MOBILIZING KNOWLEDGE FROM THE 2016 GUELPH-WELLINGTON IMMIGRANT SURVEY REPORT

PROJECT SUMMARY

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Caroline Duvieusart-Déry*, Mercerina Lyckek**, Jacqueline On** and Kathleen Slemon**1

*Project Manager
**Research Shop Intern

DESCRIPTION

The goals of this project were to create knowledge mobilization documents to ensure the appropriate dissemination and uptake of findings from the Guelph Wellington Local Immigration Partnership (GWLIP) 2016 immigrant survey report. This report focused on the lived experience and needs of the newcomer population in Guelph and Wellington County. Report results were to be communicated to key members in the community at the GWLIP Annual Event on March 29, 2017.

The main deliverable was to transform the final report into three thematic highlight sheets summarizing key findings and recommendations. These sheets would be used both as hand-outs and large scale posters in order to share information about the report with a variety of stakeholders.

From January to March 2017, the project team mined the report, determined key topics, and organized content thematically. We explored the data in a collaborative

1 First authorship is shared equally.
manner, and created two major iterations of the highlight sheets to improve communication of core messages, optimize visuals, and ensure consistency between the products. Throughout the process, the team worked closely with our community partner, Ella Henderson (Project Specialist with the GWLIP) to polish the highlight sheets and maximize their impact.

**KEY RESULTS**

The main project deliverable was the creation of three highlight sheets to share the 2016 GWLIP report findings. Based on our review of the content, the project team chose to organize the information on each highlight sheet as follows:

**Basic Needs and Belonging**

This highlight sheet groups together findings related to how the basic needs of recent immigrants are met in Guelph and Wellington County. It specifically covers access and affordability of food, housing, and transportation; health and safety; and immigrants’ sense of belonging and connection in their community. Recommendations include better promoting existing resources to newcomers and adapting services to increase access.

**Employment, Education and Training**

While recent immigrants to Guelph are typically highly educated, their median income is 36% lower than for the general population. This highlight sheet shares demographic information about the economic context of immigrants in Guelph and Wellington, as well as findings on existing barriers to employment. Recommendations center on ensuring that realistic and appropriate information is shared with newcomers, and providing supports to employers to better understand international credentials and the educational and professional sector profile of new immigrants to the region.

**Access to Services**

This highlight sheet reports on the accessibility and usefulness of support services for recent immigrants. Findings show a high level of satisfaction with the services
that immigrants access. However, key barriers to access include low awareness of some services and difficulty comprehending their intake process. Recommendations mainly focus on increasing the promotion of various services, especially housing and employment services, in order to better serve newcomers as they adjust to life in Canada.

The three highlight sheets were formatted to conform to both print and electronic accessibility requirements, and approved by the GWLIP staff and Research Committee.

**IMPACT**

The GWLIP is responsible for the dissemination of the highlight sheets and the broader mobilization of the report findings.

The main dissemination mechanism anticipated for these products, the GWLIP Annual Event (planned for March 29, 2017), was postponed to the fall. In the meantime, the highlight sheets have been printed in 150 copies each and will be shared with various stakeholders in the community. They will be used as key thematic hand-outs and targeted towards local organizations and policy-makers responsible for the various topics addressed under each sheet.

The highlight sheets will also be published on the GWLIP website, along with the full research report, and disseminated electronically to the GWLIP networks.

Finally, the GWLIP Research Committee is working on expanding the knowledge mobilization strategy for this research, and will use the highlight sheets as a key product to reach additional audiences. Mobilization strategies will include (but are not limited to) press releases, leveraging the networks of the GWLIP Leadership Council, social media posts, and targeted presentations to the boards and staff of relevant local organizations.