term: 6-12 months
 - Medium-term: 1-2 years
 - Long-term: 3 years or ongoing
2. **Potential Lead Organization:** The organization(s) in the local community are primarily responsible for implementing the key objective. Many of these objectives involve provincial or federal jurisdiction, and the local lead organization(s) must work closely with our partners to develop the key objective.
3. **Partner(s)/Resources:** The organizations(s) and resources that are positioned to support the objective and work with the local lead organization(s).
4. **Priority Level:** This was determined from the consultation process with key immigration stakeholders.
 - High: Very important to achieving our vision.
 - Low: Important to the strategy but not critical to success.
5. **Purpose:** Provides a summary description and context for why the key objective has been included.
6. **Implementation Recommendation:** Provides a high-level description of how we can achieve the key objective. The lead organization (s) will be tasked with developing specific tactics and activities.
7. **Accountability/ Measurement:** Provides ways to ensure we are achieving results for the key objective. Key indicators of success have been identified using the Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit, *Measuring Welcoming Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them*.¹

¹ Pathways to prosperity: Canada. Pathways to Prosperity Canada. (2023, March). Retrieved from <http://p2pcanada.ca/library/measuring-welcoming-communities-a-toolkit-for-communities-and-those-who-support-them/>

3.2.1 Key Immigration Strategy Priority Actions: Overview

1. Attraction of New Immigrants

The first category of the strategy involves attracting new immigrants and includes the following objectives:

- 1a. Strategically aligning local labour market goals to regional immigrant attraction Strategy.
- 1b. Attracting more immigrant entrepreneurs and promoting their success in local communities.
- 1c. Aligning immigrant investors with local investment requirements and making more strategic use of immigration as a source of foreign direct investment.
- 1d. Establishing a website portal that serves as a single platform for promoting immigration to Eastern Ontario.
- 1e. Leverage and build on the work of post-secondary institutions to attract newcomers to the region.
- 1f. Concentrating on attracting French-speaking immigrants.
- 1g. Strengthening immigrant integration and building local stories of successful integration to showcase as a means of encouraging prospective newcomers to come to the region.
- 1h. Promoting Eastern Ontario to prospective newcomers across the world, as well as to immigrants already in Canada.

2. Retention and Integration

To ensure proper coordination and alignment of immigrant settlement and retention services, the strategy entails the following objectives:

- 2a. Creating a comprehensive website portal that summarizes all the available services for immigrants.
- 2b. Increasing public awareness of the importance of immigration and the need for a welcoming community.
- 2c. Establishing a network that refers spousal employment opportunities.
- 2d. Ensure Francophone immigrants have broad access to English language training
- 2e. Setting an example for municipal governments to integrate immigrants and foster immigrant-friendly public services.
- 2f. Promoting immigrant-friendly public and personal services.
- 2g. Integrating professional immigrants into local business networks.
- 2h. Encouraging local immigrant networks and promoting cross-pollination among them.

3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Strategic Objective	1a. Strategically aligning local labour market goals to regional immigrant attraction Strategy
Timeframe	Medium to longer-term
Suggested Lead(s)	Municipalities Settlement Employment Organizations Organizations such as Invest Ottawa Regulatory Bodies Educational Institutions Skills Development Centres Local Employers IRCC Ontario Government LIPs
Partner(s)/Resources	Elected Officials (MPs, MPPs, and City Councillors) Employment agencies ACCES Employment Network World Skills New Canadians Provincial Nominee Program
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>Section 1.2.9 shows that immigrants have low unemployment rates across all regions, and their employment numbers almost match their total labour force representation. However, immigrants in Eastern Ontario Region struggle to find jobs in their areas of expertise, resulting in a rising number of unfilled positions in various industries due to a mismatch of qualifications to vacant job opportunities.</p> <p>Given this challenge, this priority should focus on two things: 1) improving how high-skilled immigrants can be supported to land jobs that are commensurate to their credentials; a solution that will help communities in the region deal with the shortages in skilled jobs, including physicians, nurses, engineers, IT professionals, entrepreneurs, etc.; and 2) addressing the workforce needs in frontline service industries, transportation, customer contact centers, personal support workers, tourism industry, and seasonal workers.</p>

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3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Implementation Recommendations

Municipal leadership, support from both provincial and federal governments, and the active involvement of economic development organizations and employers are key factors for successfully implementing this priority action.

Recommended Action:

- Establish a collaborative partnership among the key stakeholders and create a standing table for ongoing strategy refinement.
- Pool data and insight from participating stakeholders to define and track the labour market characteristics of the newcomers joining the component communities.
- Chart progress pathways in recognizing the credentials of highly skilled immigrants and work with employers to put pressure on regulatory bodies.
- Work with skills development centres and educational institutions to plan pathways for bridge pieces of training to allow newcomers to transfer skills into new fields of employment.
- Work with employers to hire newcomers by establishing incentives and by analyzing concerns they may have or perceive when hiring newcomers. For example, support employers to establish short-term contracts for newcomer employees to allow them to showcase their talent and gain Canadian experience and to enable employers to lower perceived risks.
- Identify and scale up targeting employment programs that have demonstrated success, such as the Visible Minority Immigrant Women Employment Program by World Skills.

Accountability/ Measurement

Local municipalities will track progress in this priority and course correct as necessary. Specifically, the municipalities may:

- Develop performance indicators that are measurable and aligned with the aims of this action.
- Collect and analyze data on the performance indicators to measure progress and identify areas for improvement. This data can be collected through custom and targeted surveys (like employer surveys), focus groups and interviews with specific stakeholders (like immigrants, settlement executives, etc.), and consultation with key stakeholders, including government executives and economic development organizations. It is important to ensure that the data collected is reliable, valid, and relevant to the performance indicators.
- Regularly report on the progress made toward the performance indicators to ensure accountability and transparency. This reporting can be done through annual reports, dashboards, or other communication channels that provide relevant data and analysis to the public and other stakeholders. The reporting should highlight successes, challenges, and areas for improvement and include recommendations for future actions.
- Evaluation: Conduct periodic evaluations to assess the impact of the strategies implemented and identify areas for improvement. This evaluation should involve an analysis of the data collected, reviewing the performance indicators, and consulting with key stakeholders. The evaluation should also include an assessment of the effectiveness of the strategies implemented and recommendations for future actions.
- Continuous Improvement: Make necessary adjustments and improvements based on the evaluation results. This will help ensure that the local strategies are effective and relevant across the region and that they continue to align local immigrant attraction goals and regional labour market requirements.

3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Strategic Objective	1b. Attracting more immigrant entrepreneurs and promoting their success in local communities.
Timeframe	Medium to long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Municipalities Economic Development Organizations Established Immigrant Entrepreneurs LIPs Settlement Organizations IRCC Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration, and International Trade Educational Institutions to help establish business incubation centres for immigrant entrepreneurs.
Partner(s)/Resources	Business Development Company (BDC) Invest Ottawa (now covers Eastern Ontario) Entrepreneurship Connections – ACCES Employment Ottawa Newcomer Entrepreneurs One Hub CACIA Program - Le Conseil Économique et Social d'Ottawa Carleton (CÉSOC)
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>The economy of the region thrives on small and medium business enterprises. Furthermore, in the region, a substantial number of small and medium-sized businesses are immigrant-owned and led.</p> <p>These businesses play a vital role in local economies and contribute to the social fabric of both rural and communities in the region. By attracting more immigrant entrepreneurs with growth potential and a keen interest in succession planning, we can create new economic growth and innovation opportunities and ensure that small and medium-sized businesses continue to thrive.</p> <p>Yet, there are indications that the number of young entrepreneurs in Ontario who are ambitious and export-oriented is declining. We need new cohorts of young entrepreneurs to create the next generation of export-driven companies in manufacturing, services, and technology.</p>

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3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Implementation Recommendations

On the one hand, the implementation should target attracting immigrant entrepreneurs and, on the other, promote the entrepreneurship of immigrants in the region.

Opportunities in this priority action include:

- The Start-Up Visa program is designed to attract immigrant entrepreneurs looking to set up a business in Canada to build products and services to be exported worldwide.
- Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP)
- Canada's Global Talent Stream
- Business Incubators and Accelerators
- Trade Missions
- Regional Economic Development Initiatives

Accountability/ Measurement

Municipal leadership is required to establish a measurement framework, including progress indicators, data sourcing, pooling and development, and progress reporting. Examples of indicators to track include:

- Adopting the Start-Up Visa and other key programs (OINP, Canada's Global Talent Stream, etc.)
- Arrival of new immigrant entrepreneurs in the region
- The number of new businesses launched by immigrants
- The amount of investment generated
- The number of jobs created

A comprehensive measurement strategy will need to be established, drawing from existing measurement toolkits, including the Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit to measure welcoming communities.

Conduct a periodic evaluation of progress on this priority action.

Strategic Objective

1c. Aligning immigrant investors with local investment requirements and making more strategic use of immigration as a source of foreign direct investment.

Timeframe

Long-term

Potential Lead(s)

Community Futures Development Corporation Networks
Venture Capitalists
Regional Innovation Centres (RICs)
Economic Development Organizations (EDOs)
Industry Associations
Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)
Angel Investor Networks

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3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Partner(s)/Resources	Canada Business Ontario Chamber of Commerce within each region
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>Immigrant investors play a crucial role in bringing new investment to communities. However, their investments primarily focus on local services like retail, food service, and accommodation. This investment is essential for the growth of local firms and should be continued. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity to be more strategic by connecting immigrant investors with ambitious local entrepreneurs and potential business succession opportunities.</p> <p>Partnering with immigrant investors can be a game-changer for young entrepreneurs seeking growth capital and access to international markets. Although cultural and management differences may exist, these obstacles can be overcome.</p> <p>In addition, many business owners in Eastern Ontario are above the age of 55 and lack a concrete succession plan. In such cases, immigrant investors can provide crucial investment opportunities, enabling business owners to monetize the value they have built up in their firms when they retire.</p>
Implementation Recommendations	Set up an Eastern Ontario committee of business groups to look at ways to strengthen the role of immigrant investment in the region. Create a community of practice (CoP) rather than working in silos*.
Accountability/Measurement	<p>Track the number of new immigrant entrepreneurs in the community.</p> <p>Track the number of immigrant investors involved in succession-related investments.</p> <p>Key Indicators as identified in Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit, Measuring Welcoming Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rate of self-employment - Rate of success among entrepreneurs in both the short and long term - Availability of reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about supports and services available for immigrant employment and entrepreneurship

* CoPs are hubs of knowledge creation and sharing in an organization due to the wealth of experiences, insights, and perspectives that reside at the professionally diverse member level. CoPs are critical because they serve as an ongoing learning venue for professionals from various disciplines who share similar goals, interests, problems and

approaches. The essential currency of CoPs involves the establishment of trust, the creation of learning opportunities, the development of a collaborative platform and the establishment of a distributed leadership model.

3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Strategic Objective	1d. Establishing a website portal that serves as a single platform for promoting immigration to Eastern Ontario.
Timeframe	Short-term
Potential Lead(s)	Economic Development Organizations Local Agencies Serving Immigrants LIPs RIF
Partner(s)/Resources	Immigration Greater Moncton
Priority Level	High
Purpose	During the development of this strategic plan, feedback from stakeholders emphasized the requirement for a centralized repository that contains comprehensive information about the advantages of immigrating to Eastern Ontario and the procedures involved in the process. Rather than separately promoting each of the six communities and creating competition amongst themselves to attract immigrants to settle, work, and enjoy life in their respective communities, a collaborative approach would be more effective. Furthermore, by showcasing all the various communities in a single platform, even smaller communities would have a more significant presence and wider reach, facilitating the achievement of their promotional objectives.
Implementation Recommendations	While numerous regions in Eastern Ontario have websites for promoting their areas to potential residents, few websites cater specifically to the immigrant population. To address this gap, developing a comprehensive website that serves as a one-stop-shop, with multilingual translation, for all information related to relocating to Eastern Ontario is crucial. This website should cover all aspects of immigrating, including the different ways to immigrate, the steps to take upon arrival, and the benefits of living, working, and playing in Eastern Ontario.
Accountability/Measurement	Within 12 months, a new one-stop-shop web portal will be online and updated regularly.

3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Strategic Objective	1e. Leverage and build on the work of post-secondary institutions to attract newcomers to the region.
Timeframe	Medium to long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Municipalities Post-secondary Institutes (PSI) Employment agencies Industry Associations Chambers of Commerce
Partner(s)/Resources	Local Immigration Partnerships Connector Program Canada Ottawa Connector Program Workforce Planning Boards Sectoral Councils Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration & International Trade Professional Associations Settlement Organizations
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>Eastern Ontario's universities and colleges are vital in attracting and integrating new immigrants. However, some challenges need to be addressed, such as ensuring that graduates have the necessary skills to meet labour market needs, integrating students into the local communities, and improving their English language proficiency to help them integrate into the local labour market.</p> <p>As of 2022, Eastern Ontario's prominent post-secondary institutions had more than 16,820 international students (see table below), making them an ideal target for immigration. Upon graduation, these students do not face education or credential recognition challenges and have gained valuable work experience in the community. In addition, having lived in the region for one to four+ years, they are familiar with the local culture and business practices, making them an excellent fit for local employers.</p>

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3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Implementation Recommendations

According to feedback from education stakeholders, they are not permitted to advertise themselves as a path to Canadian citizenship. Nonetheless, they can increase efforts to attract and integrate international students into the community to regionalize these potential skilled workers during their studies.

An ongoing challenge for recent international student graduates has been securing employment in their desired field, which is also an issue for native-born Ontario residents. However, with the low unemployment rates and significant labour market gap, international students have a unique advantage in obtaining employment in their field. Therefore, it is essential to establish links between students and experiential learning opportunities, including transition-to-work programs in local companies during and after graduation. In addition, students should be encouraged to proactively market themselves for local options, with support from employment agencies, such as resume development, networking, referrals, etc.

Recent trends indicate that international students are at heightened risk of exploitation by human trafficking networks, possibly correlating to their greater challenges in finding suitable employment after completing their studies.

Furthermore, post-secondary institutions and employment agencies can work together to formalize a strategy to promote employment opportunities throughout Eastern Ontario to retain international student graduates in the region.

Accountability/ Measurement

To ensure the success of this priority action in Eastern Ontario, the accountability and measurement mechanisms would need to include the following:

- Tracking the post-graduation employment rate of international students in Eastern Ontario to assess the effectiveness of our efforts to attract and integrate international students into the community.
- Monitoring the participation of international students in transition-to-work programs in local companies during and after graduation to assess the effectiveness of our efforts to establish links between students and experiential learning opportunities.
- Track the effectiveness of the support provided by employment agencies to international students, such as resume development, networking, and referrals, to assess the effectiveness of our efforts to encourage students to market themselves for local options proactively.
- Monitor the risk of human trafficking among international students and track any correlations with challenges in finding suitable employment after completing their studies.

3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Table: International Post-Secondary Students in the Eastern Ontario Region (Full-time in 2022)

Institution	# of international students
Algonquin College (Ottawa, Pembroke, Perth)	4,080
Carleton University (Ottawa)	6,510
University of Ottawa (Ottawa)	5,630
St. Lawrence College (Brockville, Cornwall)	600

*Does not include private post-secondary institutes. (Source: 2022 OCAS Data Warehouse and OUAC Undergraduate Application Statistics)

Strategic Objective	1f. Concentrating on attracting French-speaking immigrants.
Timeframe	Medium to long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Le Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'Est de l'Ontario
Partner(s)/Resources	Centre culturel francophone Labour Market Planning Boards
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>The bilingual and bi-cultural features of Eastern Ontario have played a crucial role in its economic and social development for many years. As the community grows and diversifies, it will become more multicultural, a positive trend. Nonetheless, it is essential to maintain the region's Francophone heritage and continue attracting Francophone immigrants while promoting the use of both English and French in our society. Our stakeholders reaffirmed this commitment during the strategic planning process.</p> <p>Recent years have seen a notable rise in immigrants with French as their first language. According to the National Household Survey, between 2016 and 2020, approximately 37,000 immigrants moved to Eastern Ontario, primarily in Ottawa and Prescott & Russell, and spoke French as their mother tongue. The percentage of total immigrants with French as their first language varies between 3.8% and 57%, depending on the community.</p>

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3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Implementation Recommendations

Collaborate with the provincial government to encourage immigration from French-speaking nations. Promote the Eastern Ontario region as a bilingual community, where French is widely spoken while recognizing that proficiency in English is also essential for finding employment in the region. Le Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'Est de l'Ontario (RSIFEO), the Francophone Immigration Support Network of Eastern Ontario, is a valuable partner in this effort. Work with employers to ensure they prioritize bilingualism when recruiting foreign workers and immigrants.

The 2023 Ontario Budget commits \$123.2 million to boost Francophone immigration in Canada, including support for Canadian employers to recruit French-speaking foreign workers and increased support for these immigrants once they arrive in Canada. In addition, in 2024-2025, the upcoming round of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada funding will offer support through RSIFEO for organizations seeking to expand or establish French-language services led by and for the Francophone community.

Accountability/ Measurement

Track the number of immigrants into Eastern Ontario from French-speaking countries.

Key Indicators as identified in Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit, Measuring Welcoming Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them

The key indicators that measure the number of immigrants into Eastern Ontario from French-speaking countries are not explicitly mentioned. Still, some information is provided on the availability and effectiveness of French immigrant-serving agencies and specialized services to meet the needs of French-speaking immigrants, including multi-barrier groups. This includes:

- Assess areas with the greatest need for French-language services, identify organizations equipped to lead efforts in these areas, and support these organizations in the next round of funding.
- Availability of French immigrant-serving agencies with a variety of services – in person and/or online (e.g., needs assessment, information and orientation, employment-related services);
- Availability of reliable information about French immigrant-serving organizations in the community, the services they provide, and how to access them;
- Level of knowledge of French immigrant-serving agencies in the community, the services they provide, and how to access them;
- Evidence of effectiveness of French immigrant-serving agencies in meeting French-speaking immigrants' needs;
- Availability of specialized services by French agencies to meet the needs of multi-barrier groups (e.g., racialized women, youth, seniors, 2SLGBTQI+, refugees, and immigrants with disabilities);
- Availability of reliable information about specialized services by French agencies to meet the needs of multi-barrier groups;
- Evidence of effectiveness of specialized services by French agencies in meeting the needs of multi-barrier groups;
- Availability of supports that facilitate the use of French immigrant services (e.g., childcare, transportation, flexible service delivery options and timing);
- Perceptions of connections (formal and informal) between recent French-speaking immigrants, the more established French-speaking immigrant community, and the French-speaking non-immigrant community;

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3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Accountability/ Measurement *cont'd*

- Level of satisfaction with:
 - The delivery and quality of services for French-speaking immigrants
 - The delivery and quality of specialized services for multi-barriered French-speaking immigrants
 - Interpersonal treatment from agency staff (e.g., courtesy and respect, experiences of interpersonal discrimination)
 - Connections (formal and informal) between recent French-speaking immigrants, the more established French-speaking immigrant community, and the French-speaking non-immigrant community.

Strategic Objective	1g. Strengthening immigrant integration and building local stories of successful integration to showcase as a means of encouraging prospective newcomers to come to the region.
Timeframe	Medium-term
Potential Lead(s)	Municipalities Settlement Service Providers Economic Development key players Local Immigration Partnerships Chambers of Commerce Community Associations Non-Profit Organizations
Partner(s)/Resources	Post-secondary Institutes Local Media Business and Professional Associations Provincial and Federal Government
Priority Level	Low
Purpose	Existing immigrant friends, family networks, and immigrant influencers have been vital marketing channels for promoting new immigration across Canada. However, most stakeholders who participated in the strategic planning process believe that we could and should take additional steps to enhance this approach to attract more immigrants to the region. This method serves as an effective way to market the area and strengthens local family and ethnocultural-community networks.

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3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Implementation Recommendations

Collaborate with ethnocultural-community networks and immigrant settlement agencies to establish a structured strategy for promoting Eastern Ontario to the friends and family of current immigrants.

Partner with the provincial government to execute this plan.

Create videos and written testimonials featuring new immigrants who share their positive experiences of assimilating into the local community that align with labour market needs. Use this content to bolster the newly developed web portal's effectiveness and localized marketing campaigns.

Recommended Actions:

1. Research existing government initiatives related to immigrant integration: Review the current government policies and programs related to immigrant integration in the region, helping to identify areas for collaboration with the government to enhance the existing efforts.
2. Build relationships with government officials: Reach out to government officials responsible for immigrant integration and establish a relationship with them. Introduce officials to the Strategic Plan developed and discuss how to work together to achieve our objectives.
3. Identify funding opportunities: Explore government funding opportunities that align with our objectives. We can implement programs that support immigrant integration and promote successful integration stories by tapping into these resources.
4. Create partnerships with local organizations: Work with local organizations to enhance our efforts. By collaborating with ethnocultural and community groups, we can create a network that supports the integration of newcomers and promotes the region as an attractive destination.
5. Develop joint initiatives: Develop joint initiatives with the government that align with our objectives. By working together, we can develop programs that provide newcomers with the resources they need to succeed and promote successful integration stories. This will help attract more immigrants to the region and strengthen local family and ethnocultural-community networks.
6. Expand marketing efforts to include more targeted outreach to existing immigrant networks, such as friends, family, and influencers.
7. Engage immigrant influencers, such as community leaders, social media personalities, and business owners, to help promote the region and encourage immigration.
8. Develop local success stories that highlight the experiences of successful immigrants who have integrated into the community.

Accountability/ Measurement

A formal campaign is developed and monitored for results.

A series of testimonials in differing formats are developed and used.

- Track the number of immigrant influencers engaged in marketing efforts, such as community leaders, social media personalities, and business owners, to assess the effectiveness of our outreach.
- Track the number of local success stories developed and shared through various channels to measure efforts' effectiveness in showcasing the region as a welcoming and inclusive community for newcomers.
- Track the number of immigrants who come to Ottawa and rural communities through existing networks, such as friends, family, and influencers, to assess the effectiveness of marketing efforts.

3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Strategic Objective	1h. Promoting Eastern Ontario to prospective newcomers across the world, as well as to immigrants already in Canada.
Timeframe	Medium-term
Potential Lead(s)	Municipalities Post-secondary Education Institutions Economic Development key players LIPs Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs) Industry Associations
Partner(s)/Resources	ACCES Employment Network New Canadians CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses Newcomer Centre of Peel (NCP) IRCC Settlement Service Providers Global Talent Stream (GTS)
Priority Level	Low
Purpose	<p>Many immigrants arriving in Canada often settle in major cities such as Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary. While this is often recommended, most immigrants who settled in Eastern Ontario cited the region's lower cost of living, shorter commute times, and friendly neighbourhoods as their primary reasons. These benefits should be communicated to other recent immigrants to Canada who may be seeking an alternative to high-cost, large urban centers, such as smaller cities like Ottawa and neighbouring rural communities.</p> <p>This also holds true for other areas of Ontario, as the province attracts almost half of the immigrants to Canada each year, and the government is doubling the number of economic immigrants selected in 2025 to address the critical labour shortage¹. The City of Ottawa is becoming a more popular destination for immigrants, and we have an opportunity to leverage its appeal. Encouraging immigrants to consider other career options in Eastern Ontario's smaller communities is essential to achieve the lifestyle many immigrants find unattainable in larger urban centers.</p>

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¹ Government of Canada, S. C. (2022, November 18). Labour shortage trends in Canada. Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. Retrieved from https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/subjects-start/labour_/labour-shortage-trends-canada

3.2.2 Key Objectives: Attraction of New Immigrants

Implementation Recommendations

While the City of Ottawa has already achieved some success in attracting secondary immigrants from other parts of Canada, it is recommended that a more formal approach be implemented to promote Eastern Ontario as an attractive destination for both working and living.

Partner with the provincial government on this approach.

Integrate this strategy with other efforts to attract workers/population to the region—for example, immigrant influencers or current immigrants as advocates. For example, Welcome Ottawa Week (WOW) provides a unique opportunity to foster collaboration among different regions by organizing discovery days that showcase the diverse attractions and amenities of Eastern Ontario.

Accountability/ Measurement

To measure the success of this initiative, the following key indicators should be tracked:

- Number of new immigrants who settle in Eastern Ontario: This indicator should track the number of immigrants who settle in the region, including those who have migrated from other parts of Canada and those who have immigrated from other countries.
- Economic impact of immigration: This indicator should measure the economic impact of immigration on the region, including the contribution of immigrants to the local labour market and the growth of local businesses.
- Retention rates of immigrants: This indicator should track the percentage of immigrants who remain in the region after a certain period, such as 5 or 10 years.
- Integration of immigrants: This indicator should measure the level of integration of immigrants into the local community, including their participation in community events and their engagement in local organizations.

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Strategic Objective	2a. Creating a comprehensive website portal that summarizes all the available services for immigrants.
Timeframe	Short-term
Potential Lead(s)	Municipalities Local Immigration Partnerships Local Agencies Serving Immigrants (LASI)
Partner(s)/Resources	Newcomer Information Centre Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration, and International Trade IRCC Service Provider Coalitions in the region
Priority Level	High
Purpose	The purpose of this action is to empower newcomers to have as full a view as possible of all the available supports and to maximize the reach and use of funded programs and services by newcomers across the region. This action should leverage and connect existing portals, such as the City of Ottawa's Immigration Portal, OLIP's new Partnership Portal, LIP-Lanark & Renfrew's Newcomer Portal, and the LASI Collaborative Portal, which makes settlement services available online, and which allows the use of agency specializations by the clients of all agencies. This Portal is particularly useful for newcomers in rural communities, where there may not be specialized settlement services.
Implementation Recommendations	Several areas in Eastern Ontario have pre-existing resources in print and digital formats dedicated to immigrants. This presents a chance to enhance and modernize these resources cohesively. Moreover, instead of simply directing immigrants to different organizations, it is crucial to provide a clear overview of specific services required by them. We can take inspiration from other regions that have successfully established similar one-stop-shop portals and use them to shape our initiatives. This web portal should be seamlessly linked to the promotional website mentioned earlier.
Accountability/ Measurement	<p>Within 12 months, a new one-stop-shop web portal will be online and updated regularly.</p> <p>The lead partners will establish a measurement framework for this action. Indicators of success may include both process and outcome indicators.</p> <p>Process Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of organizations contributing - Participation of all LIPs in the region - Securing municipal leadership and sustained involvement - Scope of services included - Promotion and outreach to immigrants <p>Outcome indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change in number of newcomers accessing services profiled in the portal - Satisfaction of newcomers determined through custom surveys/focus groups

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Strategic Objective	2b. Increasing public awareness of the importance of immigration and the need for a welcoming community.
Timeframe	Medium to long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Local Immigration Partnerships
Partner(s)/Resources	OLIP / Welcoming Ottawa Week LIP-Lanark & Renfrew's Culture Connect IRCC's National Welcoming Week National Francophone Week Heritage Canada Community organizations and non-profit groups that work with newcomers Local schools and educational institutions Municipal governments and city councils Local businesses and chambers of commerce Media outlets such as newspapers, radio stations, and social media platforms Immigration lawyers and settlement agencies Provincial and federal government agencies responsible for immigration and settlement Faith-based organizations and religious leaders Community leaders and influencers Public libraries and cultural centers
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>Eastern Ontario needs to foster a welcoming community for newcomers to ensure retention and a sense of belonging. It is essential to cultivate an open-minded community that values and supports immigrants. All aspects of the community should be welcoming, and this cannot be willed into existence by mere words. Cultivating a welcoming community requires extensive engagements, fostering shared understanding through dialogues, documentaries, and myriad discoveries such as guided tours. It also requires modelling welcoming attitudes through awards and stories that create new narratives.</p> <p>The Welcoming Ottawa Week (WOW), established by OLIP in 2013 (10 years ago), has taken the above approach of building / cultivating a welcoming community. As a result, welcoming Ottawa Week (WOW) is having tremendous growth and impact. Its expansion in the region had already begun last year (2022) when OLIP and LIP – Lanark & Renfrew collaborated to produce a regional calendar of events.</p>

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Implementation Recommendations

Replicate the WOW model in the region in ways that fit the uniqueness of each community in the region.

Seek funding to document the model for easy replication. And leverage the tools and resources provided by IRCC through National Welcoming Week.

Draw from Canadian Heritage resources to develop a framework for celebrating immigrants' special heritage months (Black History Month, Asian History Month, Arab Heritage Month, Islamic Heritage Month, Francophone National Week, and cultural and religious festivities. The LIPs & RIFSEO in the region will also collaborate to establish and implement a calendar of events that recognize immigrant communities and promote greater appreciation for our communities' diversity.

Engage the business community to host special events for immigrants and their members to promote newcomers' participation and forge connections.

The LIPs /RIF will facilitate the engagement of newcomers in local festivities and events and promote interest and appreciation in the local culture, history, and institutions. They should be encouraged to actively participate in their communities and engage with organizations that interest them within the community.

Engaging and collaborating with numerous organizations and local stakeholders is crucial to ensure that everyone understands the significance of immigration and their role in facilitating the successful integration of new immigrants. This increased awareness will foster a more welcoming and supportive community for immigrants, with a particular emphasis on promoting the role of WOW in this initiative.

Accountability/ Measurement

An annual survey of new immigrants should be conducted to evaluate progress in this area.

Recommended Action:

1. Gather data on the community from local organizations and community event volunteer committees to establish a benchmark for the current number of immigrants who are engaging with these groups and participating in community activities.
2. Number of visual materials and information shared: Set a target for the number of visual materials (such as social media posts, videos etc.) and information pieces (such as fact sheets and infographics) that will be shared with local businesses and community organizations. For example, the target could be to share at least 50 visual materials and ten information pieces within the initiative's first year.
3. Reach of the media and public awareness campaign: Set a target for the number of organizations and individuals reached by the media and public awareness campaign. For example, the target could be to reach at least 100 organizations and 1000 individuals within the first year.
4. New immigrant engagement and participation: Set a target for the number of new immigrants who engage with local organizations and participate in community activities. For example, the target could be a 3%-5% increase (from the benchmark) of recent immigrants engaged with local organizations and participating in at least one community activity within the first year across Eastern Ontario.

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Accountability/ Measurement

Key Indicators as identified in Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit, Measuring Welcoming Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them

- Evidence of positive attitudes toward immigration and toward racial, cultural, and religious diversity in the community
- Evidence of positive attitudes toward immigrants of all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds and their intersections in the community
- Rate of hate crimes targeting immigrants across all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds in the community
- Rate of discrimination toward immigrants across all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds in the community
- Evidence of social cohesion among immigrants and non-immigrants of all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds
- Evidence of a sense of inclusion within the community among immigrants of all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds
- Evidence of mainstream organizations and institutions making reasonable efforts to be inclusive and accommodating of immigrants from all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds
- Evidence of support by community leaders across a variety of sectors (e.g., business, civic, social) for the concerns and interests of immigrants from all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds
- Level of satisfaction with:
 - The degree of respect and value community members give to immigrants from all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds in the community
 - Mainstream organizations and institutions' efforts to be inclusive and accommodating of immigrants from all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds of the support by community leaders across a variety of sectors (e.g., business, civic, social) for the concerns and interests of immigrants from all racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds
 - Level of awareness of the media and public awareness campaign among the general population
 - Evidence of positive attitudes toward immigration and newcomers among individuals who were exposed to the media and public awareness campaign
 - Evidence of increased engagement of individuals and organizations with the local immigrant community because of the media and public awareness campaign

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Strategic Objective	2c. Establishing a network that refers spousal employment opportunities.
Timeframe	Medium-term
Potential Lead(s)	Employment agencies Local employers
Partner(s)/Resources	Settlement Service Providers Connector Program Canada Ottawa Connector Program
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>Eastern Ontario presents job prospects and entrepreneurial opportunities for both immigrants and non-immigrants. However, due to the relatively small size of some communities, access to suitable job options for spouses can be limited. This can hinder the influx of new immigrants and make it difficult to retain them, as an unhappy spouse may push their partner to relocate to a bigger urban center.</p> <p>Although there is no definitive solution to this challenge, steps can be taken to broaden the employment prospects for spouses. One such measure is for employers hiring foreign workers to establish a referral network for spousal employment and exchange resumes within the group.</p>
Implementation Recommendations	<p>A spousal employment referral network (for both immigrants and non-immigrants) should be created, through which the resumes of spouses can be shared with human resource managers of participating companies. Additionally, a service should be established to assist spouses in their job search within the communities of Eastern Ontario.</p> <p>The development and expansion of childcare services must be prioritized to ensure they are available to immigrant families with children. This will help to remove a significant barrier to employment for many newcomers who are parents. To achieve this, we can collaborate with community organizations, childcare providers, and government agencies to assess the current availability of childcare services in the region and identify gaps that need to be addressed. We can also advocate for funding and policies that support the expansion of high-quality, affordable childcare services for immigrant families. By providing access to childcare, we can support immigrant parents in their pursuit of employment and contribute to the overall economic growth of our society.</p> <p>Establish an Eastern Ontario Connector Program network. *Ottawa already has an established Connector Program through Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO).</p>
Accountability/Measurement	<p>Monitor the outcomes of the newly established referral network.</p> <p>Rate of employment of working-age immigrants</p> <p>Rate and duration of unemployment of working-age immigrants</p> <p>Rate of underemployment: percent overqualified for the work they do, rate of employment in lower-skilled jobs</p>

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Strategic Objective	2d. Ensure Francophone immigrants have broad access to English language training
Timeframe	Medium to long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Le Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'Est de l'Ontario
Partner(s)/Resources	English as a Second Language (ESL) Service Providers Post-secondary Institutes Libraries
Priority Level	High
Purpose	<p>Bilingualism is a requirement for a portion of the workforce in federally and provincially funded organizations. This has enriched our culture and made the City of Ottawa a national example of how a community can foster vibrant institutions in both official languages.</p> <p>However, the potential pool of new immigrants from the global French-speaking population is small, and rural communities in Eastern Ontario have not successfully attracted Francophone immigrants in the past.</p> <p>On a positive note, Francophone immigration in Eastern Ontario is increasing, but there is still room for improvement in the distribution of the Francophone population.</p>
Implementation Recommendations	<p>Advocate for the provincial government to maintain its emphasis on attracting Francophone immigrants and keeping ties with Francophone countries.</p> <p>Ensure that a wide range of immigrant services is offered in French.</p> <p>Collaborate with local businesses to encourage them to recruit proficient immigrants in English and French.</p> <p>The 2023 Ontario Budget commits \$123.2 million to boost Francophone immigration in Canada, including support for Canadian employers to recruit French-speaking foreign workers and increased support for these immigrants once they arrive in Canada. As well, in 2024-2025, the upcoming round of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada funding will offer support through RSIFEO for organizations seeking to expand or establish French-language services led by and for the Francophone community. For example, English conversation tables or even LINK programs are part of services that could be funded through the next round of IRCC funding if deemed important.</p>
Accountability/Measurement	Track the number of ESL students enrolled in Eastern Ontario programs – offered in both day and evening classes.

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Strategic Objective	2e. Setting an example for municipal governments to integrate immigrants and foster immigrant-friendly public services.
Timeframe	Long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Municipal elected officials and senior staff Community organizations focused on immigrant integration Immigrant service providers and settlement agencies Local business associations and chambers of commerce Community leaders and influencers
Partner(s)/Resources	Local Immigration Partnerships Beyond Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees to Canada: The Role of Municipalities (Toolkit for Inclusive Municipalities in Canada and Beyond) City of Kingston Workplace Inclusion Charter KEYS Better Integration (IBI) Project - Service Provision Model Halifax Municipal Association of Ontario Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Welcoming Communities Initiative Association of Municipalities of Ontario Municipal World Ontario Municipal Social Services Association Ontario Municipal Human Resources Association
Priority Level	Low
Purpose	The municipal government has a significant stake in attracting and retaining immigrants in the local community, as they aspire to cultivate lively and thriving communities. Throughout Canada, municipal governments are implementing policies to expedite the recruitment of immigrants across different government departments. In addition to hiring immigrants, city and town halls can spearhead the provision of immigrant-friendly services and further aid in integrating immigrants into local networks.

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Implementation Recommendations

Municipal leaders across the six regions collaborate to develop targeted strategies for increasing internal employment opportunities for immigrants and enhancing the delivery of immigrant-friendly services, including public transportation. This is particularly vital in the rural communities of Eastern Ontario, where many new immigrants and foreign workers do not own vehicles and rely heavily on public transportation or alternative means of transportation. During community consultations, stakeholders emphasized the significance of public transportation in each region.

To facilitate municipal engagement, leaders can use the Beyond Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees to Canada: The Role of Municipalities toolkit¹ as a blueprint and disseminate the resulting strategy template widely.

Recommended Actions:

- Establishing a municipal Inclusion Charter and/or “access without fear” policy.
- Creating a package of useful information to give each new resident or family.
- Ensure that basic information about community groups and community services is available in hard copy and on the municipal website with a translation option.
- Provide cross-cultural awareness training.
- Developing and implementing mentorship programs to connect new immigrants with established professionals in their field and help them navigate the local job market.
- Partnering with local businesses to offer paid internships and job shadowing opportunities for new immigrants, providing them with valuable work experience and a chance to establish professional networks.
- Providing language training and interpretation services to facilitate communication and integration into the community for non-native English/French speakers.
- Collaborating with community organizations and settlement agencies to provide social and cultural integration programs, such as community events, cultural festivals, and language exchange programs.
- Creating municipal policies and programs that promote affordable housing ensures that new immigrants have access to safe and secure housing options.
- Providing access to healthcare services and resources that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to meet the unique needs of new immigrants.
- Establishing a dedicated municipal office or point of contact to provide information, support, and advocacy for new immigrants and help them navigate the various services and resources available to them.

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¹ Canadian Commission for UNESCO. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://en.ccunesco.ca/-/media/Files/Unesco/Resources/2019/08/CIMToolkitNewComers.pdf>

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Accountability/ Measurement

To ensure immigrant-friendly service delivery, city and town halls can appoint a designated resource person responsible. Additionally, they can enhance their inclusivity by diversifying their staffing and service delivery.

To measure progress towards more immigrant-friendly service delivery, the following indicators can be used:

- The number of designated resource persons appointed by city and town halls responsible for ensuring immigrant-friendly service delivery.
- The extent to which staffing and service delivery have been diversified, including recruiting and retaining staff from diverse cultural backgrounds, languages, and life experiences.
- The extent to which immigrant-friendly services are accessible, including the number of translated materials and language interpretation services offered.
- The number of cross-cultural awareness training sessions provided to staff and volunteers to enhance their cultural competency skills.
- The number of complaints or feedback received from immigrants regarding the quality of services and the response time to these concerns.
- The number of positive reviews or feedback received from immigrants regarding their experience with city and town hall services.

Strategic Objective 2f. Promoting immigrant-friendly public and personal services.

Timeframe	Long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Local Immigration Partnerships
Partner(s)/Resources	OLIP's Equity Ottawa Partnership Grant Makers' Table LIPs Municipalities Settlement Service Providers Wired: Evaluating Settlement Online (WESO) Toolkit City of Kingston Workplace Inclusion Charter KEYS Better Integration (IBI) Project - Service Provision Model

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Priority Level	Low
Purpose	<p>Long-term public and private services need to be sensitive to the needs of immigrants and contribute to the vision of creating an inclusive community. This includes building service organizations' capacity to plan for the needs of immigrants and to change internal systems and approaches that may be posing systemic barriers or causing disparities in service access and use.</p> <p>It also promotes welcoming attitudes and practices in religious organizations and personal service providers.</p>
Implementation Recommendations	<p>To promote the integration of immigrants into the community, key public services need to include immigration in their planning efforts. Private industries should also consider how an increase in immigrants will impact their businesses and how they can tailor their services to be more immigrant-friendly. Specific measures should be taken to make services more accommodating to immigrants, and these best practices should be widely promoted to the community.</p> <p>Recommended Action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draw from the knowledge, resources, and tools created by the Equity Ottawa Partnership in Ottawa. These include organizational change action plan framework, an online community of practice, progress monitoring framework, and tools and resources to support organizations to plan internal capacity development for equity. 2. Needs Assessment: LIPs and RIF would conduct a needs assessment to identify the challenges immigrants face when accessing public and personal services in the community. 3. On-Site Evaluation: LIPs and RIF would visit participating service providers, such as hospitals, schools, libraries, banks, and government offices, to assess the level of service currently provided and identify areas for improvement. Factors such as cultural sensitivity, language barriers, and availability of information in languages other than English or French can be evaluated. 4. Feedback and Recommendations: Based on their evaluation, LIPs and RIF would provide feedback to service providers on what they are doing well and where they need to improve to be more immigrant-friendly. They would provide recommendations for specific actions that could be taken, such as multilingual signage or organizing cross-cultural training for staff. 5. Follow-Up: LIPs and RIF could conduct follow-up visits to service providers to assess the changes' effectiveness and provide ongoing support and guidance as needed. 6. Development of Service Standards: LIPs and RIF could work with service providers to develop standards for immigrant-friendly service delivery, including benchmarks for accessibility, cultural sensitivity, and language services. 7. Multilingual Resources: Service providers could develop multilingual resources such as brochures, flyers, and web content to help immigrant clients access and understand services better. 8. Cultural Competence Training: Service providers could participate in cultural competence training to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to interact effectively with immigrants from diverse backgrounds. 9. Collaboration and Referrals: LIPs and RIF could foster collaboration among service providers and refer clients to appropriate services to ensure they receive comprehensive and coordinated care. <p>~ continued next page</p>

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Implementation Recommendations

10. Community Feedback Mechanism: LIPs and RIF could create a community feedback mechanism, such as a survey or hotline, to gather feedback from immigrant clients about their experiences with service providers and identify areas for improvement.

Overall, the initiative would aim to create a more welcoming and inclusive community by improving the accessibility and quality of public and personal services for immigrants.

The Ontario Budget 2023 proposes to provide \$208 million over five years, starting in 2023-24, and \$54 million ongoing to Employment and Social Development Canada to expand the Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities to support local official language minority community organizations to deliver employment assistance services.

Accountability/ Measurement

Assess the advancement in service delivery provided by public and personal service providers and highlight and endorse those who demonstrate an "immigrant-friendly" approach.

- The number of public and personal service providers who participated in the program.
- The number of services that were improved or made more immigrant-friendly resulted from the program.
- Feedback from immigrants on the program's effectiveness in improving their experiences with public and personal services.
- The number of public and personal service providers who receive recognition for their efforts to improve their services for immigrants.

Key Indicators as identified in Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit, Measuring Welcoming Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them

- Availability and use of feedback mechanisms to assess the quality of public and personal services provided to immigrants.
- Evidence of responsiveness and action taken in response to feedback received from immigrants.
- Number and type of training and resources provided to public and personal service providers to improve their ability to provide immigrant-friendly services.
- Number of immigrants who report feeling well-served and satisfied with the public and personal services they receive.
- Number of public and personal service providers who demonstrate cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence in their interactions with immigrants.
- Public and personal service providers are disseminating evidence of positive messaging about immigrants and their contributions to the community.
- Level of satisfaction with:
 - The availability and quality of information provided to immigrants.
 - The availability and accessibility of public and personal services.
 - The cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence of public and personal service providers.
 - The portrayal of immigrants in public and personal services.

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Strategic Objective	2g. Integrating professional immigrants into local business networks.
Timeframe	Medium to long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Chamber of Commerce Eastern Ontario Regional Network Eastern Ontario Training Board Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) Business Improvement Associations (BIAs)
Partner(s)/Resources	Service Clubs Post-secondary Institutes Employers Local economic development agencies Local business associations and networks Local industry associations Professional immigrant networks and associations Local colleges and universities with programs related to the industries in the region Business incubators and accelerators Employment services and settlement agencies
Priority Level	Low
Purpose	One significant hurdle in retaining professional and investor-class immigrants is their capacity to integrate into local business networks, founded on trust and personal connections that develop over an extended period. This can be a challenging task, not just for immigrants. Nonetheless, if we aspire to retain professional and investor immigrants in the region, they must join these business networks.
Implementation Recommendations	We can encourage formal business-related networks such as Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, industry associations, management groups, etc., to welcome immigrants into their networks actively. Furthermore, we can encourage immigrants to invest time and effort in building these networks within the local community.
Accountability/Measurement	Encourage formal business-related networks to host a networking and member recruitment event in respective areas across Eastern Ontario to encourage immigrant participation and integration into local business networks. The Chamber of Commerce would host the events in collaboration with Service Clubs, Post-secondary Institutes and Employers.

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Accountability/ Measurement

Measurable outcomes could include:

- The number of events hosted across Eastern Ontario
- The number of attendees
- The number of new members among immigrant professionals and investors
- The number of new immigrant professionals who secure employment or establish a business through connections made at the events
- The number of immigrant professionals who are mentored by established members of the local business community
- The number of successful partnerships between immigrant-owned businesses and local businesses

The events would aim to create a welcoming and supportive environment for immigrant professionals and investors, providing them with the resources and connections they need to integrate successfully into the local business community.

Local Chambers of Commerce could also offer membership to winners of some entrepreneur competitions, such as speed speech competitions. However, sometimes immigrant entrepreneurs do not have the budget or interest to participate in local associations or clubs. Still, they may want to connect more if offered a one-year subscription or incentive.

Key Indicators as identified in Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit, Measuring Welcoming Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them

- Rate of participation in professional organizations
- Perceptions of intercultural understanding between immigrants and members of the receiving community (from the perspective of immigrants and members of the receiving community)
- Perceptions of intercultural understanding between French-speaking immigrants and French-speaking members of the receiving community (from the perspective of immigrants and members of the receiving community)
- Perceptions of connections (informal and formal) among recent immigrants, more established immigrants, and non-immigrants (from the perspective of immigrants and non-immigrants)
- The diversity of representation in professional organizations and business networks, including representation from immigrant communities
- The availability and accessibility of mentorship and support programs for immigrant professionals and entrepreneurs
- The extent to which immigrant professionals and entrepreneurs can access funding and financial support for their business ventures
- The level of satisfaction among immigrant professionals and entrepreneurs with the resources and support available to them through local business networks and organizations.

3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Strategic Objective	2h. Encouraging local immigrant networks and promoting cross-pollination among them.
Timeframe	Long-term
Potential Lead(s)	Chamber of Commerce Ethno-cultural Community Groups Local cultural and ethnic associations Community centers and clubs Immigrant-led organizations Local religious institutions Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focused on immigrant integration and community building
Partner(s)/Resources	Local Immigration Partnerships Newcomers Association of Canada Community foundations Employment Ontario Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) Social services organizations Settlement service providers Volunteer organizations and programs Local media outlets and publishers
Priority Level	Low
Purpose	<p>Research has shown that forming immigrant clusters in both urban and rural areas is essential for the long-term retention of immigrants. These clusters enable the emergence of specific services for immigrant groups, including food, entertainment, and personal and professional services. By offering these services to the broader community, native-born Ontarians can connect more with immigrant populations.</p> <p>Unfortunately, there are very few immigrant populations of sufficient scale in rural Eastern Ontario to form such groups. Although around 30 ethnocultural community groups across the region, many are small or inactive. Therefore, it is essential to foster cooperation and networking between similar immigrant groups across the region to overcome the challenges of small immigrant communities. By doing so, even in areas where the population is smaller, immigrants can connect with others and form a stronger community.</p>

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Implementation Recommendations

Engage with existing ethnocultural-community groups to explore opportunities to strengthen their interactions and collaborations. Various funding programs are available from both federal and provincial governments to support the establishment and development of these groups, and it is vital to encourage immigrant communities in Eastern Ontario to take advantage of these resources.

Recommended Actions:

1. Conduct a needs assessment to determine the needs of ethnocultural community groups in Eastern Ontario, such as the type of resources they need, the services they require, and the barriers they face.
2. Use the needs assessment results to connect existing ethnocultural community groups in Eastern Ontario with similar groups in other regions and encourage collaboration and networking.
3. Provide capacity-building support to these groups, including training, mentorship, and funding opportunities, to help them build the skills and knowledge they need to grow and achieve their goals.
4. Increase the visibility of ethnocultural community groups in Eastern Ontario by promoting their events, activities, and achievements through social media, local media, and other communication channels.
5. Provide language support for ethnocultural community groups in Eastern Ontario by offering translation and interpretation services and ensuring that information and resources are available in multiple languages.
6. Foster partnerships between ethnocultural community groups and local businesses, government agencies, and other organizations to promote cross-pollination and collaboration.

Accountability/ Measurement

With the growth of the immigrant population in Eastern Ontario, there is an opportunity for the emergence of active and engaged ethnocultural-community groups that can provide services and support.

Key Indicators as identified in Pathway to Prosperity Canada's Toolkit, Measuring Welcoming Communities: A Toolkit for Communities and Those Who Support Them

- Availability of inclusive public spaces, facilities, and programs (e.g., culturally appropriate public spaces and facilities, diverse calendar of activities/modalities, programs and facilities for immigrants), including for multi-barriered groups (e.g., racialized women, youth, seniors, 2SLGBTQI+, refugees, immigrants with disabilities)
- Availability of reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about public spaces, facilities, and programs (general programs and programs for multi-barriered groups)
- Level of knowledge of public spaces, facilities, and programs in the local community (general programs and programs for multi-barriered groups)
- Rate of usage of public spaces, facilities, and programs by immigrants (including immigrants from multi-barriered groups)
- Evidence of sense of inclusion in public spaces, facilities, and programs (including among immigrants from multi-barriered groups)
- Evidence of intercultural competence and understanding of immigrants' needs (including immigrants from multi-barriered groups) among administrators and staff of public spaces, facilities, and programs
- Availability and accessibility of diverse religious and ethnocultural organizations

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Accountability/ Measurement

- Availability of reliable information in both official languages and other top languages of new arrivals about religious and
- Level of satisfaction with:
 - The availability and quality of public spaces, facilities, and programs, including for multi-barriered groups
 - Information about public spaces, facilities, and programs, including for multi-barriered immigrants
 - Interpersonal treatment from administrators and staff of public spaces, facilities, and programs (e.g., courtesy and respect, patience with language/communication barriers if seeking assistance, experiences of interpersonal discrimination)
 - Interpersonal treatment from other members of the public while using public spaces, facilities, and programs
- Ethnocultural organizations in the community, the services/programming they provide, and how to access them
- Level of knowledge of religious and ethnocultural organizations in the community, the services/programming they provide, and how to access them
- Availability and accessibility of religious and ethnocultural services and amenities in the community (e.g., shops, restaurants, social clubs/associations, recreational activities, language schools, and places of worship)
- Availability of information in both official languages and top languages of new arrivals about religious and ethnocultural services and amenities in the community
- Level of knowledge of religious and ethnocultural services and amenities in the community
- Level of involvement in local religious and ethnocultural communities
- Evidence of sense of attachment to local religious and ethnocultural communities
- Evidence of social connections and support between recent immigrants and co-ethnic and co-religionist immigrants with longer residence as well as co-ethnic and co-religionist non-immigrants
- Availability and accessibility of information, programs, and services to assist with immigrant settlement and welcoming offered through religious and ethnocultural organizations in both official languages and top languages of new arrivals
- Evidence of effectiveness of information, programs, and services to assist with immigrant settlement and welcoming offered through religious and ethnocultural organizations
- Availability of specialized services and supports to meet the needs of multi-barriered groups within religious and ethnocultural communities (e.g., racialized women, youth, seniors, 2SLGBTQI+, refugees, immigrants with disabilities)
- Evidence of effectiveness of specialized services and supports to meet the needs of multi-barriered groups within religious and ethnocultural communities

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3.2.3 Key Objectives: Retention and Integration

Accountability/ Measurement

- Level of satisfaction with:
 - Information, programs, and services to assist with immigrant settlement and welcoming offered through religious and ethnocultural organizations
 - Specialized services and supports to meet the needs of multi-barriered groups within religious and ethnocultural communities
 - Information about religious and ethnocultural organizations in the community
 - Interpersonal treatment by diverse religious and ethnocultural organizations, including by non-immigrant members and those in leadership positions (e.g., courtesy and respect, patience with language/communication barriers if seeking assistance, experiences of interpersonal discrimination)



Strong, Healthy, Vibrant and Diverse

For Eastern Ontario to maintain its economic and demographic expansion, an increasing number of newcomers will have to migrate from other countries or parts of Canada. It is imperative to have thriving urban and rural communities in Ontario. Therefore, the goal of growing and advancing Eastern Ontario is linked with the objective of an inclusive and expanding society.

The coming three to five years will be difficult for the six regions of Eastern Ontario: The County of Renfrew, Lanark County, Ottawa, the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry United Counties, and the United Counties of Prescott and Russell. The economy's configuration is evolving, necessitating novel sources of economic development. Concurrently, the region's labour market is more open than in decades. As a result, the "value proposition" that appeals to private sector business investment in Eastern Ontario is evolving.

Therefore, local, provincial, and federal stakeholders need to regard immigration into Eastern Ontario not only as a tactical solution to fill labour gaps but as a primary source of talent, investment, networks, and culture that will drive the community to the next level as a growth engine for Ontario.

