



Newcomer Survey Report – Developed by the Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership

Title: Newcomer Survey - 2022

Translation: The Newcomer Survey was available in English, French and Arabic.

Aim of Study: The Newcomer Survey findings will inform the local priorities to be addressed in a revision of the RRLIP Community Action Plan, as well as advise the day-to-day initiatives of the project. The results will also be shared widely to enhance the community's capacity to engage with and support the newcomer population in the city of Regina.

Conducted by: The Newcomer Survey was conducted by the Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership (RRLIP). The RRLIP is a community initiative that exists to support and strengthen the community's capacity to welcome, settle and integrate newcomers. The RRLIP is guided by a multi-sector Partnership Council, informed by an Immigrant Advisory Table, and supported by working groups that implement activities to address the local priorities.

Survey Development: RRLIP staff consulted with project table members to ensure their feedback was considered in the development of the survey. Early in the survey development process, RRLIP staff were also supported by a University of Regina research student who reviewed the draft questions to ensure it was a well-written survey and that the data collected would be accurate, and useful. During a 6-month period spanning two fiscal years, several survey design drafts were developed, with each subsequent version being improved. *Simple Survey* was used, as it allowed for the most versatility in the features it offered.

Survey Launch and Promotion: The on-line Newcomer Survey was launched in April 2022 (the beginning of the RRLIP's 2022-2023 fiscal year). Once launched, promotion began by both the RRLIP and community partners. For example, local settlement agencies were very helpful in sharing the survey opportunity with their clients. Project blog and Facebook posts were used to promote the survey, along with the survey opportunity being shared in community meetings, at in-person events (whenever possible), through mass emails and personal phone calls, etc. Virtual and/or in-person survey orientation sessions were offered to any interested individual or community group. In the month of Sept 2022, more local in-person events were occurring due to easing COVID restrictions and therefore RRLIP staff were able to attend relevant events to share the survey opportunity. The survey closed Sept 30th, 2022.



Challenges Encountered: The pandemic was a major restricting factor in the distribution and uptake of the Newcomer Survey. Few in-person classes, community events, etc., were taking place for much of the survey’s launch and distribution period. Therefore, connecting virtually with individuals and community groups was the most utilized method of engagement. Although fewer survey participants logged onto the survey than the RRLIP project anticipated, the rich data extracted from the survey respondents will serve to support the project and community partners.

Who Participated in the Newcomer Survey?

- **281 individuals born outside of Canada participated in the survey.**
- **Immigration Categories:** Most survey participants identified as recent immigrants, having arrived within the last 5 years (46.90%). Other survey respondent groups included immigrants who had arrived more than 5 years ago (18.62%), International Students (11.72%), Refugees (8.97%), Temporary Foreign Workers (6.21%), and Canadian Citizens (5.52%)
- **Ages:** 35 to 44 (42.55%); 24 to 34 (25.53%); 45 to 54 (19.15%); 18 to 24 (9.22%); 55 to 64 (2.84%) and 65+ (0.71%)
- **Gender:** Female (61.03%); Male (38.24%); Nonbinary (0.74%); Prefer Not to Answer (0.74%)
- **Marital Status:** Married (73.91%); Single (15.94%); Common-Law (3.62%); Separated/Divorced (2.90%); Never Married (1.45%); Widow/Widower (1.45%); Prefer Not to Answer (0.72%)
- **Languages Spoken in the Home:** (30 different languages) - English, Punjabi, Hindi, Spanish, Nepalese, Bangla, Persian, Ukrainian, Polish, Malayalam, Vietnamese, Farsi, Dari, Urdu, Arabic, Chakma, Tagalog, Telugu, Gujarati, Turkish, Chinese, Mandarin, Tigrinya, Bengali, Lithuanian, Konkani, Marathi, French, Russian, and Aramaic



Survey Participants (cont'd):

- **Country/Regions of Origin:** (23 countries) - Nigeria, India, Columbia, Nepal, Bangladesh, Iran, Ukraine, Lithuania, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Morocco, Lebanon, Philippines, England, Mexico, Egypt, Benin, Tunisia, Jamaica, Turkey, China, Eritrea
- **Employment Status:** Unemployed (44.29%); Working Full-Time (32.86%); Working Part-Time (12.86%); Working Casual (7.86%); On Disability/Leave from Work (1.43%); Self-Employed (1.43%); Retired (0.71%); Other (0.71%)
- **Knowledge of French:** Don't Know Any French (82.61%); Beginner (14.49%); Intermediate (2.17%); Fluent/Advanced (1.45%)
- **Knowledge of English:** CLB 5 to 8 (62.14%); CLB 8 or higher (29.29%); CLB 4 or lower (10.71%)
- **Highest Level of Formal Education:** Undergraduate Degree (42.14%); Graduate Degree (36.43%); High School Graduate (15.71%); Less than High School (6.43%); Other - Certificates; Professional Programs (5.71%); No Formal Education (0%)
- **Household Income:** Under 15,000 (23.85%); 15,000 to 29,999 (14.62%); 30,000 to 49,999 (18.46%); 50,000 to 74,999 (13.85%); 75,000 to 99,999 (6.15%); 100,000 to 150,000 (3.85%); Over 150,000 (0.77%); Prefer Not to Answer (21.54%)
- **Current Housing/Living Situation:** Rent (57.55%); Own home (23.02%); Live as part of a couple with children (18.71%); Live with roommates/friends, sharing the rent and/or other bills (6.47%); Live as part of a couple (husband, wife, or partner), with no other family members living with us (5.04%); Live by myself (4.32%); Live with friends or family in a home owned by them, and I do not pay rent (2.16%); Live as part of a couple with parents or other adult family members living with us (1.44%); Live as a single parent (1.44%); Other (2.16%) – 'Other' sample answers included:
 - I am renting a room from my relatives. At the same time, I'm not feeling welcomed there and try not to spend time there even I pay rent. I would say I am homeless.
 - I live with relatives in a home owned by them, and I pay a little bit rent.



Survey Results:

1) Determining the Local Priorities

The survey participants were asked to choose **up to five categories** from the list below. The question was phrased in this way: **What has been MOST challenging about your settlement experience in Regina? Please choose up to five answers from the categories below.**

- Food
- Healthcare (including mental and emotional wellness)
- Housing
- Employment (working for others)
- Entrepreneurship (i.e., self-employed/own a business)
- Social Connections
- 2SLGBTQIA+ Supports
- Childcare
- Immigration Process
- Sponsorship Process – both as a sponsored person and/or as a someone who has sponsored another
- Education/Training
- Transportation
- Safety/Security
- Creative and Recreational Activities
- Other - If a survey participant chose the 'OTHER' option, they had an opportunity to expand on their answer



Chart A illustrates the percentage of respondents who identified each local priority as being the most challenging about the settlement experience in Regina.

Chart A - LOCAL PRIORITIES

Employment (working for others)	66.90%
Healthcare (including mental/emotional health, alternative health and wellness supports, and/or any health-related care or service)	39.15%
Social Connections (incl. cultural, religious/spiritual connections)	35.94%
Education/Training	34.88%
Housing	32.74%
Transportation (incl. public transit and driving/driver training, etc.)	32.03%
Food	21.35%
Immigration/Sponsorship Process	20.64%
Childcare	19.57%
Creative and Recreational Activities (incl. arts, sports, play, gardening/enjoying nature, etc.)	19.57%
Entrepreneurship (self-employed/own business)	16.37%
Safety/Security (incl. racism/discrimination, personal freedoms, COVID-19, etc.)	12.10%
Other	3.91%
2SLGBTQIA+ Supports	2.85%

Although the top local priority, **employment**, can be easily identified, the 5 priorities that followed were all closely matched. The difference between **healthcare** (priority #2) and **transportation** (priority #6) was only 7.12%.



2) Drilling Down into the Local Priorities

Once the survey participant chose up to 5 categories (or priorities), they were given the opportunity to share **more about each priority selected**. The question was phrased in this way: **Please tell us about your challenges around HEALTHCARE (for example). Please check all options that apply to your experience of settlement in Regina.** If a survey participant chose the ‘other’ option, they had an opportunity to expand on their answer.

Charts B to F illustrate more in-depth challenges experienced by the respondents, within each of the top 5 local priority categories.

Chart B – EMPLOYMENT

Employment that suits my education and skills	67.90%
Language barriers	57.41%
Low pay (wage/salary) that makes it difficult to survive	49.38%
Foreign Credential recognition	45.68%
Not aware of local employment programs to help me prepare for work, find a job	32.72%
Transportation challenges	30.86%
Not aware of mentorship/training opportunities to improve my skills on the job (once hired)	25.93%
Racism/Discrimination in the hiring practices (e.g., at job interviews; please tell us more under "Other" below)	18.52%
Don't have the technology needed, or don't know how to use it	14.81%
Racism/Discrimination on the job (after hiring; please tell us more under "Other" below)	14.20%
Difficulties working from home	9.88%
Other (or I want to say more about something above)	9.26%

‘Other’ comments around EMPLOYMENT included:

- Lack of Canadian experience is the biggest issue.
- Asking for Canadian experience but newcomer like me does not have and when I ask for work as volunteer or apprenticeship, they promise, but in the end, there is no result.
- There are enough organizations helping with firsthand training, like English, computer programs. But I am still confused about my professional career. Need advice which courses or certificate programs should I take to get a good job and increase my salary, get career development. Which path to choose? What education is better to take. I am facing issue afford a new house, so to get a house I need a good salary. But unsure what steps to take right now to achieve my goal.
- Even if I have worked in the international environment with the expats for more than 10 years in oil and gas and hospitality industry, still have to start with volunteering and from the lowest positions. My education and experience were worth nothing.
- Coming as an international student, the province is not providing any help or job offers, making it very difficult to continue in having a future here. Also helping with immigration papers after graduation doesn’t exist.



Survey Comment:

“Most employers/jobs require Canadian experience, but a newcomer clearly doesn't have that beside volunteer work experience which is often not accounted for by employers as a (paid) job. So, it is very challenging for a newcomer to find employment relevant to his or her education, training, or experience. As a result, some skilled newcomers' (like me) skills are not put in good use, and they are stuck in survival/retail jobs or even worse unemployed. It is a vicious cycle: No experience, no job; no job no experience. Cycle needs to be broken at some point if I am to be a real contributor to my community and economy as per my skills and experience.”



Chart C – HEALTHCARE

Difficulty finding or keeping a doctor or other healthcare practitioner	58.06%
Language barriers	56.45%
High cost of medicine, treatments, or equipment	50.00%
Not aware of available resources and supports for my physical health	43.55%
Difficulty finding culturally sensitive care	33.87%
Not aware of resources and supports for my mental and emotional health	29.03%
Lack of access to technology supporting health and wellness	27.42%
Embarrassed or afraid to ask for help for my physical health	22.58%
High cost of alternative health/wellness supports (e.g., chiropractor, naturopath, massage, etc.)	22.58%
Embarrassed or afraid to ask for help for my mental or emotional health	19.35%
Racism/discrimination in healthcare system (e.g., in paperwork, processes, or by healthcare workers, etc.)	14.52%
Other (or I want to say more about something above)	4.84%

‘Other’ comments around HEALTHCARE included:

- I still haven't received my Health-Card and it's been over month since I applied.
- Long waiting times for specialists and emergency. My husband had very bad allergy and had to wait and struggle for 6 months to see the specialist. Also have to go to emergency with kids as it was out of doctor's working hours and had to wait about 6 hours to see the doctor with sick child with a fever.
- The referral for any specialist taking too much time.
- Our English is not enough to describe symptoms of sickness. On the other hand, we feel hard to understand what the doctors told us to do so. That's why we are quite afraid to ask them for help.
- It is difficult to find resources and supports for my autistic son.



Chart D - SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

I really want to meet people from other cultural/religious/spiritual/community groups	71.19%
Not aware of local opportunities to connect with people from other cultural/religious/spiritual/community group(s)	64.41%
Not aware of local opportunities to connect with people from my own cultural/religious/spiritual/community group(s)	55.93%
Language barriers keep me from connecting with others	49.15%
I am uncomfortable or afraid to meet people from other cultural/religious/spiritual/community groups.	18.64%
I have loved ones with whom I communicate regularly	16.95%
Difficulties accessing/using technology to connect	11.86%
Experiences of racism/discrimination when trying to connect socially	8.47%
I do not have loved ones with whom to communicate regularly	8.47%
I'm not really interested in connecting with other people or groups; I prefer to stay by myself	6.78%
I am unable to communicate with my loved ones regularly. (Please tell us why in the box below if you don't mind sharing.)	5.08%
Other (or I want to say more about something above)	0.00%

‘Other’ comments around SOCIAL CONNECTIONS included:

- Difficulty in creating social ties with non-French-speaking people, in particular due to the lack, in my opinion, of participatory workshops: board game evenings, cooking workshop, sewing, bicycle repair, etc.

Additional Information in Response to the ‘Unable to Communicate with Loved Ones’ Selection:

- I am so busy about my kids and there is no helper, I feel press.
- Because they are not in a state in Canada.

Chart E - EDUCATION/TRAINING

Not aware of funding supports for education/training	54.10%
Language barriers	54.10%
High cost of education/training	49.18%
Not aware of education/training opportunities	45.90%
Lack of prerequisites for education/training programs	31.15%
Difficulty accessing distance education/training programs	29.51%
Challenges with education/training for my child/children or other family member	22.95%
Missing documentation needed to enter education/training programs	13.11%
Lack of technology or technological knowledge/skills needed for education/training	11.48%
Experiences of racism/discrimination	6.56%
Other (or I want to say more about something above)	3.28%

‘Other’ comments around EDUCATION/TRAINING included:

- The province doesn't have any bridging programs for foreign educated specialists with high level of education and experience. The provincial government, professional associations and industries just did not create it (other provinces did). Instead of that they created "private clubs" that are closed for immigrants. I also didn't get a student loan for an additional education in another province just because I am an immigrant. Other provinces provide immigrants with student loans fir this program. It is one more example of xenophobia and discrimination in Saskatchewan.
- No one guide me properly about my children education. I tried many daycares, but no one have space and have long waiting list. One is 5 years and still at home and with them difficult to study my self also their abilities going to be lighter day by day.



Chart F – HOUSING

High cost of housing	90.00%
Can't find appropriately sized housing for my family	36.67%
Maintenance issues	31.67%
Lack of references	31.67%
Landlord issues	28.33%
Language barriers	20.00%
Neighbour issues	18.33%
Racism/Discrimination	8.33%
Technology barriers	8.33%
Other (or I want to say more about something above)	1.67%

‘Other’ comments around HOUSING included:

- Landlords always ask income and references. It is impossible to show for those who are the first-time landing here.
- Our salaries are not affordable to buy a house in Regina. We don’t know how long we can save enough for the first home here.



3) Additional Comments about Improving the Settlement Experience

Survey participants were given the opportunity to share ideas for improving the settlement experience. The question was phrased in this way: **Please tell us how to improve the settlement experience for newcomers in Regina.**

Sample answers included:

- Long wait lists for classes.
- Accommodations should be given for free or at a very low cost for new immigrants.
- At currently, Canada welcomes many immigrants from many different countries. So, we need to have an immigration support team for newcomer group by country. Such as Chinese team, Vietnamese team, Ukraine team. Because newcomer will face of language barrier so if there are someone from their country help them. They will be easy to get along in the new land.
- I think there should be specific plan for specific culture or nation for example, Afghans who is newcomer some of them are not able read and write in their own language but they forced them to know English, I think it has negative result because at first they have to can read and write in their own language and the second in English.
- Please encourage employers to consider foreign experience.
- Should have a guide for newcomers starting from food, accommodation, job search etc.
- Food too expensive and difficult to find a job.
- We need to help new people know about rule of Canada.
- Make them feel more welcomed and help them settle in a lot more.
- Saskatchewan government should bring more people as Sask is growing and they will help it grow.
- I highly appreciate all the steps taken for newcomers in Regina. I think it takes time to understand different culture. It is a natural process.
- Program for stay-at-home mother.
- Should introduce employment program for newcomer especially introduce job for them since it is quite hard to get a job.
- Employment is the main factor that newcomers are not finding based on their educational background.
- Find areas with low cost of living. And provide work that suits them to live.
- My concern is it is better to have a councillor that is related with your language.
- Document procedure needs to be handled faster.
- To have more job opportunities and increase the payment rate at maximum.



Additional Comments about Improving the Settlement Experience (cont'd):

- The most important is to improve your language skill.
- Communicate more with new immigrants to understand their needs and organize appropriate briefings or activities according to general needs to meet these needs.
- Difficult to get a job that fit your skill. There are not many job opportunities in Regina.
- More safety helps for newcomers.
- Centralized services must be provided. It is on our own as newcomers to find relevant organizations for assistance. Social media groups and communities must be encouraged as well.
- I would like help in adapting to Canadian culture and have a better life in Regina.
- A newcomer/family should be provided with all sorts of minute details. If it 's possible a personal mentor should guide about available facilities like affordable pass, house allowance scheme by government and Child Benefit matter.
- Newcomers should be enrolled in settlement program to assist settling.
- Please introduce new mechanical/civil/Electrical Companies so that newcomers can get professional jobs easily in Regina.
- During my needs assessment I clearly stated what I needed but my most urgent need was completely ignored and only after some weeks I was told that another organisation handled that need, and I was referred there. The case worker could have told me that right away as it was already known to her. I lost and it caused me and my family additional unnecessary stress. I also find the case worker unfriendly, she seemed bothered as if she was doing me a favour, as if this was not her job.
- Find people the community where the person comes from. When we came, we received by people from another country spoke different language plus starting new life in new country is hard, becomes very hard.
- First of all, to start working with the provincial and municipal government, non-profit organizations, professional associations, and industries in the direction of equity and diversity. Equity and diversity do not exist in this province, and somebody must change it!
- By explaining the laws to the family, what are they facing in the future?
- Decrease the inflation.
- Open the housing policy so that newcomer can approach the suitable accommodation.
- Appointments dates are too long. ID and health card processing take long time. The resident not found near the school that children go to high school by walk.
- Getting support financially, socially as a new immigrant right from the Airport.

Additional Comments about Improving the Settlement Experience (cont’d):

- Develop more jobs, introduce more recreational places in neighbourhood.
- Help newcomer improve their English skills and support more fit in local life.
- Newcomers need more professional training opportunity to emerge the community.
- As an electrical engineer and a SINP nominated immigrant, I suggest that, simply bringing immigrants to the city without any proper planning and creating infrastructure for jobs, it is useless process as whole.

Survey Comment:

“You should help newcomers to improve English because communication is the most important thing that allows newcomers to settle in Regina.”

4) COVID-19/PANDEMIC RELATED IMPACTS

Survey participants were given the opportunity to share COVID-related insights. The questions were phrased in this way:

- **Please tell us any challenges you and/or your family have faced around COVID-19 (including any variants).**
- **Please check all options below that apply to your settlement experience in Regina, related to COVID-19 and the pandemic.**





Chart G illustrates what COVID-19/pandemic related impacts the survey participants experienced.

Chart G – COVID-19/PANDEMIC RELATED IMPACTS

I feel afraid of myself and/or my loved ones getting COVID-19	53.66%
My education and/or the education of a family member has been negatively affected by the pandemic	22.76%
I don't think the COVID-19 restrictions are strict enough, and/or aren't enforced well enough	15.45%
I think the COVID-19 restrictions are too strict	12.20%
Transportation challenges due to the pandemic	12.20%
I have experienced difficulties working from home due to the pandemic	10.57%
I/My family member(s) haven't been able to work due to the pandemic	9.76%
Not aware of restrictions or other information about COVID-19	8.13%
I don't have or don't know how to use technology that would help during this time	7.32%
Other (or I want to say more about something above)	7.32%
My business has suffered due to the pandemic	3.25%
I think COVID-19 is a hoax (isn't real)	1.63%

‘Other’ comments around the COVID-19 PANDEMIC included:

- I came to this country to work. The Canadian government's over-reaction to a mild disease caused my family to go without work. We need to work to live. You don't get to tell us what to put in our bodies.
- It is hard for me to get a flight to China to visit my old parents.
- I don't fear of anything except God.
- International travel regulation.
- More- I think COVID had good sides to it, first it made us stop and think, appreciate what we have, and through technology we could solve working from far, which is great with extreme weather conditions too. It made life easier from the comfort of one's home.

‘Other’ comments around the COVID-19 PANDEMIC included:

- My family and I have been saved and had taken both vaccinations timely. We are satisfied by the steps taken by Govt. in this pandemic.
- During covid-19, there was a long time to proceed our immigration application.

5) Final Questions



The survey participants were asked to reflect on their quality of life in Regina. The questions were phrased in this way: **Do you feel that you have a good quality of life in Regina? What would you need to have a better quality of life?**

Do you feel that you have a good quality of life in Regina?

Somewhat, could be better (55.07%); Yes (33.33%); No (12.32%)

What would you need to have a better quality of life?

Most answers can be categorized into similar themes – more jobs, better paying jobs, learning English, family reunification and community connections. Sample answers included:

- A better paying job.
- Stress of paying fees could be reduced if the fees is equal for everyone.
- Stable employment with good income to meet the daily expenses.
- Better status, income and having friends around me.
- Good house and good and well-paid job.

What would you need to have a better quality of life (cont'd):

- Lack of community connection. Entertainment activities for family.
- Family reunification.
- I feel very lonely here. Even don't put efforts to connect. It is quite disheartening at times. I am scared if I am sick or dead who will take care of my daughters.
- DECREASE TAXES.
- Learn English and work.
- The connection to my community and the ease of getting a job.
- Proper employment gives better quality of life.
- Better and faster access to Specialists and diagnostic services such as MRI's.
- Education for work and better life for my kids.
- I would need to have a better-quality life that's way I am learning language. I took a lot of courses to have a better job and life. I am working hard to become a better mam and to have my little one better life.
- Processing document should be faster.
- Employment will make me have a better quality of life.
- I need to improve my English skills and get a license and then find a job.
- Bodily Autonomy.
- Better health and career opportunities and services for children recreation programs. All is expensive.
- Job security.
- My family integration and good job.

Next Steps:

As shared earlier, the Regina Region Local Immigration Partnership will use the data acquired in this survey to revise/update the RRLIP's Community Action Plan.

As has occurred during the dissemination of past RRLIP Newcomer Survey results, RRLIP staff are available to present the findings to any community group, agency, and/or level of government that is interested in learning more about the survey topics that pertain to their area of work. RRLIP staff can be reached at info@rrlip.ca or 306-529-6505.

