

Investigating the Challenges of Immigrant Service Provision in Rural Ontario: A Case Study of Guelph-Wellington Area

BRIEF SUMMARY

This research focuses on the experiences of immigrant settlement service organizations and local governments in the City of Guelph and Wellington County.

- ❑ This research explores immigration settlement service provision in the Guelph-Wellington area. A review of recent literature and interviews were conducted with settlement service organizations to gain insights and impacts.
- ❑ Immigrant service provision has long been a challenge within rural Ontario, with limited literature to support the challenge.
- ❑ Providing rural immigration services is vital to ensure economic prosperity in rural Ontario, especially in communities that struggle with population retention and decline
- ❑ Primary challenges encountered by new immigrants includes transportation, housing, employment, and access to recreation and health care services.
- ❑ There is a false notion that settlement services are readily accessible to rural communities based on the fact services are available in a neighbouring urban area. The lack of transportation hinders the ability to access the services.
- ❑ Rural regions have less funding opportunities than their urban counterpart for settlement support services.

Impacts and Implications Emerging from Research

- ❑ There is a need for a community-based approach to identify the challenges addressed by rural communities.
- ❑ Local immigrant settlement services organizations in the Guelph-Wellington area are providing a wealth of services to immigrants, although challenges remain.
- ❑ The multi-stakeholder approach among local governments, businesses, community organizations, and businesses facilitates partnerships and networking to support new immigrants.
- ❑ Lack of affordable housing is a key challenge experienced by new immigrants. The availability of public transit combined with housing creates further challenges for employment and accessing services.
- ❑ Additional supports are required to assist businesses in hiring new immigrants.
- ❑ Many businesses struggle to understand the temporary foreign worker program and season agricultural worker programs to engage migrant workers.

Further Information

This Major Research Paper was completed by Menakah Yoharaja as part of the Master of Science in Rural Planning and Development program at the University of Guelph.

Acknowledgement

This research initiative is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, through the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance.

