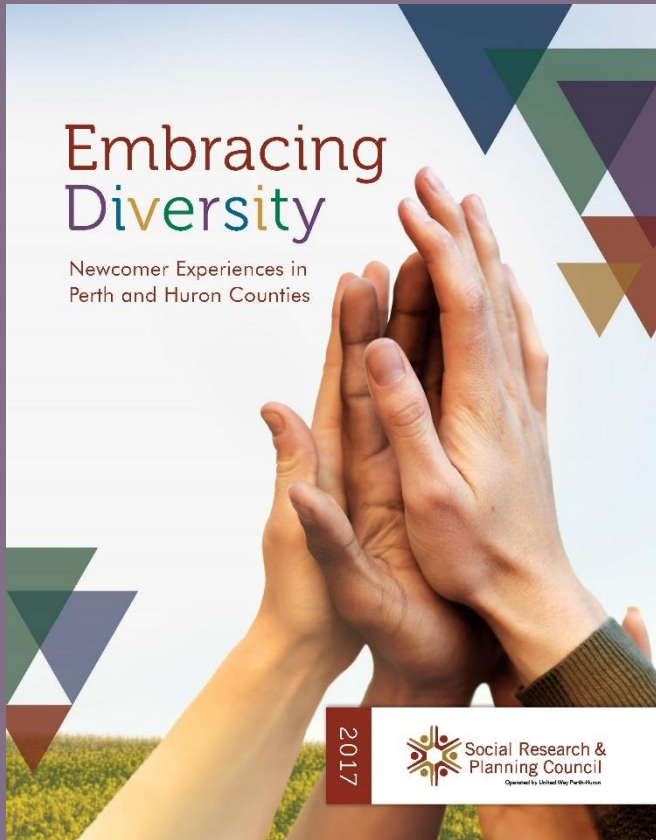




Social Research &  
Planning Council



# Embracing Diversity

Newcomer Experiences in Perth and Huron Counties



**United Way**  
Perth-Huron



# Research report background

**Newcomer** - immigrants or refugees who have been in Canada under 10 years

## 2015

- Newcomer Outreach and Needs Assessment (NONA)
- 70 survey respondents and focus group participants



## 2017

- 22 newcomer focus group
- Service provider interviews
- Employer interviews

## Report Goals

- Investigate experience of newcomers
- Reveal barriers and obstacles
- Identify service gaps
- Identify employment barriers
- Identify and profile current practices in other communities
- Compile recommendations for next steps



# Demographics of study participants

N=92

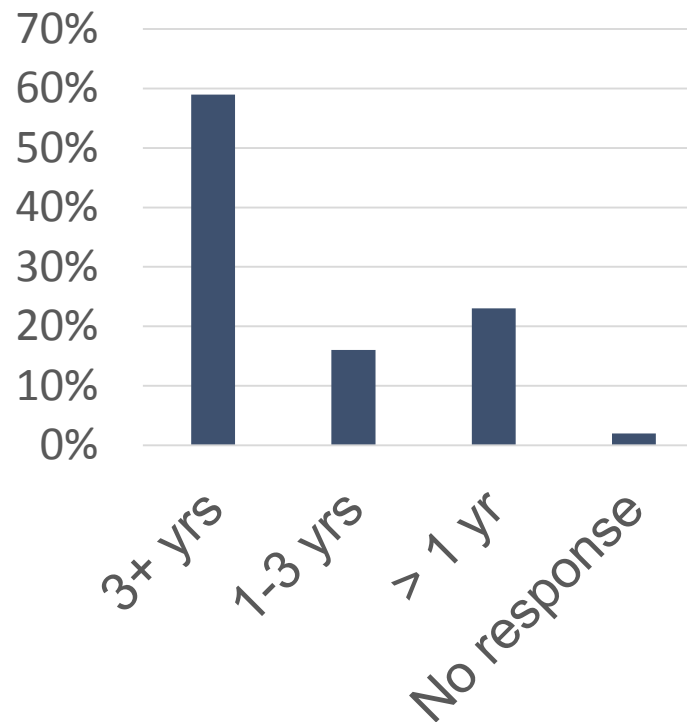


45%



55%

Length of time in Canada



■ NONA Survey & Newcomer focus group participants

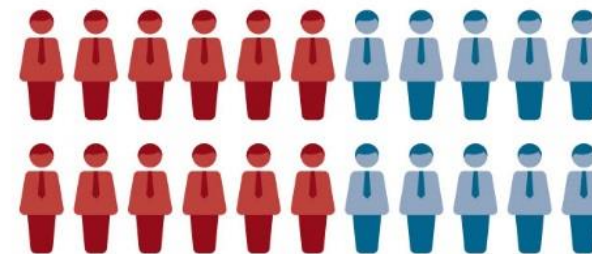


= 70% Married

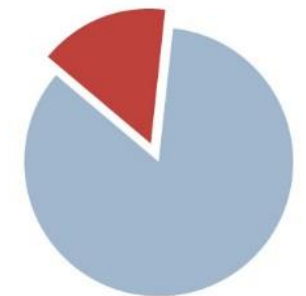
= 24% Single

= 6% Separated, Divorced

Unemployed newcomers (in focus group):



**12** of 22 (Focus Group, 2017)



**11** of 70  
(NONA Survey, 2015)

*“big city people aren’t aware of the benefits of living in a smaller community.”*

- Focus group participant

*“the people here...it’s a basement culture. They live in their basements. They say ‘Hi, good morning!’ and nothing further. You have a line. You don’t cross it.”*

- Focus group participant

# Ahmed’s Story



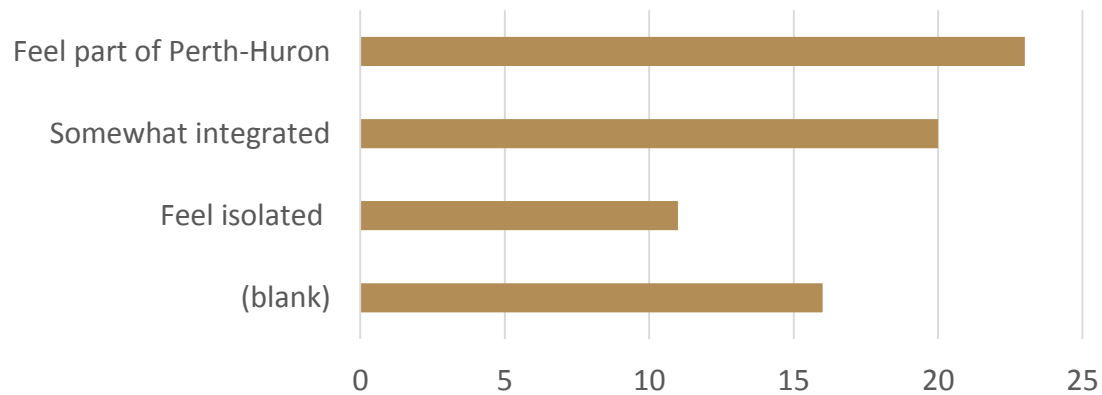


# Settlement experience

## Main Reasons for Moving to Perth and Huron:



## Degree of Self-reported Social Integration



Source: NONA Survey

## Newcomer Difficulties



Limited English language skills



Few housing options



Lack of job opportunities



Social isolation



Limited transportation options



Cold weather

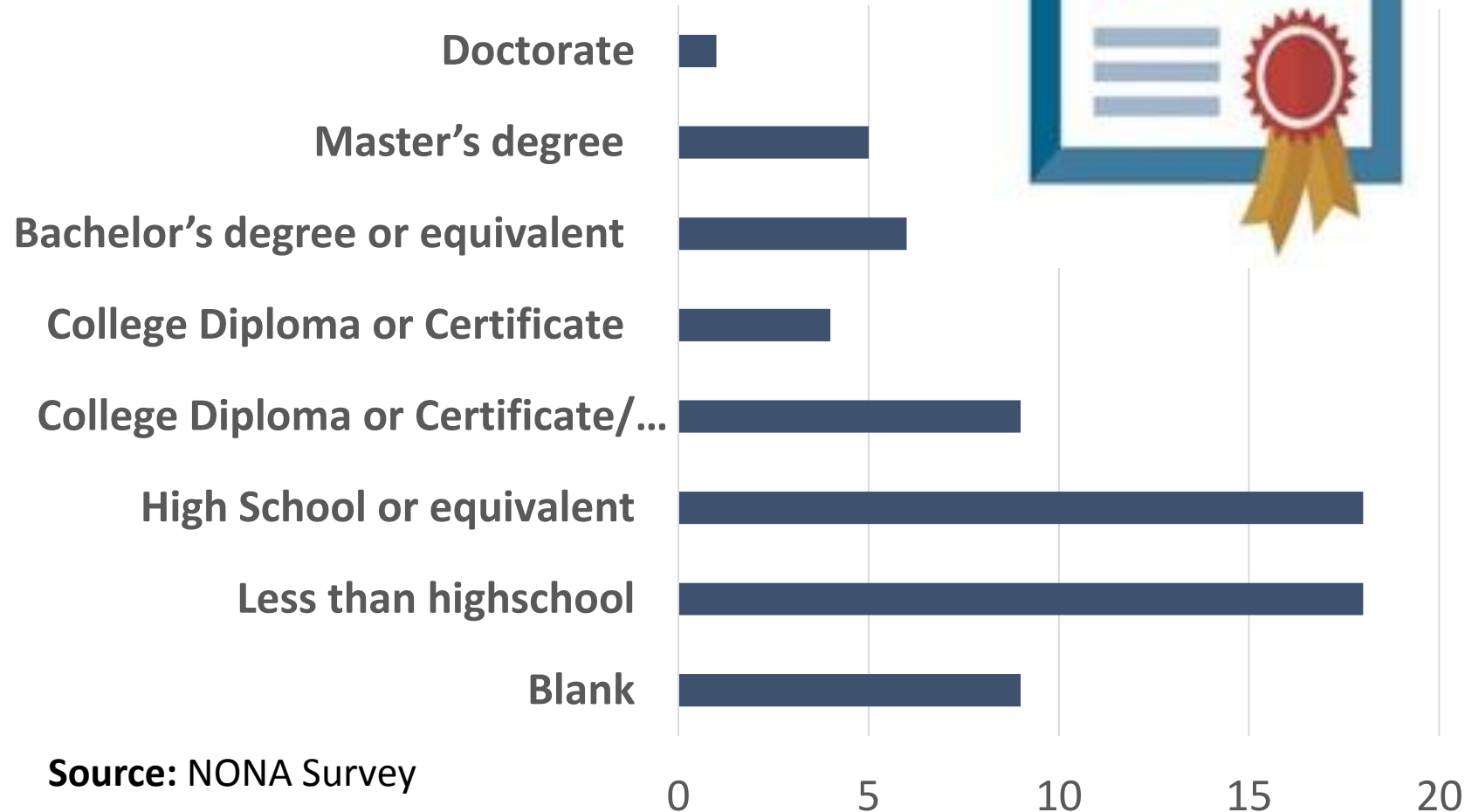
Specific to Huron County:



Healthcare access



# Prior Education



Source: NONA Survey

■ Series 1



*“when I saw the teachers—how they talk with the kids—I thought, this teacher loves my kid like me.”*

- Focus group participant

*“I think it’s impossible. I have a master’s degree in teaching from Korea. It’s not useful here. I’m trying to find other fields.”*

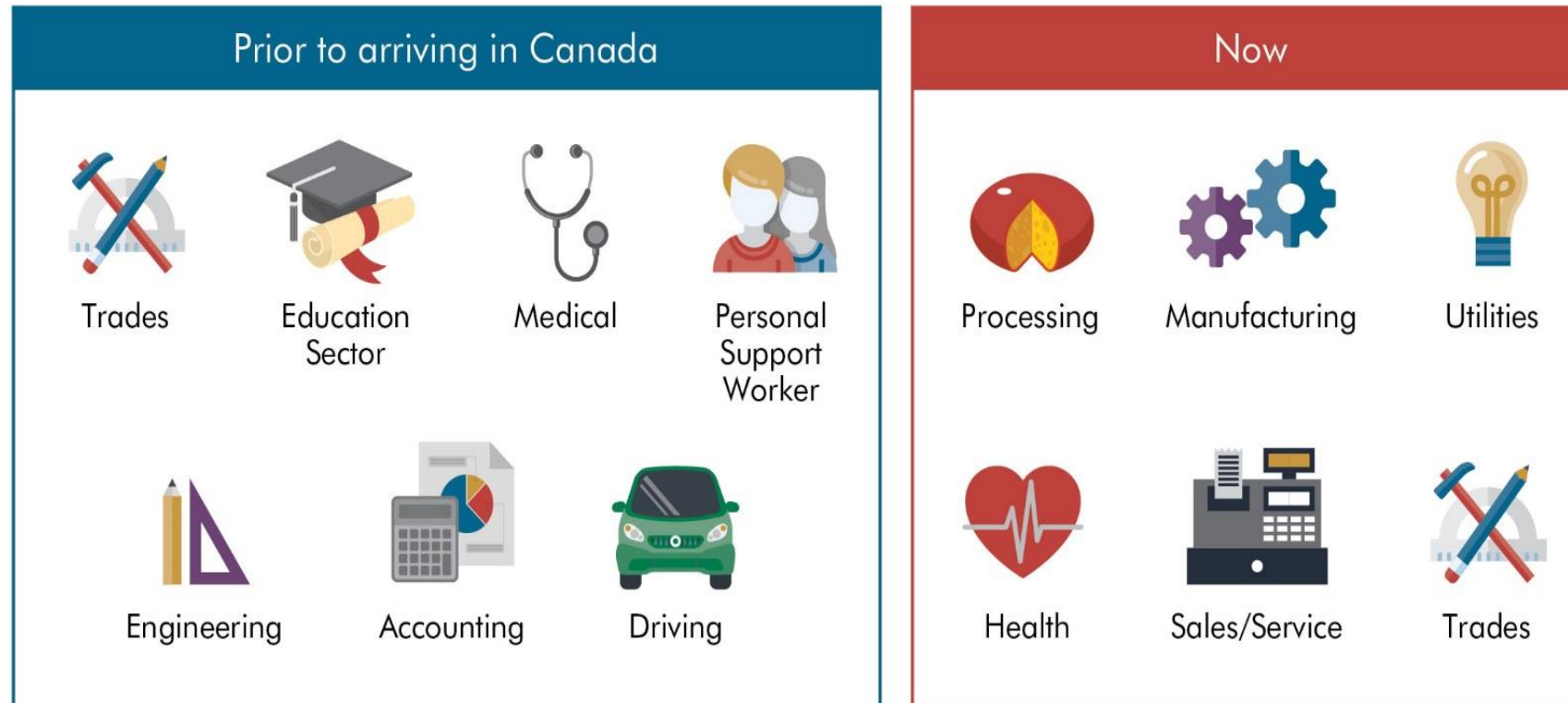
- Focus group participant



Social Research &  
Planning Council

# Employment

Experiences and Training:





## Service Providers & Community Organizations

### SERVICE NEEDS IDENTIFIED:

- Assistance with healthcare issues
- Educational support
- Navigating government systems
- Help finding suitable housing

### SUPPORT GAPS IDENTIFIED:

- Language services (translation)
- Social/spiritual interaction and integration





Social Research &  
Planning Council

# Employers

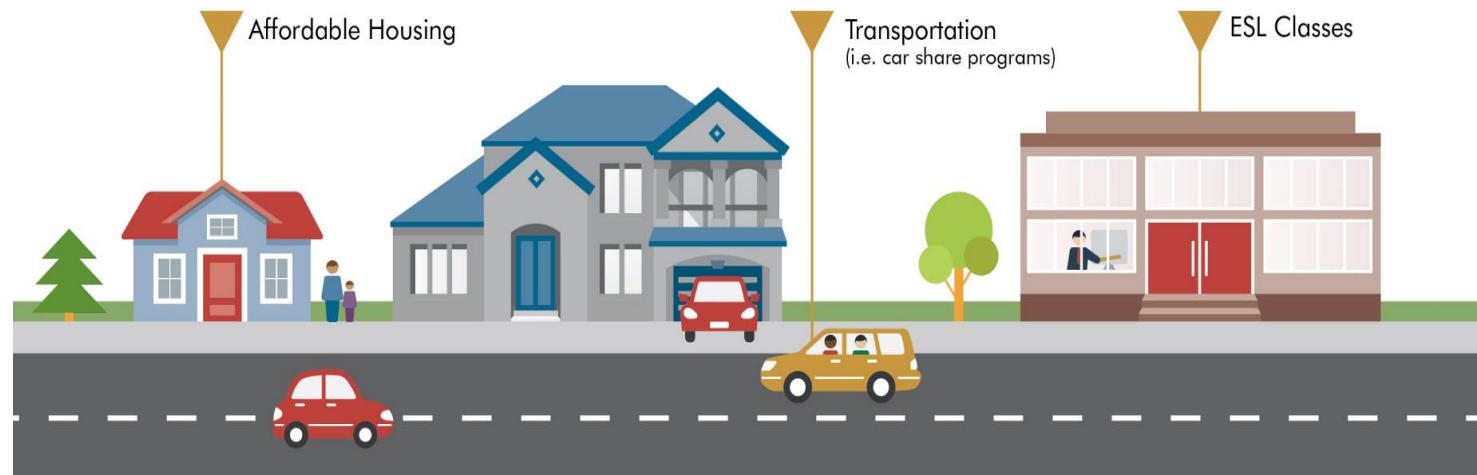
*“We have to have employees who are able to communicate, understand health and safety and work instructions, and complete paperwork etc.”*

**Employers interviewed  
expressed an interest  
in developing a more  
inclusive workplace**



*“Often they [current employees] are subtle, not obviously discrimination or harassment, but enough that newcomers can feel uncomfortable and look for a new position.”*

How to assist newcomers in becoming more employable:





# Employers

---

**Employers interviewed acknowledged they need to be more flexible and :**

- Modify hiring requirements
- Review and revise educational requirements
- Help finding suitable housing

**They will consider:**

- Increasing probation period to account for longer training and on-boarding processes
- Starting a mentorship program



*“...We would need to network with agencies in the community to identify (possible) barriers and work toward solutions to provide support for newcomers to encourage employment.”*



# Recommendations

---

**1. The Newcomer Settlement Huron Perth implement** the following recommendations into their work plan following a multi-phased approach.

- a. Investigate expansion of Local Immigration Partnership to Perth County
- b. Improve Data Collection

## Creating Community

- c. Establishment of a community welcoming committee
- d. System navigation workshops
- e. Accompaniment program

## Increasing Awareness

- 2. Employer recruitment strategy and education
- 3. Creation and enhancement of cultural celebrations
- 4. Cultural competency training
- 5. Increase awareness of rural transportation initiatives



# How can local Councils help?

---

- Encourage inclusion of cultural educational enhancements to events
- Support libraries and other local Newcomer services
- Direct staff to review Diversity and Sensitivity policies and to invest in appropriate training.