



Trends and Emerging Issues Survey Report, March 2018

Introduction

The TWLIP Service Coordination Action Group is an inter-agency working group interested in learning about current trends and emerging issues among newcomers and immigrants within the West catchment area. A short online survey (Appendix A) was designed to capture this information from various service providers.

Organizations were asked to identify the top three trends or emerging issues observed in the past year. 'Emerging issues' were defined as challenges or problems that are NEW to newcomer and immigrant service users in the communities served.

The survey was active between October 20 and November 10, 2017. 24 organizations completed the survey (see next page). The collected data has been compiled into aggregate form and this summary report will be available on the TWLIP website at <http://www.torontowestlip.ca/emerging-issue-survey-report/>.

The responses from organizations have been edited and presented in a chart format to make the report easy to read. Some omissions or inaccuracies may have occurred during the process.

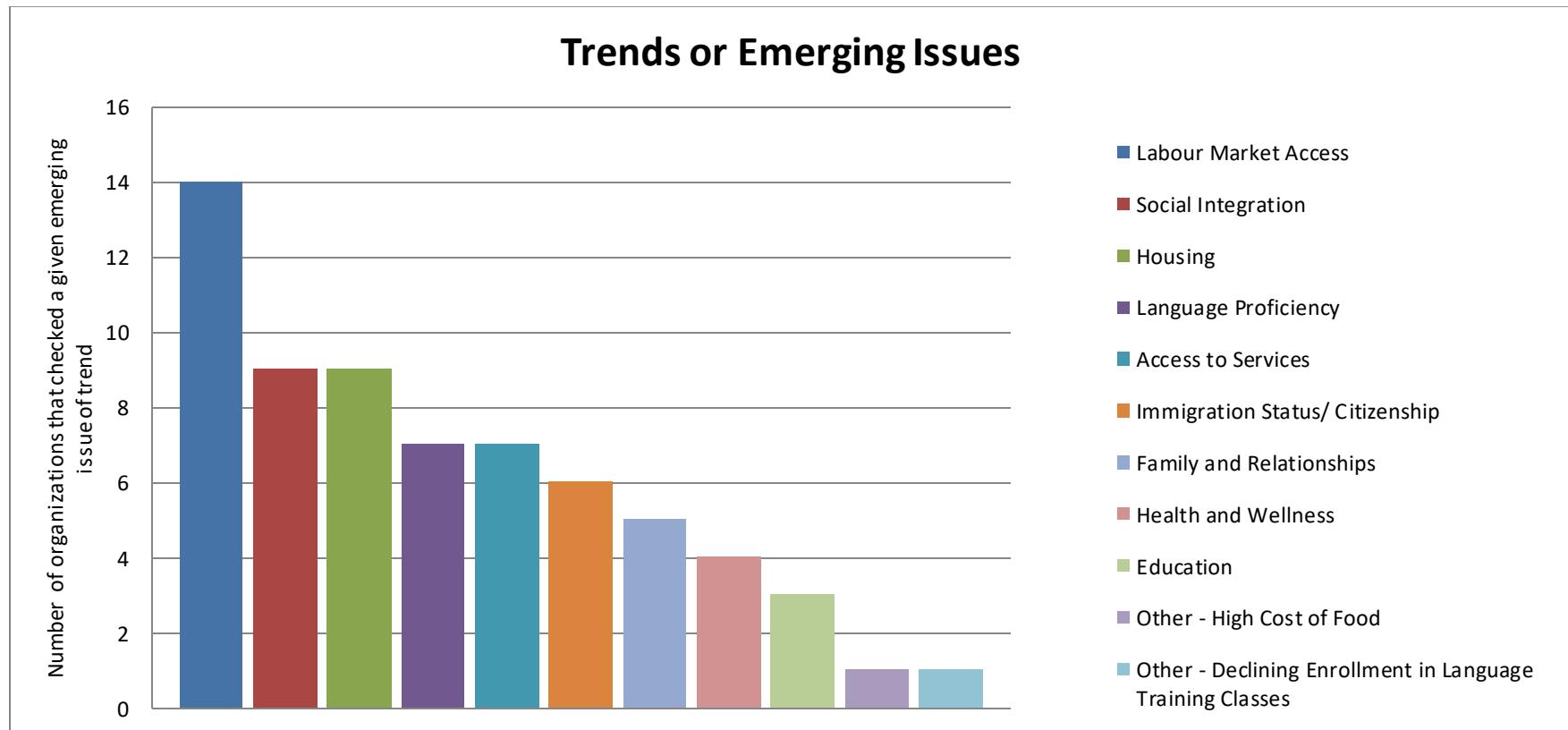
We hope that this research will provide information that is useful for agencies when planning programs and services, as well as when preparing funding applications.

Your feedback is appreciated at the end of the report.

List of organizations that completed the survey:

Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community services
Albion Neighbourhood Services
Arab Community Centre of Toronto
Conseil scolaire Viamonde (French School Board)
CultureLink Settlement and Community Services (Settlement Workers in Schools & Library Settlement Partnership)
Elsbeth Heyworth Centre for Women
For Youth Initiative
Humber College
Islamic Social Services and Resources Association
Jane/Finch Community & Family Centre
JobStart
LAMP Community Health Centre
Learning Enrichment Foundation
Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto
Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services
Rexdale Women's Centre
Skills for Change
The Career Foundation
Toronto Catholic District School Board
Toronto Public Health
Toronto Public Library (Black Creek)
YMCA Language Assessment and Referral Centre
Youth Employment Services
YWCA JUMP

Findings



Labour Market Access - Identified by 14 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* *13 out of 14 organizations developed/ implemented response
General: broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	No access to "hidden job market" and professional networks.	Offering a variety of services that connects newcomers with employers: bridging, mentoring, OSLT training and online tools.
	Unfair hiring practices.	
	Lack of sustainable employment.	Completed scan of employment agencies in the community.
	Increasing reliance on agencies offering unsafe work.	Call for action for fair access.
	Low hourly wage.	Leader in the campaign to raise the minimum wage.
	Low hourly rate does not provide sufficient living conditions.	Action call for fair access to employment.
	Increasing number of clients looking for jobs.	Providing appropriate information and referrals.
	A lack of high paying / career type jobs.	Offering employers wage subsidies.
	Struggles with resumes and job searching.	No response indicated for this issue.
	More pre-arrival services impacting service delivery.	Serving more individuals - pre and post immigration - through email and online supports.
	Technology is changing delivery of services.	
General and Youth	Lack of "first job" opportunities.	Using employment assistance programs for youth. Accessing funding for adult OW recipients.
Youth	Youth are large group of unemployed.	Accessing grants to hire local youth. Working with local businesses to increase opportunities.
	Difficulty gaining substantial career pathways.	Program development to meet this need.
Youth and Seniors	More seniors and youth seeking employment.	Connecting clients to appropriate information and resources. Computer/ technology classes for seniors.

		Volunteer opportunities with honoraria.
Temporary Residents	Work permit holders have difficulty getting hired.	NSP settlement counsellor is trained in employment counselling.
Non-Status Persons	Lack of status is a barrier to services.	No response indicated for this issue.
Women	More women wanting help with entrepreneurship.	More agencies looking at providing entrepreneurship programs.

Social Integration - Identified by 9 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* <i>*6 out of 9 organizations developed/ implemented response</i>
General: broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Discrimination and stereotyping.	Education and counselling. Referrals to culturally sensitive service providers. Schools and non-profits working with family unit.
	People not integrating after many years.	Promoting engagement in local community.
	Difficulty gaining acceptance into workplace culture.	Providing training and education around workplace culture.
	Not accessing mental health counsellors due to lack of services, stigma and language barrier.	Providing as many relevant supports as possible.
	Spousal abuse and violence against women.	No response indicated for this issue.
General and Women	Social isolation, especially for those of working age who can't find jobs and for seniors who don't speak English.	Connecting people to social activates such as faith groups and seniors' groups.
		People form connections at ESL classes.
Seniors	Increasing need for supports for seniors who are isolated. Many seniors are unaware of supports.	Providing social and recreational activities (e.g. conversation circles).
		Helping to develop Leadership Skills.

Youth	Youth in conflict with the law.	Providing Youth Justice Program.
	Hard to reach youth in the shelter system. Culture shock can be severe.	Streets to Jobs worker is making connections, but ability to assist individuals without legal status is limited. Ability to assist is limited because some of youth do not have legal status.
Canadian Citizens Born Outside Canada	This group is not eligible for settlement services that are funded by federal government.	No response indicated for this issue.

Housing - Identified by 9 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* *5 out of 9 organizations developed/ implemented response
General: broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Increasingly higher rents.	Subsidized housing.
	Lack of safe, affordable housing that is close to services and shopping.	Advocacy for clients around housing and tenancy issues.
	Wait lists are long, even for emerging housing.	Connecting with private landlords.
	Not enough income to pay rent and live on.	Knowledgeable staff working with City, TCHC and housing organizations. Working with legal clinics to prevent evictions. Strengthening partnerships with Housing Help Centres in all regions.
	Seeing people "on the move" because they can't secure housing. This impacts their settlement.	No response indicated for this issue.
	Money brought from outside Canada goes mostly to pay rent.	Financial coaches to help with financial management.
General and Seniors	Landlords have too much control regarding the cost of rent, who rents and housing conditions.	Providing resources such as Landlord and Tenant Act.

		Train frontline staff on tenant rights. Helping with applications and accompany clients to meet landlords. Advocating for government intervention/ regulation.
GARS and Refugee Claimants	Must depend on government assistance which is not enough to live on once rent is paid.	Financial management workshops.
Larger Families	Finding housing for larger families is even more difficult.	Connecting with private landlords.

Language Proficiency - Identified by 7 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* <small>*5 out of 7 organizations developed/ implemented response</small>
General: broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Newly arrived clients have low education levels and language proficiency affecting integration and their ability to use services.	We have - or refer to - language classes and English conversation classes.
	Still seeing language as a major barrier.	
	High demand for services in Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic, Farsi.	We provide services in different languages.
	Seeing many clients who need language instruction.	We provide LINC classes to eligible clients.
	Bias against having an accent.	Working to increase capacity to serve these clients.
	Some who have been in Canada for some time don't know about services (to improve English proficiency).	No response indicated for this issue.
Refugees	Lower English language proficiency of recent refugees means challenges are pronounced. It affects other aspects of their settlement: labour market access, education, and social integration.	Doing outreach to inform those that don't know about services.
		No response indicated for this issue.

Access to Services - Identified by 7 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* <small>*6 out of 7 organizations developed/ implemented response</small>
General: broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Language barrier to accessing services.	Counsellors who speak various languages.
	Complexity of the human services system is a barrier.	Case management approach to services.
	Steady decline in clients accessing our employment services.	Different marketing and outreach strategies.
	Newcomers unaware of available services.	Assigned staff members to conduct outreach on a regular basis.
Refugee Claimants	Influx of refugee claimants with immediate need for shelter and legal assistance.	Utilizing additional support from other funding streams (other than IRCC).
Youth	Lack of services for newcomer youth.	Recently opened up a Children and Youth Centre.
Non status youth	Challenging to help clients who do not have official status. With wait times and lag time for gaining status, it is difficult to know where individuals stand within the system.	No response indicated for this issue.
Francophone children and youth	Lack of French resources in the community	On-going use of settlement services inside the schools.

Immigration Status/Citizenship - Identified by 6 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* *3 out of 6 organizations developed/ implemented response
Refugee Claimants	Long(er) waiting times for refugee claimant hearings. This population is not eligible for employment/training supports.	No response indicated for this issue.
Non-Status Persons	Hard to assist clients who have lost refugee claims/ appeals and remain in Canada. They are now not eligible for government assistance or IRCC settlement services.	We can provide medical services for non-status clients.
General broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Long wait time for Health Card applications. It is psychologically difficult for families.	
	Seeing newcomer clients relocating from other provinces in past year or two.	No response indicated for this issue.
Temporary Residents	Seeing an increase in refugee status, temporary work permits and student Visa's. Many employers and programs require PR status.	No response indicated for this issue.
In-land Refugee Claimants	Requests for services from people who have crossed the border from the US to Quebec. They are interested in residing in Ontario.	Providing basic information (mostly in Spanish) about the refugee process and newcomer services in Ontario and Toronto. Four of these families that have been accepted as refugees and are now being supported by our team.
Citizenship Applicants	Seeing citizenship applicants who are unclear about requirements.	Assessing these clients and providing information.

Family and Relationships - Identified by 5 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* <small>*5 out of 5 organizations developed/ implemented response</small>
Refugees	With recent arrival of refugees, seeing more separation among families. Lack of family support hinders ability to participate in settlement services/ programs and affects mental wellbeing.	Frontline workers (such as settlement workers, peer outreach workers and social workers) have training and skills to access community supports and make effective referrals (family reunification, immigration issues etc.)
		Offering settlement workshops for all newcomers and support groups.
Newcomers who have experienced trauma	Finding that newcomers who have experienced trauma (war and violence) need more complicated interventions. Seeing more "incidents" within the family and incidents that involve police. The government does a poor job in assisting these newcomers once they have arrived.	Provide counselling, education and appropriate referrals.
General broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Intergenerational challenges between youth and their families.	Focus on building intergenerational relationships and working with the family as a unit.
		Providing holistic services to each family member.
Women	Violence against women. Relationships can worsen after coming to Canada. Issue is not new but overall it is steadily increasing.	Provide information, support and informal counselling to work out an action plan.
		Referral to social worker or LAO family lawyer when needed.
		Now that conditional PR has been lifted, it is easier for some women to leave abusive relationships.
Youth	Youth having serious issues with adjustment involving bullying; difficulty with school, parents and the law.	Youth counselors working with settlement counselors as a team to address the entire family unit is yielding much better outcomes.

Health and Wellness - Identified by 4 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented* *3 out of 4 organizations developed/ implemented response
Seniors and adults (from 50 +)	Aging population is magnifying health concerns (such as diabetes, heart disease and cancers) in ethno-specific communities. Social isolation of older people is also compounding the problem.	Programming to reduce isolation and provide a healthy meal. Act as a "bridge" for our clients to the mainstream health care providers. Project to empower community members on health prevention; to teach self-management of chronic diseases and to provide exercise.
General: broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Newcomers' approach to health is reactive, not proactive. There is lack of awareness about preventative health care services (that help manage chronic diseases).	Providing holistic client engagement model to assist clients navigating support systems that strengthen the social determinants of health (connections to employment, childcare, social supports etc.)
		Providing healthy living group sessions that include fitness classes, info sessions on diabetes prevention, healthy eating and dental health. Including recreational activities such as arts and crafts and stress management to encourage mind wellness.
	Newcomers unable to advocate for themselves or / navigate current health care system. An urgent need to incorporate "bridges" to health services that respond to their needs (information in their language, cultural sensitive health Information, advocacy and personalized information).	Incorporating health navigators to support needs.
	A lack of employment or being underemployed affects newcomers' health.	No response indicated for this issue.

Education - Identified by 3 organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented*
Francophone children and youth	Lack of French resources in the community.	Ongoing use of community settlement service inside the schools.
Youth	Need for intensive academic supports to complete secondary and enter post-secondary school.	We have developed programs to address this need.
	Not enough support for youth/teens after school hours.	Libraries provide a wide variety of programs to support youth and teens such as daily Youth Hub programs that provide food, homework help, and educational entertainment.

Other Issues - Identified by organizations as a trend or emerging issue

Groups Affected	Description of Trend/ Issue	Response Developed/ Implemented*
General: broader population groups include, but are not limited to women, youth, seniors, men	Food insecurity: Cost for basic food items keeps going up and low income families are receiving almost the same amount of social assistance. Also, once these families spend a large portion of their income on rent there is little or no money for food.	Dieticians see clients one on one and provide resources and information about healthy eating on a budget.
		Developing a food strategy as an organization and mapping resources in the community.
		Newcomer cooking clubs where clients can come together, cook, eat and take food home.
Men and women	Declining participation in language training programs: Seeing decline in enrollment and attendance in adult ESL and LINC classes over past few years in all areas of TWLIP except York South-Weston.	Stepping up outreach through online and hard copy distribution of promotional information.
		Working closely with Language Assessment Centres.

Appendix A

TWLIP Trends and Emerging Issues Survey

- Your Organization *
- Your Name *
- Your role/title *

Please identify the TOP THREE EMERGING ISSUES that you and/or your staff members have observed in the past year. 'Emerging issues' are challenges or problems that are NEW to newcomer and immigrant service users in the communities you serve.

- Which area does ISSUE #1 fall within? *

Labour market access Language proficiency Social integration Education Immigration status/citizenship
 Health and wellness Housing Family and relationships Access to services Other

- ISSUE #1: Which groups of newcomers are affected? Check all that apply. *

Women Men Youth (13-24) Children Seniors (60+) LGBTQ Francophone Other

- ISSUE #1: In which community/communities have you observed this issue? Check all that apply. *

South Etobicoke Central Etobicoke North Etobicoke York South-Weston Black Creek/Jane Finch Other

- ISSUE #1: Please provide details about this issue. *

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- ISSUE #1: Has your agency developed or implemented a response to this issue? *

Yes No

- Please provide a brief description of the response. *

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NOTE: The above questions are repeated for Issues 2 and 3.

Feedback

We want to assess if this report is helpful for you and if we would continue this kind of survey in the future. Follow the link below to answer 5 very short questions. Please complete the survey by Friday April 20th. Thank you for your valuable feedback.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D8NHHQG>