

South Okanagan | Similkameen  
*Local Immigration*  
**PARTNERSHIP**  
Regional Snapshot

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Attracting, Integrating and Sustaining Newcomer Canadians



SOUTH OKANAGAN  
IMMIGRANT AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Prepared Oct. 2014  
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*In partnership with South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services*

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South Okanagan | Similkameen  
***Local Immigration Partnership***

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**SOUTH OKANAGAN  
IMMIGRANT AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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## Purpose of Regional Snapshot

The purpose of this paper is to highlight and provide summary information to assist in preparing for a Regional Strategic Plan pertaining to the Attraction, Integration and Sustaining of Newcomer Canadians.

## Overview

The South Okanagan Similkameen Region currently welcomes about 100 newcomer Canadians a year. Most newcomer Canadians choose to live in large rural centers: Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. Ninety percent of immigrants who come to British Columbia choose to live in Vancouver, largely due to wanting to live close to family and friends and to the perceived economic gains of living in a large centre, including the ability to find employment. However, given the projected skill and business needs of the South Okanagan Similkameen Region there is potential to attract, integrate and sustain more newcomer Canadians to meet those needs.

Studies show it can take up to 15 years for a newcomer Canadian to integrate into a community. There is an opportunity, through focused strategic initiatives, to ensure newcomer Canadians are integrated more quickly. These initiatives can help meet the shortage of skills in the labour market and help build and sustain the foundation of small businesses in BC. These initiatives should also ensure that newcomer Canadians are socially and culturally integrated such that they are further contributing to the community as civically-minded members.

The South Okanagan Similkameen, as in British Columbia overall, has a high number of small businesses that employ less than 20 people. There is a concern, with the anticipated number of small business owners planning to retire, that these small businesses continue on through new ownership. Business Class Immigrants are a potential source of new owners.

The South Okanagan Similkameen, again as in British Columbia overall, is projected to have a shortage of skilled workers, including trades people such as carpenters, truck drivers, and health care workers. This skills shortage is particularly relevant and immediate to the region in light of at least three major projects currently underway or planned: the Correctional Centre in Oliver, Skaha Hills Development, and the Penticton Hospital Expansion. Skilled newcomer Canadians are a source of skilled workers for the region.

The South Okanagan Similkameen Region presents similar issues for immigrants who seek out, or who may be invited to, the region as in most areas of Canada. Affordable housing, transit and ease of access to services, and a livable wage are issues immigrants face elsewhere but may be exacerbated here due to the rural and geographical stretch, the unique lake and mountain environment, the seasonal nature of many jobs, and the high influx of pensioned retirees. The region places a priority on sustainable practices for the environment: land, nature, and water. All of these issues are important to consider in strategic initiatives designed to create successful programs that attract, integrate, and sustain newcomer Canadians.

## *Notes for Strategic Plan*

1. A regional strategy that works with both provincial and federal governments to help influence the type and number of newcomer Canadians will help better establish the best fit for new Canadians with unique economic and social conditions of the region.
2. The more peaceful lifestyle away from a larger rural centre is worth mentioning in materials designed to attract newcomer Canadians to the region.
3. When inviting skilled newcomer Canadians to the region, employment hiring practices, satisfactory employment, and employment that best matches skills, are keys to ensuring successful integration.
4. Volunteering is a way to engage newcomer Canadians immediately in the community, enabling them access to, and experience with, the Canadian business culture. Improved communications between Non-profits and For-profits would create a better understanding for transference of skills.
5. Immigrant Services should include an awareness of the South Okanagan Similkameen Valley as an endangered ecosystem, along with the importance of, and practices in, sustainable development and water conservation.
6. Information on affordable housing and transit routes will help facilitate newcomer Canadian's integration.

# Attracting Newcomer Canadians

## **Canadian Federal and BC Provincial Policies**

Federal and BC provincial policies currently influence immigration to BC and the South Okanagan. These policies are structured to attract various categories of Immigrants including the following: (see appendix for description of these categories) <sup>1</sup>

1. Family Sponsorship
  2. BC Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)
  3. Live in Care Giver (Nanny Program)
  4. Canadian Experience Class
  5. Federal Skilled Worker
  6. Federal Skilled Trades
- ▶ BC Business PNP allows BC to select (nominate) immigrants for permanent residence based on the province's labour market and economic development needs, priorities, and selection criteria
  - ▶ The top skills nominated in 2013 included skills associated with Service Supervisors, Trades, Professional including science, finance, and health, transportation, and retail sales
  - ▶ The objectives of the BC PNP are to:
    - Help employers attract and retain qualified foreign workers who have the skills and experience to contribute to BC's economy
    - Attract experienced entrepreneurs who are ready to invest in our economy and create jobs for Canadian citizens and permanent residents
  - ▶ Citizen and Immigration Canada (CIC) sets annual nomination targets for individual provinces/territories and the overall number of provincial nominees admitted annually to Canada as permanent residents
  - ▶ Canada aims to attract up to 285,000 new immigrants in 2015, an increase of 20,000 from the goal for 2014, skilled economic immigration will account for 65% of new immigrants
  - ▶ BC allocated 4,150 positions for the Provincial Nominee Program in 2014. Actual applications received in 2013 were 818 and 239 were approved
  - ▶ The Thompson Okanagan distribution of 2013 Business entrepreneurs was 8% compared to 44% for Metro Vancouver/Abbotsford and 30% for Vancouver Island
  - ▶ The top source country for Business Nominations was China (18%) followed by Korea (9%) and Iran (9%).

*Sources of information: Canada Immigration Council Website and BC Provincial Nominee Program: Supporting Investment, Attraction and Business Succession and in BC's Regions June 2014*

## **Obtaining Canadian Citizenship**

- ▶ **To be eligible to become a Canadian citizen, immigrants must meet conditions in these areas:**
  - Age
  - Permanent resident status
  - Time already lived in Canada
  - Language skills
  - Criminal history (prohibitions)
  - How well an immigrant knows Canada<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ 64% of internationally-educated immigrants aged 25 to 64 held Canadian citizenship
- ▶ Those who have been in Canada for the longest period of time are most likely to hold Canadian citizenship, since they had had more time to fulfill the requirements for application.

*Sources of information: Canadian Immigration Council Website and Statistics Canada, 2010*

## ***Benefits of Newcomer Canadians<sup>3</sup>***

The Canadian-born workforce is shrinking and the demand for labour is growing. Skilled immigrants fill that need and help Canadian companies do business with the world. They boost innovation and reflect the markets in which Canadian organizations operate. Skilled immigrants are a key factor in Canada's economic growth and prosperity.

Source: [www.hireimmigrants.ca](http://www.hireimmigrants.ca), [www.soics.ca](http://www.soics.ca) (*Guide to Hiring Newcomer Canadians*)

## ***Profile of Newcomer Canadians***

- ▶ One quarter of the Canadian population are immigrants between the ages of 25-64
- ▶ Six of the top ten source countries for immigrants were in Asia (61%). Although the number of immigrants from Europe declined over the years, at 21% they still make up the second-largest group of immigrants to Canada, after Asia
- ▶ 1/3 of Immigrants are from China, followed by India, the Philippines, South Korea, United States, England, Taiwan and Iran
- ▶ One third of immigrants have been in Canada for less than 5 years. Most of these newcomer Canadians (75%) have a postsecondary education where more than half completed their highest education outside of Canada
- ▶ Internationally-educated immigrants often have to further their education upon their arrival in the country. One in five newcomer Canadians attend school for business, health professions and engineering programs
- ▶ Reasons for immigrating include: Pre-immigration experience, previous professional experience, and other motivations such as being near family and friends.

Source of Information: *Statistic Canada*

## ***Urban vs. Rural Immigration***

- ▶ Unlike immigrants who arrived a century ago in search of good farmland, today's immigrants are mostly city dwellers. They are more likely to live in a metropolitan area than the Canadian-born population
- ▶ Seven out of 10 recent immigrants to Canada settle in one of the country's three metropolitan areas: Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, thereby contributing to the current demographic imbalance
- ▶ The principle factor that determines where new immigrants settle is the presence of family (42%), friends (39%) and countrymen
- ▶ Job opportunities, based on the size and conditions of the local job market also play a role, particularly for economic immigrants
- ▶ To a lesser extent, quality of life, infrastructure and available services as well as educational and cultural opportunities guide the immigrant's choice of initial destination
- ▶ **The main reasons immigrants settle outside a major metro area include:**
  - Peacefulness (70%) and proximity to family and friends (58%)
  - Resources available (39%)
  - Did not want to live in a big city (38%)
  - Good educational opportunities (34%)
  - Good job opportunities (25%)
  - Someone's advice (23%)
  - Knowledge of the territory (17%).

Source of Information: *Immigration Beyond MTV: Canadian Coalition of Community Based Employability Training; Gabrielle St-Cyr (2013)*

## ***Immigration to the Thompson Okanagan***

- ▶ 2.5% or 6,210 immigrants settled in the Thompson Okanagan region out of 250,000 immigrants who settled in BC between 2006 and 2011
- ▶ From 2005–2009 the Thompson Okanagan region had the highest percentage of immigrants, of all economic regions in BC, who arrived with only an elementary or high school education, as well as the lowest % of newcomers with a university diploma
- ▶ 45% had more than 10 years of work experience in their own country
- ▶ 78% of Immigrants to the Thompson Okanagan have language proficiency.

## ***Local Immigrant Survey Results December 2014***

47 Responses – 17 Permanent Residents, 3 PR in Process, 20 Canadians, 4 Temporary Workers, 3 Visas

### **Education and Language proficiency <sup>1</sup>**

- ▶ 63% were fluent in English
- ▶ 46% have a university degree and 19% have a College diploma
- ▶ 33% continued studies in Canada

### **Working Status and Experience <sup>2</sup>**

- ▶ 40% had more than ten years experience in their field
- ▶ 63% reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their current job
- ▶ 58% have volunteered
- ▶ 19% still looking for work, 42% found work they preferred and/or matched their field, 19% found work but not what they want, 17% owned their own business, and 6% students

### **Moving to the South Okanagan <sup>3</sup>**

- ▶ 50% moved directly to the South Okanagan – 50% lived somewhere else in Canada before moving here
- ▶ The number one reason for moving to the area was family and friends (33%), followed by work or spousal work (38%)
- ▶ 6% reported not meeting any friends, 52% made some friends, 19% met people through family, and 23% have made many friends
- ▶ 65% slowly explored what the community had to offer, 27% attend many events
- ▶ 38% didn't know anything about the area before moving here and 29% knew very little
- ▶ When asked to rate their quality of life here, 35% report loving life here, 46% report doing well, 10% managing day to day and 8% struggling <sup>4</sup>

### **Housing <sup>5</sup>**

- ▶ 40% stated they found it easy to find a place to live and another 31% had pre-arranged plans with family or friends. 30% reported challenges in finding appropriate housing
- ▶ 54% reported to be homeowners

### **Transportation**

- ▶ 65% had access to their own transportation. 19% found it difficult to access transit, and 8% said it wasn't suitable for their needs

### **Health Care <sup>6</sup>**

- ▶ 60% did not have any information regarding our health care system and another 29% had minimal knowledge

*Sources of information: Welcome BC, 2009 and Welcoming Communities? An Assessment of Community Services in Attracting and Retaining Immigrants in the South Okanagan Valley, with Policy Recommendations: Wolfgang Depner and Carlos Teixeira 9 (2012), South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services, 2014 Local Immigrant Survey.*

## Immigration specific to South Okanagan Similkameen Region

- ▶ From 2001- to 2006 the region had 460 new immigrants, representing about 26% of the net growth of the region.
- ▶ The area currently receives about 100 immigrants per year; however based on the general population growth projections, this number is anticipated to double
- ▶ Since immigrants can take more than 10 years to integrate, SOICS serves more than 1000 immigrant clients every year

Sources of Information: South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services, 2014, Welcome BC, 2009 and Welcoming Communities? An Assessment of Community Services in Attracting and Retaining Immigrants in the South Okanagan Valley, with Policy Recommendations: Wolfgang Depner and Carlos Teixeira 9 (2012)

## South Okanagan Similkameen Population Projections

Year	Actual Population	Projected Population
2006	79,475	
2011	80,742	
2017		96,287
2022		101,188
2027		105,361
2037		108,266

- ▶ The average annual increase for the area has been about 1% per year and growth is estimated to occur mostly from the 55 plus age group with a reduction in the 15-24 age group.

Source of Information: Regional District of the South Okanagan Similkameen Regional Growth Strategy 2010

## South Okanagan Similkameen Cities and New Immigrant Populations

- ▶ Twenty Eight percent of the growth in the major centres in the region comes from newcomer Canadians

Area	2011 Population	2006 Population	Population Change 2006-2011	Immigrants
Penticton	32,877	31,909	968 (3%)	300
Summerland	11,280	10,828	452 (4.2%)	145
Oliver	4,824	4,395	429 (9.8%)	Actual NA <sup>4</sup> Est 70
Osoyoos	4,855	4,752	103 (2.2%)	60
Princeton	2,724	2,677	47 (1.8%)	0
Keremeos	1,330	1,289	41 (3.2%)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,890</b>	<b>55,850</b>	<b>2,040 (3.9%)</b>	<b>Est 575 (28% of growth)</b>

Source of Information: Statistics Canada National Household Survey 2011



# Integrating Newcomer Canadians

## ***General challenges for Newcomer Canadians***

- ▶ learning English or French<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ a lack of Canadian work experience
- ▶ a lack of acceptance or recognition of their foreign work experience or qualifications.

## ***Immigrant Business Entrepreneurs***

- ▶ Immigrants have a slightly higher self-employment (12%) rate than Canadians (11%) 1996–2006
- ▶ The current rate of self employment among immigrants is 30%. Similar to existing Canadians, 14.9% of immigrants aged 45–54 are self-employed, compared to 3.2% of 15–24 ages
- ▶ The highest self-employed rate is among those 65 and older; however less than 12% of people aged 65 and older participate in the labour force. Self-employment among recent immigrants is half that of all immigrants. One-third of recent immigrants prefer paid employment to self-employment
- ▶ 70% of self-employed immigrants described values such as independence, freedom, own boss, control, responsibility, decision making, challenge, creativity, success, satisfaction, and more money as the reason for self-employment
- ▶ Immigrants face the same challenges in starting a business as the Canadian-born population. However, they may have additional barriers such as language difficulties, lack of familiarity with business culture, lack of social networks, difficulty accessing financing, and discrimination
- ▶ For immigrants, lack of financing or access to capital assets is identified as the main barrier to starting a business. Linguistic barriers, including lack of business, technical, and legal vocabulary, also prevent immigrants from starting businesses. These barriers may also work to keep entrepreneurs from expanding beyond their own ethnic enclaves
- ▶ Non-verbal communication skills are important and may need to be relearned within the Canadian context. Immigrants often lack the social and professional networks they need to succeed in the business world. Mentoring opportunities and professional associations can help overcome this obstacle
- ▶ Self-employment and entrepreneurship can describe a wide range of businesses including home based, who often live in low-income situations. 30% of self-employed workers earn less than \$20,000 with no benefits. Other owner operated businesses with fewer than 5 employees have modest revenues. Entrepreneurship tends to be associated with larger scale businesses.

*Source of information: Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship in the GTA: Literature, Data and Program Review, Sarah V. Wayland, PhD, 2011*

## ***Employable Skilled Immigrants***

- ▶ There is a growing gap between recent immigrants and the rest of the Canadian population. Despite improved levels of education, recent immigrants continue to find it difficult to integrate into the job market. This erodes their personal income and increases their rates of unemployment
- ▶ Upon arrival in Canada, 60% of immigrants work in a professional field that differs from their former experience. Settling for subsistence means a significant loss, as much for the individual confined to a lower skilled job, as for the host society that loses a skilled worker. This non recognition of immigrant skills leads to annual losses of between 2.4 and 3.2 billion dollars

- ▶ 1/3 in BC found jobs related to their education, training and experience
- ▶ Post immigration: 17% very satisfied with employment, 58% satisfied, 24% dissatisfied, 1% very dissatisfied. Reasons for being dissatisfied include: Deplored the lack of advancement or promotional opportunities, insufficient hours and they felt overqualified for their positions
- ▶ 53% gain volunteer experience in BC after arriving and 71% said this did not help them find work. This may be due to the lack of perceived development and transference of skills from Non-profits to For-profits. And, or, it may be due to discrimination regardless of skills a newcomer Canadian has
- ▶ Immigrants who had been living in Canada for five years or less recorded the highest unemployment rate from 2008 to 2011 compared to those who had been in Canada for more than ten years and the Canadian-born
- ▶ **The vast majority of immigrants have difficulty finding employment even if it is outside their fields of expertise. The reasons for this are as follows:**
  - Lack of Canadian work experience (63%)
  - Lack of recognition of skills & qualifications (53%)
  - Shortage of employment opportunities (47%)
  - Shortage of opportunities in field of study (40%)
  - Insufficient contacts in the job market (46%)
  - Language problems (37%).

Sources of Information: Stan Kustec, June 2013, Carlos Teixeira, 2010, Matt Thomson, Social Planning and Research Council of BC, Wolfgang Depner and Carlos Teixeira 9 (2012)

## “Canadian Experience” may be discrimination

The Ontario Human Rights Commission’s position is that a strict requirement for “Canadian Experience” is prima facie discrimination (discrimination on its face) and can only be used in very limited circumstances. The onus will be on employers and regulatory bodies to show that a requirement for prior work experience in Canada is a bona fide requirement. (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013)

Making an employment decision based on the criteria of “Canadian experience” could constitute discrimination. It must be shown that this criterion is rationally connected to the job being offered... (Grounds of Protection in BC, The BC Human Rights Coalition 2014)

## Unemployment rate among older newcomers

- ▶ Cross-cultural consultant Dr. Lionel Laroche reports the following data regarding the unemployment rate percentage among older newcomers:
- ▶ after living 1 year in Canada 30% remain unemployed
- ▶ after 5 years that figure drops to 12%
- ▶ and after 10 years of living in Canada the percentage of unemployed immigrants becomes the same as the average unemployment percentage rate in the country (7.5%)
- ▶ But by this time, a new problem arises for newcomers – the trap of age. Having lived 10 years in the country, the average immigrant has reached 45 years of age and enters the mature workers group (Work after 10 years of living in Canada, Canadian Newcomer Magazine)

## Social Integration

"The growing disparity between the existing characteristics of existing Canadians and those of immigrants, where in terms of their status as a visible minority, their insufficient grasp of the language, their religious affiliation or socio-cultural traits, engender the creation of ethnic enclaves. This excessive concentration of newcomers in the country's three primary cities informs the current debate on the regionalization of immigrants." (*Immigration Beyond MTV Report, 2013*)

An **ethnic enclave** is an area that has a cultural identity with a large numbers of people who are of a particular type of ethnicity. Ethnic enclaves are often established due to immigrants from other countries

settling all in one geographic area and as a single community.

Living amongst people of a similar cultural identity allows Newcomer Canadians quick access to markets, sources of labour with no language barriers. However in the long run living in ethnic enclaves can impede the acquisition of host country skills and slow integration into local job markets beyond the enclave.<sup>6</sup>

"While **stigma** may be a theoretical concept, anyone who has experienced social isolation, verbal or physical assault, or discrimination because of the assumptions of another person, knows that stigma is a painful reality. The consequences of stigma are widespread effecting education, employment, housing, access to healthcare and more. Even worse, internalized stigma leads to shame, low self esteem and social isolation intensifies mental and physical health problems." (*Shelley Hourston, Transition Magazine, 2014*)

## Multiculturalism Policy

Canada was the first country in the world to adopt a Multiculturalism Policy. In 1971, this official policy affirmed the value and dignity of all citizens regardless of ethnic origin, language, or religion. Multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging.

# Economic, Social and Environment Trends and Issues

## *Small Business Important to BC*

- ▶ Small Business accounts for 98% of all businesses in BC, contributing to 26% of BC Gross Domestic Product. BC ranks first in Canada for the number of small businesses per capita with 83.5 per 1000 people
- ▶ Small Businesses employ over 1 million people, and employment with small businesses is increasing contributing 31 % of all wages to employees, the highest of all provinces in Canada. Accommodation and food services industry is the largest provider of new small business jobs in BC
- ▶ Small Business Entrepreneurs make up 17% of the labour force in the Okanagan and Similkameen
- ▶ There is a growing proportion of income from self-employment resulting from the growing demand to live in the Okanagan Valley and to bring or create a job based on acquired skills. These opportunities have been enhanced by advances in communications technology
- ▶ 35% of business owners are planning to exit the business in the next 5 years mostly due to retirement and the issue of succession is increasingly important. 20% have identified a successor to take over their business. A shortage of buyers is expected to last for decades.

Sources of Information: Venture Connect, Summer 2014, Our Okanagan website, [www.penticton.ca-demographics](http://www.penticton.ca-demographics) and Chamber Catalyst, 2014 Edition

## Skilled Workers Needed Across BC

- ▶ Over the next decade, there will be an estimated 1.1 million job openings in the province. However, only 650,000 young people will emerge from the school system over the decade to fill those jobs
- ▶ British Columbia continues to be an attractive destination to persons from other provinces and countries; however the global competition for skilled workers is increasing
- ▶ The challenge will be making use of every opportunity to build a workforce with more skills, and matching those skills with the demand from employers in communities across the province
- ▶ By 2020 the gap between supply and demand for truck drivers in BC is estimated at 3400 drivers. Trucking firms that can attract and retain qualified immigrants will have an important advantage.

“In the provincial government’s Labour Market Outlook 2022, transport truck drivers were identified as number two in the top 10 most-needed professions. It’s estimated that the province will need a whopping 18,000 drivers by 2022.”  
(Steve Moores, Okanagan College’s Dean of Trades and Apprenticeship)

“We know that 43 per cent of the one million job openings that will be created in B.C. by 2022 will require trades or technical training...”  
(Okanagan College President Jim Hamilton)

Sources of Information: Skills for Growth, BC’s Labour Market Strategy to 2020, WorkBC, BCTA, 2012, International Trucking Reference: Roads, Rules and Drivers, Okanagan College Press Releases Oct. 23 and Oct. 2

## Skilled Workers Needed in the Thompson Okanagan

By 2020, more than 75,000 new hires are anticipated and the Labour force is anticipated to grow by 18.5 % in the next six years (2014–2020):

- 2/3 new hires will require post secondary education
- The ability for the local residents to fulfill hiring needs is limited. 50% of residents do not have education beyond high school education
- The majority of employers do not have an Human Resource or Succession Plan
- Current labour force growth is insufficient to meet the labour force needs
- Current migration to the region would need to double or triple to meet labour force needs
- 80% of employers reported the local labour force was the most important labour source for workers
- Immigration was rated the lowest in importance as a source of workers by employers
- 50% of difficult to fill positions are low skilled with wages at or near minimum wage. This may reflect the inability of employers to attract workers to low skilled positions rather than an inadequate supply or workers to fulfill these roles.

Source of Information: Growth in the Okanagan 2020 Labour Market Outlook–Central Okanagan Development Commission 2014

## Skilled Workers including Trades Workers Needed in the South Okanagan–Similkameen

- ▶ Correctional Centre in Oliver Construction is slated to start in 2016 providing about 500 direct jobs and another 500 indirect jobs during construction, with a staff of 245 when complete<sup>7</sup>
- ▶ There is an expectation that demand for residential property will grow in the South Okanagan–Similkameen. The Pentiction Indian Band is building one of the most ambitious residential developments in the region: Skaha Hills Development. This is at a time when there is an acknowledged shortage of carpenters in British Columbia<sup>8</sup> (Okanagan College press releases, 2014)

- ▶ A new patient care tower at Penticton Regional Hospital project is expected to create more than 1,910 direct and indirect jobs for workers over the life of the project.<sup>9</sup> ([www.partnershipsbc.ca/files-4/project-prh.php](http://www.partnershipsbc.ca/files-4/project-prh.php))
- ▶ 212 jobs listed on Service Canada Job Listings, Oct. 24, 2014, highest postings for Retail (46) and Trades including Trucking (62) and Hospitality (41). Totals for each city in Endnote<sup>10</sup>
- ▶ 32 Job postings for Interior Health in the region, Oct. 24, 2014. Totals for each city in Endnote<sup>11</sup>

### **Valley Trends and Issues**

- ▶ South Okanagan residents value living in a region that celebrates a sense of community that supports a positive quality of life, where people can enjoy sustainable development with environmental integrity while meeting the social and economic needs for present and future generations<sup>12</sup>
- ▶ The South Okanagan has one of the highest percentage of persons on pensions and relying on investment income found anywhere in BC. This is due to the relatively high number of retirees as well as the nominal number of large-scale employers
- ▶ Highly educated migrants can create economic opportunities for local population that may not only lead to higher individual income but also sustained economic growth for the community they reside in
- ▶ If the Valley's trend is maintained, it will continue to have a high percentage of migrants and they will likely be mature residents (55 and older). This would mean greater demand for retirement housing and health services. It will also likely result in a short fall in working age residents, labour which is needed to sustain the Valley's economy, especially agriculture and much of the service sector
- ▶ The increasing cost of living, especially increasing housing costs in the Similkameen Valley, is not going to encourage young workers. The younger Indian Reserves' population may help, but is likely not enough to replace the Valley's aging labour force, or meet new demands
- ▶ Out of 28 key issues that the Similkameen Valley may face in the next 20 years ...Water quality was identified as the most important future problem, followed by availability of medical services
- ▶ South Okanagan is a unique ecosystem and one of the top four endangered ecosystems in Canada (South Okanagan Naturalist club, 2006) Ecosystem services, clean air, water habitat and biodiversity compose the environment and are the basis for the quality of life in the South Okanagan
- ▶ One of the key reasons for developing a Similkameen Valley water management plan is to ensure that water supply and quality do not constrain economic development and that economic development is compatible with sustainable water resource use<sup>13</sup>
- ▶ Current issues related to transportation include the need for inter-regional and regional connections, improved accessibility for people with disabilities, local connections and improved vehicle technology as well as improved timing, connections and information between transit systems.
- ▶ The RDOS vision for transit by the year 2040 is that it connects people and communities regionally and locally through cost-effective, convenient, integrated, and accessible services
- ▶ Affordable housing is housing considered to cost less than 30% of a household's gross income. To be affordable housing would need to be available that cost less than \$150,000 to a maximum of \$250,000 according to the range of average household income (\$30,000 – \$80,000) for the region. Individuals with lower average household incomes, who currently do not own homes, would face affordability issues<sup>14</sup>

*Sources of Information: Amenity Migration, 2010, Similkameen Valley, [www.penticton.ca-demographics](http://www.penticton.ca-demographics), South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy 2010, Similkameen River Water Management Plan, Transit Future Plan: RDOS, Our Okanagan, Invest Okanagan 2012 Economic Profile of Okanagan Valley, Okanagan Falls Economic Development Action Plan, 2012. South Okanagan Real Estate Board*

# Sustaining Newcomer Canadians

## ***Services currently available:***

- ▶ Online database of business opportunities in British Columbia: [www.opportunitiesbc.ca](http://www.opportunitiesbc.ca)
- ▶ Sprott Shaw College – Medical English Certificate Program
- ▶ Lower Similkameen Community Services Society – English Language Tutoring
- ▶ Okanagan College – English Language Classes

## ***South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services:***

- ▶ Employment Services & Publications
- ▶ English Language Classes
- ▶ Skills connect (assistance with funding for accreditation exams, credential evaluations and study course materials)
- ▶ Settlement Services
- ▶ Licensed Daycares
- ▶ Community Connections
- ▶ Youth Mentorship
- ▶ Life Skills Workshops

*South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services provided 4,036 Settlement Services to 1,017 Clients from Oct. 2013 to Sept. 2014. (2014 SOICS Annual Report)*

## ***Potential services for increased support:***

Summary of Results from Regional Non-Profit Survey

The majority of the organizations provide services at no charge, and two of the organizations offer subsidized services:

- ▶ 100% of the organizations agree that their services could be beneficial to new comers
- ▶ 88% have had new immigrants access their service however minimally
- ▶ 24% have staff designated to assist new immigrants
- ▶ 35% have policies in place that reflect the needs of new immigrants
- ▶ 88% believe servicing new immigrants is an area of growth for their organization
- ▶ 65% plan to include new immigrants in their outreach strategy
- ▶ 71% believe their organization requires additional training for servicing new immigrants.

*Source of Information: Community Resources Survey –Undertaken by SOICS Aug. 2014*

## ***Successful Programs:***

Successful integration helps new Canadians gain access to the services they need, realize a high quality of life, and participate both socially and politically to develop a feeling of belonging within their community

Smaller communities may integrate newcomers faster because they are in a sink or swim environment. Employment programs tend to place everyone into whatever they can without addressing barriers. For most immigrants this means placement into survival jobs at the end of service

Lessons learned from other successful programs:

- Fully leverage existing resources—nearly all programs leverage existing services rather than create stand-alone or parallel services
- Act in coordination with others—community leaders and members are fully engaged and contributing
- Build the ability to adapt—incorporate new inputs for future efforts
- Provide leadership at the City level due to the cross-cutting nature of the challenges. Leadership and coordination is required from the mayor's office.

*Sources of Information: BC Provincial Service Associations, 2011 and Margie McHugh, 2014*

## ***Examples for Local Immigrant Partnership Strategy:***

York Region Vision:

- York Region is a community that is welcoming and inclusive
- Newcomers are economically integrated; they are succeeding in the labour market and live in affordable housing with a livable wage. They are helping to meet labour shortages
- Newcomers are socially integrated. They feel included, safe and are living healthy lives
- Newcomers are culturally integrated. They feel part of the Canadian Culture and understand Canadian Values. They practice the social and cultural norms of various cultures appropriately
- Newcomers are civically and politically integrated. They access and understand the Canadian government. They take active roles in community building.

Successful programs elsewhere USA:

- Block leader Program—Cupertino, California. The program was designed to build relationships at the street and neighborhood levels, organize residents to articulate and build on common interests and connect these interests to civic governance and services. Their activities include such things as sharing rosters for activity planning, facilitating shared interest meetings, and organizing block parties
- The Littleton Immigrant Initiative, Littleton Colorado. Included a one-stop information centre, citizen mentoring and English classes program, and health outreach coordination (a cross agency network staffed by a community health liaison who connects immigrants to health and wellness programs)
- Equal Access, New York City—Created a multilingual customer service centre that can answer calls in 170 different languages.

*Sources of Information: York Region Local Immigration Partnership: Consultation & Literature Review, Sept. 2011 and Margie McHugh, 2014, Immigrant Civic Integration and Service Access Initiatives, a project of the Migration Policy Institute, Washington DC.*





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# End Notes

## ***'Summary of Immigration Categories***

### ***Family Sponsorship***

#### ***Spouse sponsorship***

a) Application from Inside Canada (cannot leave the country during process and no right to appeal if denied)

b) Application from Outside Canada (shorter processing time and have a right to appeal)

Parents & Siblings: Must maintain a certain level of income to sponsor a parent or sibling. Cannot sponsor siblings above the age of 18

### ***BC Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)***

Temporary Foreign Worker (entry level or semi skilled, skilled workers and health care professionals)

Language requirement and eligibility timeline varies based on skill level. International Students Graduate (job offer from BC employer required), Post Graduate (job offer not required and is only open to natural, applied and health sciences). Business Program Attract experienced entrepreneurs who are ready to invest in our economy and create jobs for Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

### ***Live-in-Caregiver (Nanny Program)***

24 months of authorized full time employment within 4 years of date of arrival. 3900 hours of full-time employment.

May apply for an open work permit\* at the time of residency application

### ***Canadian Experience Class (CEC)***

Cap of 8000 applications per year with sub cap of 200 applications for each NOC\*\* application. Applicants must be Temporary Foreign Workers with NOC skill type O (managerial jobs); NOC skill type A (professional jobs); and NOC skill type B (technical jobs). Must have at least 12 months of work experience in Canada in the last 3 years. Must meet language requirements.

### ***Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) – 67 points***

50 eligible occupations, Cap of 25,500 applications per year with sub cap of 1,000 per occupation, Cap of 500 applications from PhD students. The application is processed based on the six selection factors in the 100 points grid. The current pass mark is 67 points.

- ▶ Language proficiency in English and/or French – up to 28 points
- ▶ Education – up to 25 points
- ▶ Work experience – up to 15 points
- ▶ Age – up to 12 points
- ▶ Whether you have arranged employment in Canada – up to 10 points
- ▶ Adaptability (how well you are likely to settle here) – up to 10 points

Foreign education must be assessed by a CIC approved agency to show it is valid and equal to a completed Canadian credential.

## ***Federal Skilled Trades Category (FSTP)***

5000 applications accepted until May 14, 2014. Will reopen after the launch of Express Entry in Jan 2015

Eligible categories are selected from NOC: Major Group 72, industrial, electrical and construction trades, Major Group 73, maintenance and equipment operation trades, Major Group 82, supervisors and technical jobs in natural resources, agriculture and production, Major Group 92, processing, manufacturing and utilities supervisors and central control operators, Sub cap of 100 applications under each occupation, Must have 2 years of full time experience within the last 5 years, Must meet language requirements, Must have 1-year full time employment offer from a Canadian employer.

\* A work permit is issued to an applicant with the employer's name and in some instances has geographical limitations. An open work permit allows the applicant to work anywhere and for anyone in Canada.

\*\* National Occupation Classification (NOC) A standardized language for describing work performed by Canadians in the labour Market. [www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/noc/2011/pdf/Matrix.pdf](http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/noc/2011/pdf/Matrix.pdf)

## ***Additional Links***

BC PNP categories at a glance [www.welcomebc.ca/Immigrate/About-the-BC-PNP/Skills-Immigration/Categories-at-a-glance.aspx](http://www.welcomebc.ca/Immigrate/About-the-BC-PNP/Skills-Immigration/Categories-at-a-glance.aspx)

## ***Educational Credential Assessment (ECA)***

This is used to verify that your foreign degree, diploma, certificate (or other proof of your credential) is valid and equal to a completed credential in Canada.

**Designated organizations for Educational Credential Assessments:**

**Comparative Education Service – University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies**

**International Credential Assessment Service of Canada**

**World Education Services**

**Medical Council of Canada** (professional body)

**Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada** (professional body)

50 eligible occupations under Federal Skilled Worker program [www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/apply-who-instructions.asp?expand=jobs#jobs](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/apply-who-instructions.asp?expand=jobs#jobs)

## ***<sup>2</sup>Determining Eligibility to become a Canadian Citizen:***

To be eligible to become a Canadian citizen, you must meet the conditions in all these areas:

**age,**

**permanent resident status,**

**time you have lived in Canada,**

**language skills,**

**criminal history (prohibitions) and**

**how well you know Canada.**

As a result of 2014 changes to the Citizenship Act, if you have served in or with the Canadian Armed Forces, you might be able to apply through a fast-track process. We look at how long you have served our country, instead of how long you lived in Canada. Foreign military members do not need to be a permanent resident of Canada.

**Age:** You must be at least 18 years old to apply. To apply for citizenship for a child under 18: you must be the child's parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian, the child must be a permanent resident, and one parent must be a Canadian citizen or apply to become a citizen at the same time (this also applies to adoptive parents).

**Permanent resident status:** You must have permanent resident (PR) status in Canada. Your PR status must not be in question. That means you must not be: under review for immigration or fraud reasons, or under a removal order (an order from Canadian officials to leave Canada). You do not need to have a PR card to apply for citizenship. If you have a PR card, but it is expired, you can still apply for citizenship.

**Time you have lived in Canada:** You must have resided in Canada for at least three years (1,095 days) in the past four years before you apply. This does not apply to children under 18.

You may be able to count time you spent in Canada before you became a permanent resident if it was during the past four years. Use our online tool to find out if you have lived in Canada long enough to apply to become a citizen.

**Language abilities:** Canada has two official languages—English and French. To become a citizen, you must show that you have adequate knowledge of one of these languages. In general, this means you can:

take part in short, everyday conversations about common topics; understand simple instructions, questions and directions; use basic grammar, including simple structures and tenses; and show that you know enough common words and phrases to answer questions and express yourself. If you are between 18 and 54, you must send documents with your citizenship application that prove you can speak and listen in English or French at this level. Use our wizard to see if you have the proof we will accept. The citizenship application guide also contains the type of proof we will accept. Second, we will note how well you communicate when you talk to staff or a citizenship officer interviews you. A citizenship officer will make the final decision on your application, including how well you can communicate in English or French.

**Criminal history (prohibitions):** You cannot become a citizen if you:

- ▶ have been convicted of an indictable (criminal) offence or an offence under the Citizenship Act in the three years before you apply,
- ▶ are currently charged with an offence under the Citizenship Act,
- ▶ are in prison, on parole or on probation,
- ▶ are under a removal order (Canadian officials have ordered you to leave Canada),
- ▶ are being investigated for, are charged with, or have been convicted of a war crime or a crime against humanity, or
- ▶ have had your Canadian citizenship taken away in the past five years.

If you are on probation or are charged with a crime and waiting for a trial, you should wait until after the probation is done or your trial is over to apply to become a citizen. Time in prison or on parole does not count as time you have lived in Canada. Time on probation also does not count if you were convicted of a crime. If you were on probation due to a conditional discharge, that time may be counted toward the time you have lived in Canada. For details, contact the Call Centre.

How well you know Canada To become a citizen, you must understand the rights, responsibilities and privileges of citizenship, such as voting in elections and obeying the law. You must also show you understand Canada's: history, values, institutions and symbols.

If you are between 18–54 when you apply for citizenship you will need to take a test to show you have **adequate knowledge** of Canada and the **responsibilities and privileges of citizenship**. All you need to know for the test is in our free study guide, *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship*. We will send you a copy of it once we get your application. The questions in the citizenship test are based on this study guide.

Source of information: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizenship/become-eligibility.asp>

### **<sup>3</sup>Benefits of New Canadians**

- ▶ For every 3 employees who retire, only one is available to replace them; there is a need to increase the base of where to hire employees from
- ▶ Lack of skilled labour for certain trades
- ▶ Replace and grow population and decrease the average age of the population
- ▶ Provide skilled workers and replace retiring skilled workers needed for Healthcare and other industries
- ▶ Are new youth and young families who bring children to fill our schools
- ▶ Can take over an existing business and buy and run farms and bring in new businesses
- ▶ Provide a balance when the education system does not produce enough graduates in key skilled areas
- ▶ Balances the effect of Canadian born skilled workers recruited by other countries
- ▶ Provide needed workers for agriculture, service industries, and retail sectors
- ▶ Contribute to building a strong democracy and healthy communities through volunteering
- ▶ Citizens speaking many languages and understanding many cultures enable Canada to participate globally.

### **<sup>4</sup>2011 National Household Census-Voluntary**

In 2011 the National Household Census was voluntary and for Oliver and the rural area surrounding Osoyoos, Statistics Canada chose not to release some figures because the response rates were so low, potentially skewing the data.

### **<sup>5</sup>Most Immigrants speak either English or French.**

81% of internationally-educated immigrants aged 25 to 64 reported that they could converse in English and 13% in French. Very-recent (4%) and recent immigrants (3%) were more likely than established immigrants (1%) to report not being able to conduct a conversation in either official language. (Stats Canada 2010).

### **<sup>6</sup>Ethnic enclaves**

Pros of enclaves

- ▶ Financial networks and socio-professional networks may be more easily accessible to new immigrants
- ▶ Assist members in achieving economic mobility
- ▶ Create an alternative labour market that is ethnic specific and does not demand social and cultural skills of the host country
- ▶ Employ a greater number of co-ethnics and speed the incorporation of new immigrants into the economy
- ▶ Eliminate language and cultural barriers
- ▶ impede acquisition of host country skills that benefit the immigrant over the long-run, Opportunities available to mainstream society can thus be out of reach for immigrants who lack both the knowledge of these services and the ability to access them.

## Cons of enclaves

- ▶ Slow integration into local job markets
- ▶ Slow integration into the host community
- ▶ Hampers the acquisition of national languages
- ▶ Increases the polarization of the Canadian population's socio demographic makeup
- ▶ Could lead to the reduction in the level of acceptance by Canadians that would affect not only new immigrants but also many of those that have already arrived
- ▶ Enclave economies have been linked to a glass ceiling limiting immigrant growth and upward mobility
- ▶ Latency in learning the language and social norms of the receiving country constrains immigrants to activity within the enclave and secludes them from the larger receiving context
- ▶ The accelerated path toward economic mobility that lures new immigrants into enclave economies pose a challenge to potential success. Integration into an ethnic enclave may delay and even halt assimilation to the host society, preventing the immigrants from benefiting from mainstream institutions.

Source: *Ghettos in Canada's cities/ Racial segregation, ethnic enclaves and poverty in Canadian urban areas; Alan Walks and Larry Bourne, 2006*

<sup>7</sup>The Correctional Centre in Oliver is a new 378-cell, \$200 million project which will result in an influx of residents to the region.

<sup>8</sup>Skaha Hills Development is a \$250-million development consisting of seven phases featuring approximately 600 homes, a golf course and winery. Its 550-acre site on the South Okanagan hillsides and bench lands will be home to a \$250-million mixed residential/commercial community with a \$5.2-million winery and vineyard. Proposed amenities include golf, beachfront access, and exceptional hiking trails throughout the resort community, pools, clubhouse and sports courts (Okanagan College press releases).

<sup>9</sup>New patient care tower at Penticton Regional Hospital. Phase one is construction of the new patient care tower which will include an ambulatory care centre, surgical services centre, 84 medical/surgical inpatient beds in single patient rooms, a new medical device reprocessing unit, and space for the UBC Faculty of Medicine program. Phase two involves the renovation of vacated areas in the current hospital, including increasing the size of the emergency department to nearly four times its current size. "The release of the RFQ is a preliminary step towards what will be an economic surge for Penticton," said Dan Ashton, Penticton MLA. "Not only will there be direct construction-related jobs created for the project, but the trickle-down will also positively affect sectors like retail and entertainment." The project is expected to create more than 1,910 direct and indirect jobs for workers over the life of the project ([www.partnershipsbc.ca/files-4/project-prh.php](http://www.partnershipsbc.ca/files-4/project-prh.php)) Sept, 2014.

Location	Total	Retail	Trades	Financial/ Acct	Hospitality	Health	Agriculture	Mgt/ Other
Penticton	132	34	42	17	22	9	2	6
Summerland	19	6	3		6	3		1
Oliver	18	2	3	2	6		3	2
Osoyoos	20	2	5		4	1	5	3
Princeton	13	1	7	1	3	1		
Keremeos	4			2		2		
Okanagan Falls	6	1	2	2				1
SOS Total	212	46	62	24	41	16	10	13

<sup>10</sup>Service Canada Job Listings, Oct. 24, 2014

<sup>11</sup>Interior Health Job Postings –Oct. 24, 2014. Total postings 32; Penticton – 16, Summerland –2, Oliver– 5, Osoyoos–1, Princeton–8.

<sup>12</sup>South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy Vision. Key elements of the vision relate to respecting Agricultural Land Reserve, limiting population growth in rural areas, protecting sensitive ecosystems, future populations housed in existing urban areas, development is spread evenly throughout Oliver, Osoyoos, Penticton and Summerland, encouraging alternatives to single occupant automobiles and encouraging public transit, reducing and recycling waste, best land practices including allocating funding to water and energy conservation. South Okanagan Regional Growth Strategy 2010. <http://www.rdosmaps.bc.ca>.

<sup>13</sup>Water Management in British Columbia is guided by the Water Act. It encompasses water allocation (licensing), changes or transfers of water licenses, construction in and adjacent to water bodies, water management and planning, and drought management. There are three regulations under the Water Act: Water Regulation, the Groundwater Protection Regulation, and the Dam Safety Regulation. In addition to the Water Act, there are more than a dozen other provincial and federal acts that are relevant to water management. Similkameen River Water Management Plan: Part 1–Scoping Study, Sept. 2011.

<sup>14</sup>Where housing affordability issues may be reduced is in the more rural areas; however employability and transportation issues may increase. According to the South Okanagan Real Estate Board in Sept. 2013 the average selling prices of homes were highest in Naramata (\$521,600), Oliver (\$335,000) and Okanagan Falls (\$409,222). The lowest prices were in Keremeos (\$179,600) and Princeton (\$239,000). In 2012 the average household income in the Okanagan was \$73,530 up from \$57,351 in 2006. Specific to Penticton housing costs in 2012 for a 1000 sq. ft. condominium ranged from the mid \$200,000 to a 1450–2450 sq. ft. single home in the high \$300,000's. In Aug. 2012, Okanagan Falls Economic Development reported that the average selling price was \$408,003 for a single detached home. Osoyoos average single dwelling home sells for \$360,688.

## **Page 7 – Local Immigration Survey Results**

<sup>1</sup> Compared to the Western Settlement Outcomes Survey, 2013, “When asked about the highest level of education that they (744 Immigrant Survey Respondents in BC) have completed outside of Canada, most immigrants have completed at least a university undergraduate degree (63%).The majority of immigrants completed their education in Asian countries (56%).”

<sup>2</sup> IBID. “Respondents were asked to select one option that best describes their current employment status. ... approximately 44% of respondents are employed full-time, 14% are employed part-time, 9% are self-employed and 15% are unemployed (of these unemployed individuals, 72% are currently looking for work.”

<sup>3</sup> IBID. “A list of potential difficulties in obtaining settlement assistance was read to respondents who indicated that they had used settlement services. ... the greatest barrier to obtaining settlement services was language barriers, cited by one-third of respondents. Almost as many (31%) were confused about where to go for assistance. One-quarter reported lack of information or awareness of services as a barrier. One-fifth (21%) felt that financial difficulties prevented them from accessing the services they needed.”

<sup>4</sup> IBID. “Respondents were asked how satisfied they are with their life in Canada these days. Immigrants in British Columbia are very satisfied with their life in Canada with over 80% of respondents providing ratings above the scale midpoint”.

<sup>5</sup> IBID. “Respondents were most likely to say that having a good place to live, and feeling that their family will do well in British Columbia would make them feel settled in British Columbia.”

<sup>6</sup> IBID. “All respondents were asked to identify the one type of service they would need most if they were to use only one service in British Columbia. 42% of the newcomers to British Columbia indicated that they would need employment services. Health and wellness services (15%) were a distant second.” Note: the average age of Immigrants in British Columbia sampled was 37.5 years which could account for the lack of knowledge and priority placed on Health and Wellness services. Health and Wellness services may be perceived as something one needs when they are older.

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