



SKILLSNEXT

**Employment Gaps and
Underemployment for
Racialized Groups and
Immigrants in Canada:**
Current Findings and Future
Directions

JANUARY 2020

**Dr. Eddy S. Ng &
Dr. Suzanne Gagnon**





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The word "Canada" in a serif font, with a small Canadian flag icon above the letter "a".

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

Canadians' needs for skills training are changing rapidly. Through Skills Next, the Public Policy Forum and the Diversity Institute—in its role as a research lead for the Future Skills Centre—are publishing a series of reports that explore a number of the most important issues currently impacting the skills ecosystem in Canada. Each report focuses on one issue, reviews the existing state of knowledge on this topic, and identifies areas in need of additional research. This strong foundation is intended to help support further research and strengthen policymaking. A diverse set of authors who are engaged in the skills ecosystem through various roles, including through research, activism, and policymaking, have been carefully selected to provide a broad range of perspectives while also foregrounding the Canadian context. Their varied backgrounds, experiences, and expertise have shaped their individual perspectives, their analyses of the current skills ecosystem, and the reports they have authored.

Skills Next includes reports focused on:

- **Global comparison of trends to understand the future of skills**
- **Knowns and unknowns about skills in labour market information**
- **Rethinking the relationship between technology and the future of work**
- **Defining digital skills and the pathways to acquiring them**
- **Barriers to employment for immigrants and racialized people in Canada**
- **Barriers to employment for persons with disabilities**
- **The return on investment of industry leadership in skills and training**
- **Approaches to improving the transitions of university graduates from education to the workforce**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While Canada faces labour shortages due to a declining birthrate and aging population, many Canadians experience obstacles to employment and are underemployed relative to their educational and professional backgrounds. This report summarizes current data on employment outcomes for racialized Canadians and for recent immigrants to Canada, reviews the literature that seeks to explain these gaps and analyzes studies of programming and policy designed to close these gaps — including in the areas of settlement and bridging. While much is known about the problem itself, solutions to date have been fragmented.

Despite years of policy initiatives and programming by governments and other service providers, employment outcomes for racialized Canadians, including racialized immigrant men and women, continue to lag those for non-racialized workers. Using data from the 2016 Census and Legislated Employment Equity Program (LEEP), we find that racialized minorities and immigrants experience greater unemployment and underemployment collectively, and that immigrant women experience poorer outcomes than immigrant men.

Generally, racialized workers and immigrants are employed in lower paying sectors and occupations. Immigrants from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East fare worse than Canadian-born workers, while immigrants from Europe fare better than non-European immigrants. Foreign credential devaluation, language skills, and perceived fit with the Canadian workplace continue to be barriers for immigrant labour-market integration.

The barriers faced by immigrants are compounded when the work influences of disruptive technologies are considered. Automation is expected to transform many of the industries with a high concentration of racialized minority and immigrant workers. As a result, they are more vulnerable to displacement in the future. Further, persistent underemployment suggests an important potential disconnection: employers are incorrectly evaluating foreign credentials and/or there is a need to upgrade skills to better align with those required by Canadian employers.

While immigrants and racialized minorities are likely to continue to face barriers, factors associated with the changing nature of work will magnify the need to address the skills mismatch between members of these population groups and the occupations in which they work. Our review shows that more and better evaluation, as well as renewed attention and concerted action among stakeholders, is needed to remedy the qualifications mismatch, to enhance awareness of existing supports and to avoid displacement and further inequities amongst these groups. Self-employment and entrepreneurship, for example, represent alternative pathways to increased socio-economic mobility for immigrants and racialized minorities. However, increased awareness among immigrants around the existence of entrepreneurship supports is needed. Similarly, employment-equity policies are currently too limited to drive broader systems change, though they have been helpful in raising awareness and aiding in the removal of barriers for women and racialized minorities in some regulated sectors. Expanding the collection and sharing of disaggregated data will be essential to enabling more granular analysis of how gender, country of origin, and other factors interface with racialized identities and immigration status to influence the experiences of individuals in the Canadian workforce.



Immigrants from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East fare worse than Canadian-born workers, while immigrants from Europe fare better than non-European immigrants.



INTRODUCTION

“Jobs without people and people without jobs” is a global challenge. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) reports that business leaders around the world consider skills gaps one of the most pressing issues impeding their ability to grow and innovate.¹ At the same time, many highly skilled workers, including racialized people and internationally educated professionals, are underemployed.² Even as employers, policymakers and community organizations commit to diversity and inclusion in the workplace, efforts remain uneven and barriers to employment and advancement still impact diverse populations.

Empirical data on employment gaps in Canada indicate that wage and employment gaps are often “colour coded.”³ We first review the statistics on employment gaps, barriers to employment and challenges in accessing skills training programs for racialized populations and for immigrants. We then identify what is known and what is not known in order to inform a robust future research and innovation agenda specific to skills policy in Canada. This policy must respond to the unique challenges and experiences of immigrants and racialized populations.

Racialized non-Indigenous workers (including racialized immigrants), represent approximately one fifth (22 percent) of Canada’s workforce.⁴ We also consider the picture from an intersectional lens: how do women *vis-à-vis* men fare within each of these populations, and what do the differences suggest in terms of further research?⁵ We use the terms “racialized persons” and “racialized minorities” in place of the term “visible minorities,”⁶ which is commonly used in Canadian legislative frameworks, to more accurately portray the experiences of racialized people in Canada. This is also congruent with the recommendations from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination as well as the Ontario Human Rights Council.⁷

¹ PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). (2019). [CEOs’ Curbed Confidence Spells Caution](#). PwC.

² Mahboubi, P. (2019). [Why Canada’s skills mismatch is cause for concern](#). The Globe and Mail.

³ Block, S. Galabuzi, G-E. and Tranjan, R. (2019). [Canada’s colour-coded income inequality](#). Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

⁴ Statistics Canada. (2017). [2016 Census of Population](#). Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016286.

⁵ An intersectional approach systematically examines the interactive influences of a variety of categorizations such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, immigration status, and others, across the life course. That is, an intersectionality approach starts from the understanding that forms of discrimination and oppression (e.g., racism, sexism) overlap and interact and posits that because of this, the consequences of oppression on the basis of these categorizations cannot be understood sufficiently by studying these phenomena separately.

⁶ Statistics Canada uses the term “visible minorities” to refer to persons, other than Indigenous Peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. The experience of Indigenous Peoples is particular and is discussed in a forthcoming Skills Next report.

⁷ Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF). (2007). [CRRF responds to UN body’s criticism of the use of “visible minorities.”](#) CRRF.

An aging population and low birth rates have resulted in an acute shortage of workers in Canada.⁸ In response, the federal government has pursued an aggressive immigration policy aimed at attracting highly skilled workers to expand the talent pool available to Canada's knowledge economy.^{9, 10} In the most recent 2016 Census, recent immigrants are more likely to arrive from Asia, with the Philippines, India, China, Iran and Pakistan, making up almost half of all immigrants to Canada.¹¹ The emphasis on skills and experience in immigration selection policies (e.g., the points-based system and Provincial Nominee Programs) has meant that greater numbers of recent immigrants possess higher levels of education relative to native-born Canadians. Despite similar or greater levels of educational attainment, however, the disparity between education and employment outcomes (e.g., unemployment, underemployment and wage gaps) persists for immigrants, particularly those from racialized backgrounds.¹²

Further, evidence suggests that racialized women fare worse than racialized men across a variety of occupations and different industries.^{13, 14} As indicated in a Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) study, the earnings gap between immigrants and Canadian-born individuals, despite comparable educational attainment, could cost the Canadian economy approximately \$50 billion.¹⁵

Skilled immigrants face significant obstacles to employment, earning less than Canadian-born workers, despite having higher levels of education.^{16, 17} Banerjee, Reitz, and Oreopoulos (2018) show that job applicants with “foreign-sounding names” are 20 to 40 percent less likely to get a call-back, depending on company size. Furthermore, when the intersection of race and gender is considered, these employment gaps (e.g., underemployment, wages) are compounded.¹⁸ In addition to upskilling workers,

⁸ Burke, R. and Ng, E. (2006). [The changing nature of work and organizations: Implications for human resource management](#). Human Resource Management Review, 16(2), 86-94.

⁹ Ng, E. and Metz, I. (2015). [Multiculturalism as a strategy for national competitiveness: The case for Canada and Australia](#). Journal of Business Ethics, 128(2), 253-266.

¹⁰ Reitz, J. (2013). [Closing the gaps between skilled immigration and Canadian labour markets: Emerging policy issues and priorities](#). Wanted and Welcome? pp 147-163.

¹¹ Statistics Canada. (2017). [2016 Census of Population](#). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016184. Note, the term “recent immigrants” includes permanent residents in Canada who arrived between 2011 and 2016.

¹² Yssaad, L. and Fields, A. (2018). [The Canadian immigrant labour market: Recent trends from 2006 to 2017](#). Statistics Canada.

¹³ Statistics Canada. (2017). [2016 Census of Population](#). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016286.

¹⁴ Statistics Canada. (2017). [2016 Census of Population](#). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016360.

¹⁵ Agopsowicz, A. and Billy-Ochieng, R. (2019). [Untapped potential: Canada needs to close its immigrant wage gap](#). RBC Economics. Canada: Royal Bank of Canada.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Reitz, J. (2013). [Closing the gaps between skilled immigration and Canadian labour markets: Emerging policy issues and priorities](#). Wanted and Welcome? pp 147-163.

¹⁸ Block, S., and Galabuzi, G-E. (2011). [Canada's colour-coded labour market](#). Wellesley Institute and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

there is also need for demand-side capacity-building in the form of improving managerial skills in accessible and inclusive employment.

Employment Equity in Regulated Sectors: Representation of Racialized People

Since Canada's *Employment Equity Act* of 1986, federally regulated companies and contractors—representing a relatively small segment of employers—were required to report on representation in their workforce of designated groups, including women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities. The legislation aimed to encourage employers in such industries as banking and financial services, communications and transportation to achieve better representation of designated groups (Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, and women)¹⁹ in their respective workforces, relative to the labour market. In 2017, 561 employers submitted a report to the Minister responsible for Labour, representing 740,420 workers or 3.8 percent of the Canadian workforce.²⁰ In the *2018 Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2018*, women continue to be underrepresented,²¹ while racialized minorities have reached or exceeded their proportionate representation,²² as depicted in Figures 1 and 2. Hiring rates exceed termination rates for visible minorities, due in part to the growing number of immigrants from racialized backgrounds entering the Canadian labour market (see Figure 4).

¹⁹ In the context of this report, the term “Aboriginal” or “Indigenous” is used to refer to individuals who identify themselves as First Nation, Métis or Inuit.

²⁰ Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). (2019). [Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2018](#). ESDC, 10.

²¹ Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). (2019). [Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2018](#). ESDC, 22.

²² Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). (2019). [Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2018](#). ESDC, 35.

Figure 1: Representation of Visible Minorities under the Legislated Employment Equity Program (LEEP)

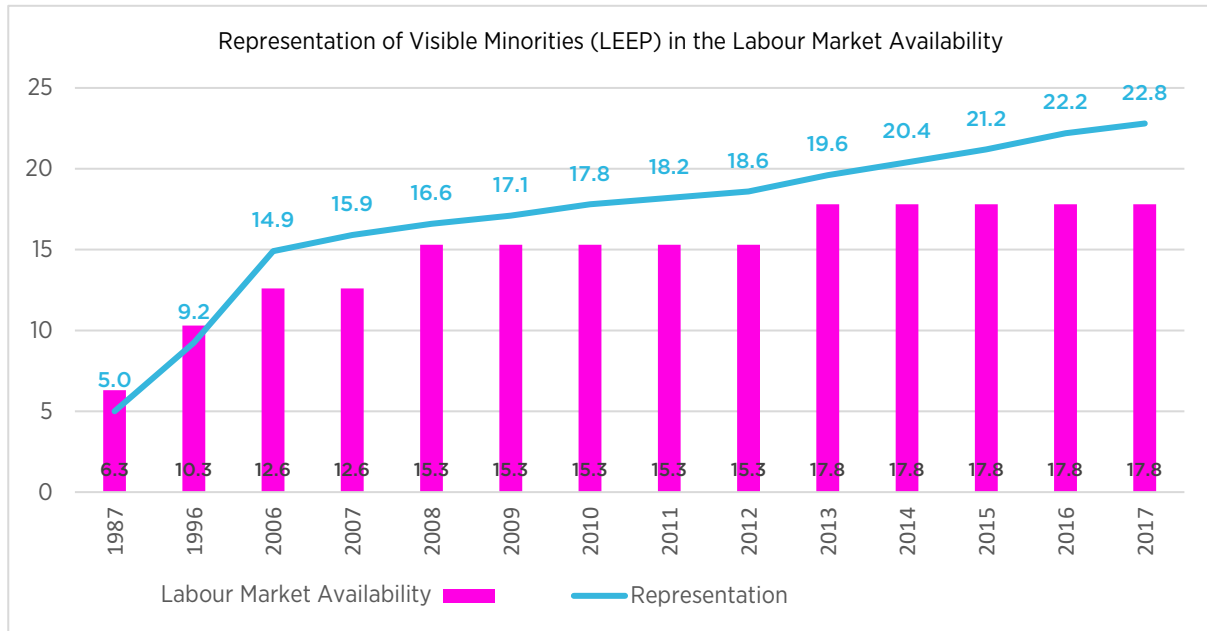
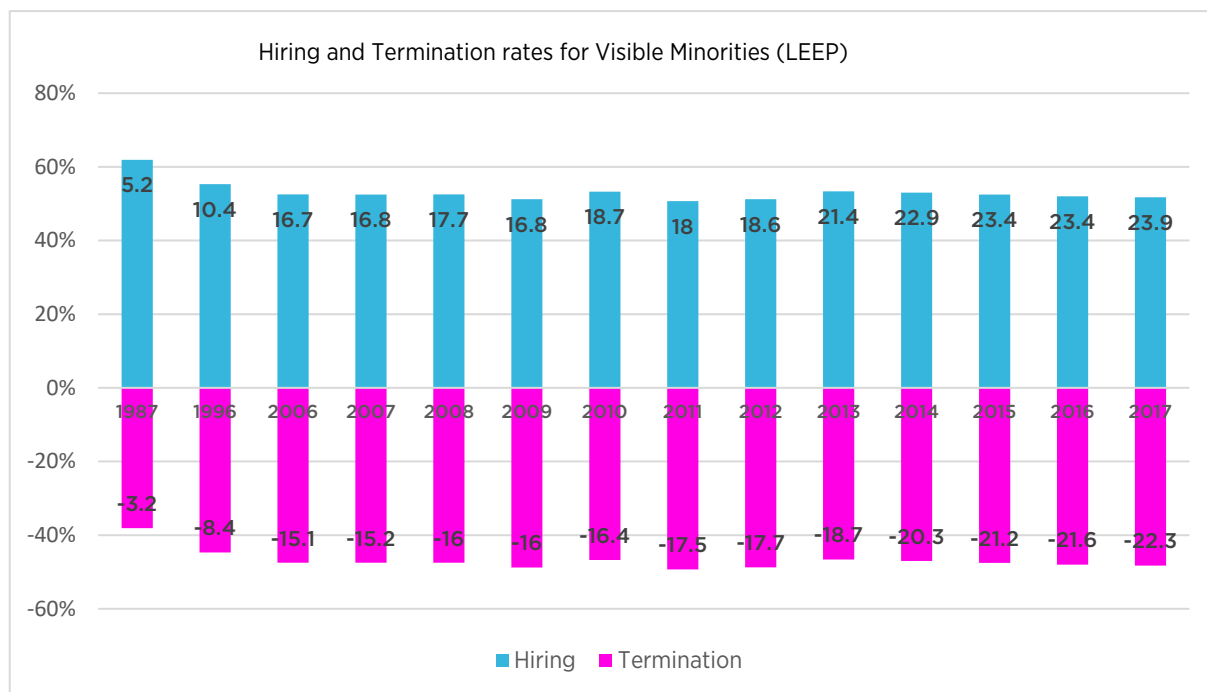


Figure 2: Hiring and Termination of Visible minorities under the Legislated Employment Equity Program (LEEP)



LABOUR OUTCOMES FOR RACIALIZED MINORITIES

The most recent census data (2016) provides a more complete picture of the labour-market profile for women and racialized persons.²³ The census provides data separately for racialized minorities and for immigrants, although there is a substantial overlap between the two. Below, we first review the relevant data for racialized minorities (irrespective of immigration status) and then discuss the differences within groups with respect to gender. Racialized persons have a higher labour market participation rate (66.5 percent) than non-racialized persons (64.8 percent), suggesting that they are more likely to be working or seeking work.²⁴ However, racialized minorities also report greater unemployment (9.2 percent) than non-racialized persons (7.3 percent), as illustrated in Figure 1.²⁵ Furthermore, racialized women experience the poorest labour market outcomes. They report a far greater unemployment rate (9.6 percent) than racialized men (8.8 percent) and non-racialized women (6.4 percent), suggesting that they may be doubly disadvantaged.²⁶

The data also indicate that the term “visible minority” or “racialized minority” conceals significant within group differences. As described in Table 1 and Figure 3, unemployment rates are highest for Arabs (13.5 percent), Blacks (12.5 percent), and West Asians (11.0 percent).²⁷ This may be influenced by additional barriers—for example, the “Muslim penalty”—arising out of anti-Muslim sentiments.²⁸ Chinese and South Asians, which make up the top five racialized minorities, also report unemployment rates of 7.9 percent and 9.2 percent respectively, higher than the rate for non-racialized persons (7.3 percent). The unemployment rate is lowest for Filipinos (5.2 percent). This may be attributed to two factors: English is one of the two languages of instruction in the Philippines (in addition to Tagalog) and the Filipino education system closely mirrors that of North America; and, Filipino workers are concentrated in high-demand, but low-skilled, occupations such as childcare provider and personal support worker.²⁹

²³ Statistics Canada. (2017). [2016 Census of Population](#). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016286.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

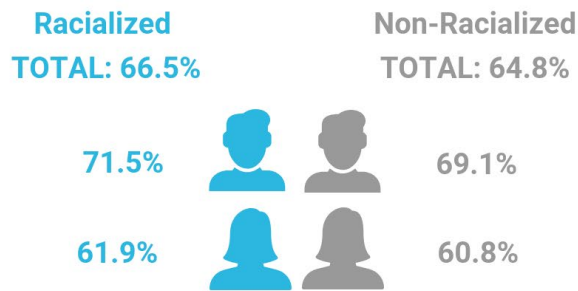
²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Khattab, N., Miaari, S., and Mohamed-Ali, M. (2019). [Visible minorities in the Canadian labour market: Disentangling the effect of religion and ethnicity](#). Ethnicities.

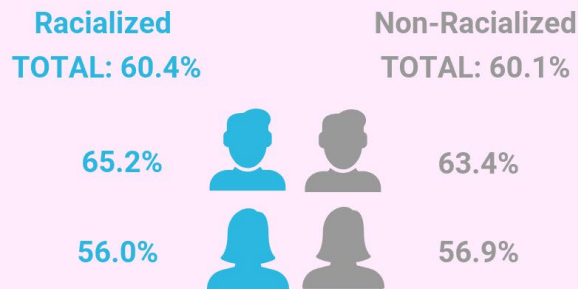
²⁹ Yssaad, L. and Fields, A. (2018). [The Canadian immigrant labour market: Recent trends from 2006 to 2017](#). Statistics Canada.

Figure 3: Employment, unemployment and labour-market participation rates, by racialization and gender

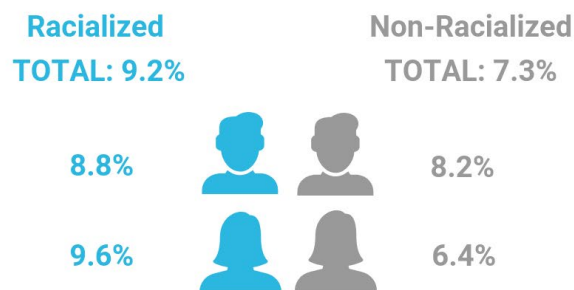
Labour-market participation rates, by racialization and gender



Employment rate by racialization and gender



Unemployment rate by racialization and gender



There are more racialized persons working and actively looking for work in Canada than non-racialized persons—and yet their unemployment rates are higher. Racialized women experience the poorest labour market outcomes suggesting a double disadvantage.

Source: Statistics Canada. (2017b). [2016 Census of Population](#). Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016286.

Table 1 – Employment, unemployment, and labour-market participation rates, by ethnic group

	Participation rate	Employment	Unemployment
Non-Racialized	64.8	60.1	7.3
Racialized			
Filipino	77.5	73.5	5.2
Latin American	72.7	66	9.1
Visible Minority (multiple)	69.1	62.5	9.5
Black	69	60.4	12.5
Visible Minority (not included elsewhere)	68.8	62.9	8.6
Southeast Asian	68.2	62.6	8.2
South Asian	67.1	61	9.2
Total Racialized	66.5	60.4	9.2
West Asian	63.1	56.1	11
Japanese	62.4	58.4	6.4
Arab	61.1	52.9	13.5
Korean	60.9	55.8	8.4
Chinese	59.4	54.7	7.9

Source: Statistics Canada. (2017b). [2016 Census of Population](#). Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016286.

Tables 2 through 9 in Appendix A provide a comprehensive picture of employment outcomes facing racialized Canadians. We summarize these here. In general, racialized minorities are disproportionately employed in the lowest-paying sectors, such as in accommodation and food services (see Tables 2 and 3). Although some are employed in relatively higher-paying sectors, including finance and insurance, as well as professional, scientific and technical services jobs (see Tables 2 and 3), they make less than their non-racialized counterparts within the same sectors, suggesting the existence of a racialized wage gap in higher-paying work. In fact, this is true across all sectors (see Table 3).

Notably, racialized individuals are also less likely to be found in management (see Table 4), which is the highest-paying occupational group, as demonstrated in Table 5. Similarly, they are paid less than their non-racialized counterparts across all occupational groups (see Table 5). Immigrants with a doctoral degree in a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) field had similar rates of employment in a STEM occupation as Canadian-born counterparts, but earned about 9 percent less

annually than Canadian-born workers with similar socio-demographic characteristics.³⁰ Further, immigrants with a STEM bachelor's degree earned 28 percent less annually than Canadian-born STEM bachelor degree holders and immigrants with an engineering degree were much less likely to be working in a STEM occupation (48 percent) than Canadian-born workers (66 percent).³¹

The Double Penalty for Racialized Women

The data shows further differences between racialized and non-racialized workers as they affect women, forming what we label a double penalty for racialized women. One part of this penalty can be seen in the fact that racialized women are over-represented in several sectors of the economy compared to their general labour-market availability.³² Many of these sectors tend to be relatively poorly compensated and include accommodation and food services, health care and social services, administrative and support, and waste management and remediation services (see Table 7, Appendix A).

Table 8 also shows that there is a double penalty on wages for racialized women in several sectors. In information and cultural industries, women earn 28 percent less (\$49,688) than men (\$69,187), while racialized women earn 35 percent less (\$44,750).³³ Non-racialized women earn \$50,668 (or 26 percent less) on average. Racialized men earn \$60,969 or 12 percent, which is still less than non-racialized men, but considerably more than racialized women and, in this case, more than non-racialized women as well.³⁴

In finance and insurance, women in general earn vastly less than men, at \$59,548 (or 48 percent less) to men's \$114,890.³⁵ Racialized women again face a double penalty trailing both white women and racialized men who earn \$61,463 and \$76,672 respectively.³⁶ While the pay gap for racialized men is highly significant, the double penalty faced by racialized women underscores the value of adopting an intersectional analytic perspective. In real estate and rental/leasing, racialized men earn an equivalent amount to white women, but much less than white men, while racialized women earn least of all. Examples from other occupational sectors are provided in Table 7.

³⁰ Statistics Canada. (2019). [Study: Immigrant skill utilization: Immigrants with STEM education and trends in over-education](#). The Daily.

³¹ Ibid.

³² There are important regional variations in these figures, with, for example, racialized individuals' share of the labour market in large metropolitan areas reaching much higher than their national total of 21 percent for racialized women and men together. Nationwide, racialized women make up 10.5 percent of the workforce versus the 38.2 percent of the workforce made up of non-racialized women.

³³ Statistics Canada. (2017). [2016 Census of Population](#). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016360.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

Generally, in occupations where racialized women are over-represented relative to their participation in the labour force, their pay has not yet reached the levels of white women or men, nor racialized men.³⁷

In sum, these figures suggest that racialized employees may not be advancing in their professions at the same rate or to the same extent as non-racialized Canadians and, further, that racialized employees earn less for achieving the same occupation levels.

There are also differences as we proceed up the management hierarchy. In management occupations, for instance, non-racialized women represent 32.1 percent of the occupation (versus their total labour market availability rate of 38.2 percent) while racialized women represent only 6.4 percent of the management workforce, despite representing 10.5 percent of the overall workforce.

Table 9 summarizes the average income for four groups: non-racialized men, non-racialized women, racialized men and racialized women. It shows that overall, while racialized men earn less than both non-racialized men and women, the penalty is highest for racialized women.

Studies of representation of women and racialized groups in senior leadership roles across sectors indicate that these problems are exacerbated as one moves up in organizations. The under-representation of racialized people in leadership roles as well as on boards, for example, has been well documented.³⁸ Further, from an intersectional perspective, racialized women fare much worse than white women and racialized men across sectors; for example, one study showed that in corporate leadership roles in the Greater Toronto Area, white women outnumber racialized women 17:1.³⁹ This under-representation of racialized women in highly paid leadership roles contributes significantly to the wage gap experienced by racialized women.^{40, 41, 42}

³⁷ Statistics Canada. (2017). [2016 Census of Population](#). Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016360.

³⁸ DiversityLeads. (2013). [Women and visible minorities in senior leadership positions: A profile of the Greater Montreal: 2012 - 2013](#). Ryerson University, Ted Rogers School of Management's Diversity Institute. See also 2014, 2015.

³⁹ DiversityLeads. (2014). [Women and visible minorities in senior leadership positions: A profile of the Greater Toronto Area \(GTA\): 2013 - 2014](#). Ryerson University, Ted Rogers School of Management's Diversity Institute.

⁴⁰ DiversityLeads. (2013). [Women and visible minorities in senior leadership positions: A profile of the Greater Montreal: 2012 - 2013](#). Ryerson University, Ted Rogers School of Management's Diversity Institute.

⁴¹ DiversityLeads. (2014). [Women and visible minorities in senior leadership positions: A profile of the Greater Toronto Area \(GTA\): 2013 - 2014](#). Ryerson University, Ted Rogers School of Management's Diversity Institute.

⁴² DiversityLeads. (2015). [Women and visible minorities in senior leadership positions: A profile of the Greater Montreal: 2015](#). Ryerson University, Ted Rogers School of Management's Diversity Institute.

LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES FOR IMMIGRANTS

Immigrants, and particularly those who are racialized, also experience different labour market outcomes correlated with country of origin, as reported in Statistics Canada data. Immigrants accounted for two thirds (66 percent) of Canada's labour force growth for the period of 2016-2017 (the most recent data available), and this proportion is projected to rise to 80 percent by 2031.⁴³ A 12-year trend analysis (2006-2017) by Statistics Canada indicates that the unemployment rate is highest for immigrants who have arrived most recently (i.e., landing in past five years) at 9.6 percent, followed by those who arrived between five to 10 years ago at 6.2 percent, while those who arrived more than 10 years ago have the lowest unemployment rate of 5.6 percent.⁴⁴ Consistent with employment data for racialized minorities,⁴⁵ immigrants from Asia, Latin America, and Africa have higher unemployment rates than native-born Canadians. The only exception are immigrants from the Philippines and those from Europe. Indeed, it is worth highlighting the fact that immigrants from Europe (4.6 percent) fare better than native-born Canadians (5.0 percent).

Chinese, Indians, and Filipinos make up 50 percent of all immigrants from Asia and collectively report a higher unemployment rate (6.2 percent) than native born Canadians (5.0 percent).⁴⁶ Immigrants from Latin America also have a higher unemployment rate at 6.4 percent. Finally, immigrants from Africa experience the highest unemployment rates of all at 11.2 percent.⁴⁷ These statistics are partly explained by the fact that many immigrants from Africa and the Middle East arrive in Canada as refugees, meaning

Chinese, Indians, and Filipinos make up 50 percent of all immigrants from Asia and collectively report a higher unemployment rate (6.2 percent) than native born Canadians (5.0 percent)



⁴³ Yssaad, L. and Fields, A. (2018). [The Canadian immigrant labour market: Recent trends from 2006 to 2017](#). Statistics Canada.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Lightman, N. and Good Gingrich, L. (2018). [Measuring economic exclusion for racialized minorities, immigrants and women in Canada: results from 2000 and 2010](#). Journal of Poverty, 22(5), 398-420.

⁴⁶ Yssaad, L. and Fields, A. (2018). [The Canadian immigrant labour market: Recent trends from 2006 to 2017](#). Statistics Canada.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

that the circumstances of their migration are likely to be much more challenging than those experienced by economic or knowledge migrants.

Immigrant workers are also distributed unevenly across the different sectors of the economy. They are overrepresented in lower-paying sectors such as accommodation and food services where they make up 35 percent of the labour force, and where the average pay is \$383 per week compared to \$976 per week across all industries. Immigrants are also overrepresented in transportation and warehousing, as well as manufacturing. Automation is expected to transform these industries, rendering these jobs more precarious than others.⁴⁸ Many immigrants are also employed in sectors that pay relatively well, such as in financial services (finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing) where they make up 34 percent of the workforce, and STEM occupations (professional, scientific, technical services), where they account for 32 percent of the labour force.

Factors impacting immigrants integration into the labour market

When immigrants first arrive in Canada, they face challenges, including getting their credentials recognized, acquiring the required official language skills to work in their desired occupation or industry and acquiring Canadian work experience.⁴⁹ One important factor moderating immigrant worker earnings is Canadian work experience. New immigrants without previous job experience earned substantially less one year after arrival than those with some form of prior exposure.⁵⁰ This factor helps to explain why the longer a new immigrant lives in Canada, the more likely they are to close the earnings gap with Canadian-born workers, though on average this gap remains.

Racialized immigrants who have been in Canada for fewer than five years are overrepresented in low paying industries such as hospitality, warehousing and manufacturing. If they remain concentrated in these sectors, they will be at risk of displacement as a result of increased automation. Recent immigrants from Arab countries, West Asia, and Africa are arguably most vulnerable, largely because they are also most likely to be found in these lower-skilled, lower-paying jobs that are primed for automation.

Exploring factors affecting employment rates, including demographics, experience, education, and employment sector, a recent survey of 6,400 skilled immigrants in Canada revealed insights into the employment pathways of new Canadians.⁵¹ Regarding country of origin, the report's findings supported those reported by Statistics Canada in 2018: Country of origin makes a difference to employment outcomes, with those from Nigeria, China, Iran, Bangladesh and Egypt reporting lower percentages of

⁴⁸ Johal, S., Urban, M. (2020). [Understanding the future of skills: Trends and global policy responses](#). Skills Next. Public Policy Forum, Diversity Institute at Ryerson University, Future Skills Centre.

⁴⁹ Statistics Canada. (2019). [Changes in outcomes of immigrants and non-permanent residents, 2017](#). The Daily

⁵⁰ Ibid.

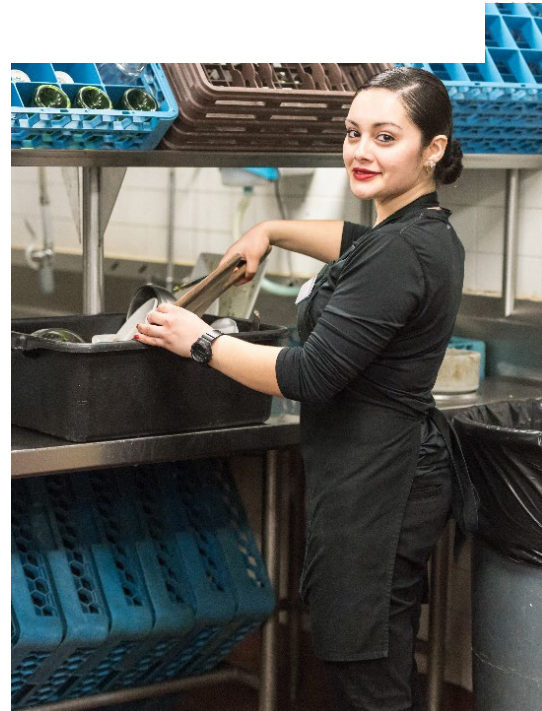
⁵¹ World Education Services (WES). (2019). [Who is succeeding in the Canadian labour market?](#)

employment than arrivals from the Philippines and Brazil, which were highest in this survey. There is clearly a complex relationship between country of origin and outcomes, requiring further analysis.

Some initial conclusions point to the relevance of pre-immigration occupational sector for predicting experience within the Canadian workforce. For example, immigrants from professional, management and education sectors all showed a downward shift post-immigration, and these were sectors representing high proportions of immigrants from China, Iran, Egypt and Bangladesh. A higher proportion of Brazilian respondents worked in IT post-migration (32 percent), a high-growth sector, than pre-migration (23 percent). However, while proportions of arrivals from other countries working in this sector remained relatively unchanged pre- and post-migration, the proportion from Nigeria in IT dropped post-migration, adding to the overall unfavourable outcomes for immigrants from Nigeria.

Using the Canadian Labour Force Survey from 2006 to 2012, Parvinder Hira-Friesen suggests that a Census Metropolitan Area's (CMA) characteristics, such as median hourly wages and the proportion of immigrants, plays a role in determining the permanency of immigrant men's employment, as well as the number of jobs they hold. For every dollar increase in the average wage of a CMA, recent immigrant men are on average 28 percent more likely to report holding multiple jobs.⁵²

Recent female immigrants (living in Canada for five years or less) are three times more likely to obtain paid part-time work and two-and-a-half times more likely to obtain temporary work than non-immigrant women.



⁵² Hira-Friesen, P. (2017). [The effect of labour market characteristics on Canadian immigrant employment in precarious work](#), 2006-2012. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 26(1), 1-15.

In contrast, established female immigrants are less likely to hold multiple jobs, but are more likely to be unemployed. As the proportion of immigrants in a CMA increases by one percentage point, the odds of an immigrant man being employed in a temporary job increase by a factor of 0.98. The effect is smaller for established immigrants, and even smaller for immigrants who reside in Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver. The authors suggest that the accumulation of social capital increases with more immigrants residing in these CMAs, with the result that immigrants can benefit from the help of established immigrant communities and existing social programs.⁵³

Recent female immigrants (living in Canada for five years or less) are three times more likely to obtain paid part-time work and two-and-a-half times more likely to obtain temporary work than non-immigrant women.⁵⁴ Notably, the effect is smaller for female immigrants who have resided in Canada for more than five years. Hira-Friesen also suggests that the lack of foreign credential recognition plays a critical role in determining the economic success of immigrants who are highly educated and have foreign work experience.⁵⁵ The recent World Education Services (WES) study (2019) corroborates these findings; in a large survey of 6,400 immigrants arriving in Canada in the past five years, it found that men were 1.6 times more likely to be employed than women.⁵⁶

In sum, most studies demonstrate that newcomers continue to fare worse when competing in the labour market than their Canadian-born counterparts, and this may in fact be worsening.^{57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62} Craig Alexander, Derek Burleton and Francis Fong found that recent immigrants' labour market outcomes have worsened in recent years when compared to the Canadian-born population.⁶³ This gap is magnified for immigrants with foreign credentials. Immigrants who arrived in Canada between 2000 and 2004 earned 61 cents on the dollar compared to their Canadian-born counterparts, with many unable to close this gap

⁵³ Hira-Friesen, P. (2017). [The effect of labour market characteristics on Canadian immigrant employment in precarious work](#), 2006-2012. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 26(1), 1-15.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ World Education Services (WES). (2019). [Who is succeeding in the Canadian labour market?](#)

⁵⁷ Aydemir, A. and Skuterud, M. (2005). [Explaining the deteriorating entry earnings of Canada's immigrant cohorts, 1966-2000](#). *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue Canadienne d'Economique*, 38(2), 641-672.

⁵⁸ Banerjee, R., Reitz, J. and Oreopoulos, P. (2018). [Do large employers treat racial minorities more fairly? An analysis of Canadian field experiment data](#). *Canadian Public Policy*, 44(1), 1-12.

⁵⁹ Bollman, R. (2016). [Immigrant medium earnings by year of landing](#). Pathways to Prosperity Canada.

⁶⁰ Oreopoulos, P. (2011). [13,000 resumés](#). *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 3(4), 148-71.

⁶¹ Truong, N. and Sweetman, A. (2018). [Basic information and communication technology skills among Canadian immigrants and non-immigrants](#). *Canadian Public Policy*, 44(S1), S91-S112.

⁶² Warman, C., Webb, M. and Worswick, C. (2019). [Immigrant category of admission and the earnings of adults and children: how far does the apple fall?](#) *Journal of Population Economics*, 32(1), 53-112.

⁶³ Alexander, C., Burleton, D. and Fong, F. (2012). [Knocking down barriers faced by new immigrants to Canada: Fitting the pieces together](#). TD Economics.

in their lifetime.⁶⁴ In contrast, a male immigrant who arrived in the 1970s would have earned 85 cents for every dollar earned by a Canadian-born worker within the first five years of landing, and they could close this gap to 98 cents within 25 years.⁶⁵

Consistent with the figures for unemployment, the wage gap for more recent immigrants (less than five years) is highest, with immigrants earning 70 percent of what the general population earns. More established immigrants are able to close the gap, earning 96 percent of what Canadian-born workers make. The gaps are highest in manufacturing (23 percent), and range between 10-15 percent for education, law, and the trades.⁶⁶

Finally, underemployment is an important negative labour-market outcome indicator for immigrants, with evidence showing that this is particularly acute among racialized minorities. Underemployment often occurs when there is a skills mismatch, where a worker has more advanced skills than required to perform a job.^{67, 68} Some research suggests that in Canada, many employers are looking for less skilled workers, and the policy emphasis on skilled and experienced immigrants itself has resulted in the underutilization of skills for highly educated immigrants. Lucia Lo, Wei Li and Wan Yu argue that this may partially explain the higher underemployment rate among immigrants from China and India, as they tend to possess higher levels of education.⁶⁹ The problem of underemployment is further considered in the next section.

⁶⁴ Alexander, C., Burleton, D. and Fong, F. (2012). [Knocking down barriers faced by new immigrants to Canada: Fitting the pieces together](#). TD Economics.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Agopsowicz, A. and Billy-Ochieng, R. (2019). [Untapped potential: Canada needs to close its immigrant wage gap](#). RBC Economics. Canada: Royal Bank of Canada.

⁶⁷ Mahboubi, P. (2019). [Why Canada's skills mismatch is cause for concern](#). The Globe and Mail.

⁶⁸ Braham, E., Tobin, S. (2020). [Solving the skills puzzle: The missing piece is good information](#). Skills Next. Public Policy Forum, Diversity Institute at Ryerson University, Future Skills Centre.

⁶⁹ Lo, L., Li, W. and Yu, W. (2019). [Highly skilled migration from China and India to Canada and the United States](#). International Migration, 57(3), 317-333.

EXPLAINING THE GAPS

It seems clear that there are a number of factors that contribute to the labour-market challenges faced by immigrants and racialized minorities, with race and gender often playing important intersecting roles.⁷⁰ Further examination is needed to understand the functioning and impact of these barriers and, in particular, how they can be overcome.

Obstacles to integration into the workforce

The devaluation of foreign credentials is one of the most widely cited factors negatively influencing labour market outcomes for immigrants.^{71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78} The recent World Education Services survey underlines the importance of this challenge. In this survey, employers not accepting immigrants' qualifications and experience, and international education not being recognized were identified as two of the biggest challenges faced by immigrants with 30.8 percent and 25.2 percent of respondents highlighting their impact respectively.⁷⁹

Internationally trained individuals (ITIs) whose skills are highly valued in the immigration point system face many specific challenges in obtaining work in their fields once in Canada, particularly in regulated

⁷⁰ Ng, R. (2002). [Freedom for whom? Globalization and trade from the standpoint of garment workers](#). *Canadian Woman Studies*, 21(4), 74-81.

⁷¹ Yssaad, L. and Fields, A. (2018). [The Canadian immigrant labour market: Recent trends from 2006 to 2017](#). Statistics Canada.

⁷² Teelucksingh, C. and Galabuzi, G. (2005). [The impact of race and immigrant status on employment opportunities and outcomes in Canada](#). The Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

⁷³ Creese, G. and Wiebe, B. (2012). [‘Survival employment’: gender and deskilling among African immigrants in Canada](#). *International Migration*, 50(5), 56-76.

⁷⁴ Walton-Roberts, M. (2011). [Immigration, the university and the welcoming second-tier city](#). *Journal of international migration and integration*, 12(4), 453-473.

⁷⁵ Banerjee, R. and Verma, A. (2009). [Determinants and effects of post-migration education among new immigrants in Canada](#). Canadian Labour Market and Skills Researcher Network.

⁷⁶ Clarke, A. and Skuterud, M. (2013). [Why do immigrant workers in Australia perform better than those in Canada? Is it the immigrants or their labour markets?](#) *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue Canadienne d'Economie*, 46(4), 1431-1462.

⁷⁷ Frank, K. and Hou, F. (2017). [Over-education and life satisfaction among immigrant and non-immigrant workers in Canada](#). Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series, Catalogue no. 11F0019M – No. 393. Statistics Canada.

⁷⁸ Yssaad, L. and Fields, A. (2018). [The Canadian immigrant labour market: Recent trends from 2006 to 2017](#). Statistics Canada.

⁷⁹ A lack of professional connections was the top barrier according to the survey with 48.5 percent respondents identifying it as an obstacle to integration into the labour market. See World Education Services. (2019). [Who is succeeding in the Canadian labour market?](#), 5.

professions.^{80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87} For example, in spite of the focus that is placed on highly skilled workers and the ongoing complaints by employers about the lack of access to technical skills, recent studies show that 44 percent for internationally trained engineers living in Ontario are not working as engineers. The situation is even worse for women: 50 percent for internationally trained female engineers in Canada are not even employed.⁸⁸

Some of the specific obstacles these individuals face include:



high financial costs of skills upgrading and lengthy credential-recognition processes;



challenges with navigating the labour market and obtaining accurate labour-market information;



barriers to obtaining Canadian work experience;



a lack of a professional network; and



employer discrimination, bias and lack of bridging programs.

⁸⁰ Shields, J., et al. (2010). [Do immigrant class and gender affect labour-market outcomes for immigrants?](#) TIEDI Analytical Report 2. Toronto Immigrant Employment Data Initiative (TIEDI).

⁸¹ Hathiyani, A. (2017). [A bridge to where? An analysis of the effectiveness of the bridging programs for internationally trained professionals in Toronto.](#) Doctoral dissertation.

⁸² Sattler, P., et al. (2015). [Multiple case study evaluation of post-secondary bridging programs for internationally educated health professionals.](#) Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO).

⁸³ Reitz, J., Curtis, J. and Elrick, J. (2014). [Immigrant skill utilization: Trends and policy issues.](#) Journal of International Migration and Integration, 15(1), 1–26.

⁸⁴ Chaze, F. and George, U. (2013). [The interlocking oppressions of employment-related discrimination for internationally trained engineers in Canada.](#) Canadian Social Work Review, 30(2), 119–137.

⁸⁵ Sweetman, A. and Warman, C. (2014). [Former temporary foreign workers and international students as sources of permanent immigration.](#) Canadian Public Policy, 40(4), 392–407.

⁸⁶ Warman, C., Sweetman, A. and Goldmann, G. (2015). [The portability of new immigrants' human capital: language, education and occupational skills.](#) Canadian Public Policy, 41(Supplement 1), S64–S79.

⁸⁷ Aydemir, A. and Skuterud, M. 2005. [Explaining the deteriorating entry earnings of Canada's immigrant cohorts, 1966–2000.](#) Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue Canadienne d'Economique, 38(2), pp. 641–672.

⁸⁸ Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. 2015. [Crisis in Ontario's Engineering Labour Market: Underemployment Among Ontario's Engineering-Degree Holders.](#) Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. p. 12 and 2.

In some cases, ITIs are able to pass their examinations, but are unable to secure the clinical or work placements required for certification, particularly in the face of competition from Canadian-trained professionals.⁸⁹ While governments have launched various initiatives to address challenges for ITIs, including credential-assessment services, bridging training programs and regulations designed to ensure fair access to licensing,⁹⁰ the current economic outcomes suggest the need for stronger evaluation and improvement of such initiatives and programs.⁹¹

Indeed, Ontario’s auditor general concluded, for example, that many of the programs aimed at providing access to employment for newcomers fail to deliver these outcomes, and found that many of the programs aimed at developing language skills do not produce results.⁹²

Although a systematic and current mapping of all the service providers in the settlement sector—or adequate knowledge about their contributions to service provision—is not available,⁹³ we have reviewed the literature to identify stakeholder categories of organizations providing employment-related and entrepreneurship supports. These categories are a first step in understanding the diversity of key players, types of services offered (within employment-related services), as well as their funding models. Tables 10 (Stakeholder Categories—Organizations providing employment-related and entrepreneurship supports), and 11 (Mapping employment-related and entrepreneurial supports—Program types) in Appendix B summarize our findings.

Unfortunately, duplication of efforts, a lack of sharing across jurisdictions or sectors, and the slow adoption of new approaches all characterize this sector. For example, Wendy Cukier and collaborators showed that immigrants, particularly those interested in entrepreneurship, encounter a fragmented and unspecialized service-delivery environment.⁹⁴ There is also a lack of consistent assessment of services, where many “promising” practices that claim to be particularly effective in achieving their stated aims are often measured and justified as successful based only on self-reported evaluations from agencies in the sector and without clarity about the comparators or analysis of factors differentiating high and low

⁸⁹ Sattler, P., et al. (2015). [Multiple case study evaluation of post-secondary bridging programs for internationally educated health professionals](#). Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO).

⁹⁰ Reitz, J., Curtis, J. and Elrick, J. (2014). [Immigrant skill utilization: Trends and policy issues](#). Journal of International Migration and Integration, 15(1), 1-26.

⁹¹ Drolet, J., et al. (2014). [The role of employers in bridging newcomers' absorption and integration in the Canadian labour market: A knowledge synthesis project](#). Pathways to Prosperity Canada.

⁹² The Auditor General of Ontario. (2017). [Annual Report 2017](#): Section 3.13: Settlement and integration services for newcomers. The Government of Ontario.

⁹³ The Workforce Innovation and Inclusion Project based at Ryerson University’s Diversity Institute aims to create such a mapping of service providers delivering employment-related services and entrepreneurship supports.

⁹⁴ Cukier, W., et al. (2017). [Trade-offs and disappearing acts: shifting societal discourses of diversity in Canada over three decades](#). The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28(7), 1031-1064.

performers.⁹⁵ Recent literature and sector reports show that there is a great need for improvement to enhance settlement service delivery and provision across sectors and nationally to ensure settlement services are efficient, sustainable and relevant, and that assessment of major national and provincial settlement services is consistent.^{96, 97}

Employer Engagement

Employers have a key role to play in actively seeking out and employing individuals from the immigrant talent pool. Yet, despite the need for employers to tap into this pool, there is little evidence of employer engagement in the provision of services related to immigrant settlement. The lack of evidence suggests an underinvestment by organizations in immigrant labour market integration.⁹⁸ As the authors of an important report on bridging newcomers into the Canadian labour market state, there is:

“a lack of evidence of employer engagement in the provision of settlement services, notwithstanding the substantial employer stake in hiring and optimizing immigrant workers. This suggests underinvestment by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and larger companies in incorporating immigrants into the labour market. Employer involvement in settlement has not been extensively or systematically studied, and there has been no attempt to carefully analyze and disseminate best practices in this field.”⁹⁹

Immigration policies such as the point system need to better reflect the labour market realities in Canada. There is also a need for improved co-operation between agencies and organizations to facilitate effective integration, including employer-led initiatives.¹⁰⁰ These should incorporate a focus on addressing barriers such as bias and discrimination.

At a policy level, Julie Drolet and colleagues identify several key initiatives that are helpful. Several of these can involve a clear role for employers who wish to be progressive and, ultimately, competitive in ensuring a strong labour force. These include: the development of clear retraining paths for skilled immigrants to obtain Canadian-equivalent qualifications; offering experience through internships and

⁹⁵ Burstein, M. and Esses, V. (2012). [Study of innovative and promising practices within the immigrant settlement sector](#). Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance (CISSA).

⁹⁶ Mukhtar, M., et al. (2016). [“But many of these problems are about funds...”: The challenges immigrant settlement agencies \(ISAs\) encounter in a suburban setting in Ontario, Canada](#). Journal of International Migration and Integration, Volume 17, 389–408.

⁹⁷ Neudorf, E. (2016). [Key informant perspectives on the Government of Canada’s modernized approach to immigrant settlement](#). Canadian Ethnic Studies 48(3) 91-107.

⁹⁸ Drolet, J., et al. (2014). [The role of employers in bridging newcomers’ absorption and integration in the Canadian labour market: A knowledge synthesis project](#). Pathways to Prosperity Canada.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

work-integrated learning; providing occupation-specific language training; developing retraining programs for immigrants in non-regulated professions; and, ensuring that opportunities are accessible to women with children, who often arrive as family-class immigrants or refugees.

The onus is on policymakers and employers, and not on skilled immigrant workers, to facilitate a skills and occupational match between ITIs and Canadian jobs. Laying the responsibility on skilled immigrant workers to adapt and change to Canada's needs hurts not only these individuals, but the Canadian economy and perpetuates a false narrative about immigrant employment success or failure being primarily contingent upon the efforts of individuals.

Entrepreneurship as a Chosen Newcomer Pathway

In examining labour-market participation for immigrants and racialized Canadians, research shows that immigrants have a greater and growing propensity towards choosing entrepreneurship as a path to prosperity, in effect creating their own job as well as employment for others.^{101, 102, 103}

In Ontario, 34.7 percent of all start-ups are launched by first-generation immigrants.¹⁰⁴ Some are “necessity-based,” meaning the newcomers behind these businesses have been excluded from the parts of the labour market in which they were accustomed to working in their home countries.¹⁰⁵ David Green, Huju Liu, Yuri Ostrovsky and Garnett Picot state that immigrant business ownership levels are low initially, but that they surpass those of the Canadian-born after four to eight years in Canada.¹⁰⁶ Using the Canadian Employer-Employee Dynamics Database (CEED), Loretta Fung, Douwre Grekou and Huju Liu found that businesses owned by immigrants have a higher likelihood of importing from (6.7 percent), and exporting to (2.1 percent), their countries of origins in the manufacturing sector.¹⁰⁷ As a result, firms that import or export and that are owned by immigrants possess stronger trade links with their regions of origin than those owned by the Canadian-born individuals.

Feng Hou and Shunji Wang suggest that many newcomers choose entrepreneurship because they see it as a desirable and flexible career path.¹⁰⁸ In particular, highly skilled immigrants use their education and

¹⁰¹ Aldrich, H. E. and Waldinger, R. (1990). [Ethnicity and entrepreneurship](#). Annual Review of Sociology, 16(1), 111-135.

¹⁰² MacCrimmon, K. and Wehrung, D. (1990). [Characteristics of risk-taking executives](#). Management Science, 36(4), 422-435.

¹⁰³ Dheer, R. (2018). [Entrepreneurship by immigrants: a review of existing literature and directions for future research](#). International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal, 14(3), 555-614.

¹⁰⁴ Davis, C. H., et al. (2013). [Driving wealth creation & social development in Ontario](#). Global Entrepreneurship Monitor.

¹⁰⁵ Bauder, H. (2003). [“Brain abuse.” or the devaluation of immigrant labour in Canada](#). Antipode, 35, 699-717.

¹⁰⁶ Green, D., et al. (2016). [Business ownership and employment in immigrant-owned firms in Canada](#). Economic Insights, catalogue no. 11-626-X – No. 057. Statistics Canada.

¹⁰⁷ Fung, L., Grekou, D. and Liu, H. (2019). [The impact of immigrant business ownership on international trade](#). Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series, Catalogue no. 11F0019M – No. 393. Statistics Canada.

¹⁰⁸ Hou, F., and Wang, S. (2011). [Immigrants in self-employment](#). Perspectives on Labour and Income, 23(3), 3-14.

experience, as well as transnational ties, to start firms in professional services and creative and technological fields, often voluntarily leaving jobs to take advantage of new venture opportunities.¹⁰⁹ In addition, immigrants are also more likely to pursue ventures based on radical innovations, with a high emphasis on research and development.¹¹⁰

The entrepreneurial path is no less challenging for immigrants than for any other entrepreneur. Moreover, immigrant entrepreneurs face additional barriers and lack many of the supports and tools available to Canadian-born entrepreneurs, despite possessing, in general, better than-average credentials, stronger entrepreneurial intent and entrepreneurial aptitude, and greater global knowledge and social networks.^{111,112} These challenges include institutional barriers, discrimination, as well as knowledge and skill gaps—all of which are crucial to developing a business.^{113, 114, 115, 116}

Despite the existence of various organizations that provide entrepreneurship support to immigrants, many immigrant entrepreneurs lack awareness of these services.¹¹⁷ A 2017 Report on Immigrant Entrepreneurship found that 78 percent of immigrant entrepreneurs reported that they needed help starting their business, but less than 10 percent of the same group accessed formal support, such as settlement services, business organizations or municipal entrepreneurship programs.¹¹⁸

¹⁰⁹ Dheer, R. (2018). [Entrepreneurship by immigrants: a review of existing literature and directions for future research](#). *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 14(3), 555-614.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Wayland, S. V. (2011). [Immigrant self-employment and entrepreneurship in the GTA: Literature, data and program review](#). Maytree and Metcalf Foundation.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Cukier, W., Gagnon, S., Roach, E., Elmi, M., Yap, M. and Rodrigues, S. 2017. [Trade-offs and disappearing acts: shifting societal discourses of diversity in Canada over three decades](#). *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 28(7), pp. 1031-1064

¹¹⁴ Ley, D. (2006). [Explaining variations in business performance among immigrant entrepreneurs in Canada](#). *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32(5), 743-764.

¹¹⁵ Sim, D. (2015). *Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Canada: A scan of the experience of Canadian immigrant entrepreneurs and policy and programs for encouraging immigrant business*. Global Diversity Exchange.

¹¹⁶ Schlosser, F. (2012). [Taking an active approach in entrepreneurial mentoring programs geared towards immigrants](#). *The Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 21(2), 201-221.

¹¹⁷ Lo, L. and Teixeira, C. (2015). [Immigrants doing business in a mid-sized Canadian city: Challenges, opportunities, and local strategies in Kelowna, British Columbia](#). *Growth and Change*, 46(4), 631-653

¹¹⁸ Diversity Institute. (2017). [Immigrant entrepreneurship: barriers and facilitators to growth](#). Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University.



CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Racialized Canadians and immigrants continue to experience significantly poorer labour market outcomes than Canadian-born workers and entrepreneurs. Immigrants, particularly those who have arrived recently (landing in first five years), experience significant underemployment and underutilization of their skills, and women are doubly disadvantaged. These are systems-level problems requiring systems-level solutions.

The research suggests that more work is needed to:

- Disaggregate data to better understand the experience of different populations encompassed within the categories of “visible minority” or “immigrant,” and to examine the impact of ethnicity, language, education levels, sector, occupation etc.
- Ensure that a dual perspective is retained that recognizes that we need to do more than “fix” the job seekers but rather we also need to recognize the impact of bias, discrimination, and systemic barriers in the employment system.

- Better understand who does what in terms of targeted language training, bridging, and other occupational programs and to develop more comprehensive evaluations of what works for whom.
- Examine how policies impact opportunities both in terms of the selection of immigrants, settlement support and training programs, ensuring that employers' needs and labour market information are considered.
- Continue to work on more objective assessments of skills required and skills possessed, and to apply an asset-based approach to identifying gaps.
- Examine ways to promote innovative employer practices to recruit, advance, and create inclusive environments for racialized people and immigrants.

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APPENDIX A

Tables 2 through 9

Table 2: Shares of employment by racialized and non-racialized groups, across industries

Industry	Racialized (percent)	Non- Racialized (percent)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	7.2	92.8
Accommodation and food services	30.1	69.9
Finance and insurance	29.0	71.0
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	25.8	74.2
Transportation and warehousing	24.6	75.4
Professional, scientific and technical services	24.1	75.9
Manufacturing	23.4	76.6
Real estate and rental and leasing	23.0	77.0
Information and cultural industries	22.5	77.5
Retail trade	21.9	78.1
Health care and social assistance	21.7	78.3
Wholesale trade	21.6	78.4
Other services (except public administration)	21.3	78.7
Management of companies and enterprises	21.3	78.7
Educational services	15.7	84.3
Arts, entertainment and recreation	14.3	85.7
Utilities	13.0	87.0
Public administration	12.9	87.1
Construction	11.3	88.7
Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	9.9	90.1
Share in the workforce	20.8	79.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016360

Table 3: Average incomes of racialized and non-racialized individuals, across industry

Industry	Racialized (\$)	Non- Racialized (\$)
Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	111,921	114,990
Utilities	88,360	96,347
Management of companies and enterprises	82,364	120,663
Finance and insurance	64,387	89,277
Public administration	60,800	64,876
Professional, scientific and technical services	55,735	68,090
Information and cultural industries	54,581	62,644
Wholesale trade	49,512	68,999
Health care and social assistance	47,744	48,449
Manufacturing	45,775	59,912
Real estate and rental and leasing	42,240	56,152
Construction	40,595	52,768
Educational services	39,138	52,182
Transportation and warehousing	38,088	53,572
Other services (except public administration)	28,339	36,499
Retail trade	27,873	32,759
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	26,698	33,307
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	25,930	31,477
Arts, entertainment and recreation	24,351	27,374
Accommodation and food services	20,718	19,722
Average income across all industries	41,504	51,527

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016360

Table 4: Shares of racialized and non-racialized groups, across occupations

National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016	Racialized (percent)	Non- Racialized (percent)
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	29.3	70.7
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	27.5	72.5
Sales and service occupations	25.3	74.7
Health occupations	24.3	75.7
Business, finance and administration occupations	20.5	79.5
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	17.5	82.5
Management occupations	16.4	83.6
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	15.5	84.5
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	15.0	85.0
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	8.6	91.4
Total shares	20.8	79.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016356

Table 5: Average incomes of racialized and non-racialized individuals, across occupations

National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016	Racialized (\$)	Non-Racialized (\$)
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	68,835	75,083
Management occupations	64,512	88,284
Health occupations	56,808	57,787
Business, finance and administration occupations	45,543	51,740
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	40,828	56,915
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	38,071	50,067
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	35,480	48,744
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	27,309	39,292
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	26,864	31,525
Sales and service occupations	24,165	27,368
Average income in all occupations	41,504	51,527

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016356.

Table 6: Shares of racialized and non-racialized groups across industries, by gender

Industry	Women			Men		
	Racialized (percent)	Non- Racialized (percent)	All (percent)	Racialized (percent)	Non- Racialized (percent)	All (percent)
Health care and social assistance	17.1	65.4	82.5	4.6	12.9	17.5
Accommodation and food services	16.2	42.8	59.0	14.0	27.0	41.0
Finance and insurance	16.0	43.4	59.3	13.1	27.6	40.7
Other services (except public administration)	12.7	41.8	54.5	8.5	37.0	45.5
Retail trade	11.6	42.5	54.1	10.3	35.6	45.9
Management of companies and enterprises	11.5	44.9	56.3	9.8	33.8	43.7
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	11.4	31.3	42.7	14.4	42.9	57.3
Professional, scientific and technical services	10.1	35.3	45.4	14.0	40.6	54.6
Real estate and rental and leasing	10.0	35.5	45.5	13.0	41.6	54.5
Educational services	9.9	58.8	68.7	5.8	25.5	31.3
Information and cultural industries	8.9	34.0	42.8	13.7	43.5	57.2
Wholesale trade	8.0	24.5	32.5	13.5	54.0	67.5
Manufacturing	7.9	20.2	28.1	15.5	56.4	71.9
Arts, entertainment and recreation	6.9	42.6	49.5	7.4	43.1	50.5
Public administration	6.5	41.6	48.1	6.4	45.5	51.9
Transportation and warehousing	5.5	20.0	25.5	19.1	55.4	74.5
Utilities	4.1	22.5	26.6	8.8	64.5	73.4
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	3.2	26.5	29.7	4.0	66.3	70.3
Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	2.7	16.4	19.2	7.2	73.6	80.8
Construction	1.5	11.1	12.6	9.8	77.6	87.4
Share in the workforce	10.2	38.2	48.3	10.6	41.1	51.7

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016360.

Table 7: Average incomes of racialized and non-racialized groups across industries, by gender

Industry	Women			Men		
	Racialized (\$)	Non-Racialized (\$)	All (\$)	Racialized (\$)	Non-Racialized (\$)	All (\$)
Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	90,516	89,591	<i>89,723</i>	120,079	120,661	<i>120,609</i>
Utilities	75,338	78,863	<i>78,319</i>	94,411	102,442	<i>101,474</i>
Management of companies and enterprises	67,420	78,061	<i>75,897</i>	99,807	177,122	<i>159,747</i>
Public administration	54,623	57,075	<i>56,744</i>	67,072	72,010	<i>71,402</i>
Finance and insurance	54,355	61,463	<i>59,548</i>	76,672	132,960	<i>114,890</i>
Professional, scientific and technical services	44,842	50,015	<i>48,867</i>	63,561	83,826	<i>78,619</i>
Information and cultural industries	44,750	50,953	<i>49,668</i>	60,969	71,766	<i>69,187</i>
Health care and social assistance	42,950	44,267	<i>43,994</i>	65,604	69,579	<i>68,538</i>
Wholesale trade	41,590	54,117	<i>51,024</i>	54,214	75,753	<i>71,435</i>
Real estate and rental and leasing	38,695	44,234	<i>43,017</i>	44,973	66,321	<i>61,247</i>
Transportation and warehousing	37,301	43,166	<i>41,912</i>	38,312	57,339	<i>52,454</i>
Construction	37,041	41,816	<i>41,231</i>	41,157	54,333	<i>52,855</i>
Manufacturing	35,990	44,570	<i>42,162</i>	50,751	65,406	<i>62,248</i>
Educational services	35,666	48,436	<i>46,601</i>	45,032	60,836	<i>57,899</i>
Other services (except public administration)	24,254	28,478	<i>27,491</i>	34,444	45,558	<i>43,475</i>
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	23,939	27,857	<i>26,808</i>	28,893	37,287	<i>35,179</i>
Retail trade	23,612	25,733	<i>25,280</i>	32,663	41,145	<i>39,244</i>
Arts, entertainment and recreation	21,087	22,981	<i>22,717</i>	27,416	31,719	<i>31,091</i>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	20,693	22,334	<i>22,155</i>	30,197	35,131	<i>34,851</i>
Accommodation and food services	18,788	17,438	<i>17,808</i>	22,949	23,341	<i>23,208</i>
Average incomes in all industries	35,652	40,930	<i>39,820</i>	47,118	61,375	<i>58,452</i>

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016360.

Table 8: Shares of racialized and non-racialized individuals across occupations, by gender

National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016	Women			Men		
	Racialized (percent)	Non-Racialized (percent)	All (percent)	Racialized (percent)	Non-Racialized (percent)	All (percent)
Health occupations	18.4	62.7	81.0	6.0	13.0	19.0
Sales and service occupations	13.8	43.4	57.2	11.5	31.3	42.8
Business, finance and administration occupations	13.1	57.5	70.6	7.4	22.1	29.4
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	12.3	56.2	68.5	5.2	26.3	31.5
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	11.7	17.7	29.4	17.6	52.9	70.6
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	8.0	46.9	54.9	7.5	37.6	45.1
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	6.5	15.9	22.4	21.0	56.6	77.6
Management occupations	6.4	32.1	38.5	10.0	51.5	61.5
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	2.8	17.3	20.1	5.8	74.1	79.9
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	1.1	5.2	6.3	13.9	79.8	93.7
Average income in all occupations	10.2	38.2	48.3	10.6	41.1	51.7

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016356.

Table 9: Average incomes of racialized and non-racialized individuals across occupations, by gender

National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016	Women			Men		
	Racialized (\$)	Non-Racialized (\$)	All (\$)	Racialized (\$)	Non-Racialized (\$)	All (\$)
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	60,545	61,553	61,262	71,391	78,896	76,864
Management occupations	56,366	67,413	65,578	69,709	101,283	96,143
Health occupations	50,810	51,719	51,513	75,320	87,044	83,359
Business, finance and administration occupations	41,517	44,102	43,622	52,704	71,637	66,892
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	35,220	47,460	45,263	54,046	77,089	73,279
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	27,970	34,038	33,006	38,844	51,110	49,291
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	27,873	32,892	30,897	40,530	54,059	50,678
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	23,814	26,687	26,268	30,093	37,559	36,310
Sales and service occupations	21,436	22,388	22,159	27,445	34,285	32,449
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	18,752	19,985	19,811	31,510	43,795	42,907
Average income in all occupations	35,652	40,930	39,820	47,118	61,375	58,452

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016356.

APPENDIX B

Tables 10 through 11

Table 10

Stakeholder categories - Organizations providing employment-related and entrepreneurship supports

Service-provider category	Description	Relevant Services Offered	Funders and Sponsors	Example Organizations
Government	<p>Federally <u>administered</u> programs (mainly Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada) and Provincial Programs</p> <p><i>Differs from Federal funding: IRCC funds many of the categories below</i></p> <p>Government-funded and -led programs, strategies</p>	<p>Express Entry programs (Startup Visa, High-Skilled Class);</p> <p>Atlantic Immigration Pilot;</p> <p>Provincial Nominee Programs;</p> <p>Local Immigration Partnerships;</p> <p>Provincial Employment Centres</p>	In progress	<p>Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; Employment and Social Development Canada; Employment Ontario</p> <p>See the Global Skills Strategy.</p>
Settlement Service Organizations; including ethno-specific organizations	<p>Primary mandate is serving newcomer settlement needs, often providing multiple services such as Orientation and Referral, Language Training and Employment Support</p>	<p>Common offerings around employment include:</p> <p>Career planning, job search and placement, language training (including for internationally trained individuals), employer services, pre-arrival, mentorship</p>	<p>Primarily government, including IRCC, province (Employment Ontario, ministry of citizenship and immigration, etc.) and municipalities.</p> <p>Foundations (primarily Trillium, United Way) and some private funders</p>	<p>Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) (umbrella org); COSTI Immigrant Services; Canadian Ukrainian Immigrant Aid Society; Jewish Immigrant Aid Services; Al-Qazzaz Foundation for Education & Development; Centre for Immigrant and Community Services</p>

“Community services”	Multiservice organizations serving general, “mainstream” community, including employment support, and extend services to immigrants (includes charities, municipal services)	Career mentoring, networking, English-language training; entrepreneurship training/support; workplace orientation; English classes; job training, skills development, work opportunities and other community supports	Government departments, foundations, charities (e.g. Employment Ontario, Trillium) Some fee-for-service and private donations	Woodgreen Community Services; Scadding Court; YMCA; Toronto Public Library; Toronto Arts Council; Centre for Skills Development; Human Endeavour, ComIT; KEYS Job Centre; Job Skills; ACCES Employment; Career Edge; Skills for Change
Incubators and Enterprise Support Organizations	Non-profit organizations offering small loans to startups, who also offer training, mentorship, or other business support	Entrepreneurship training and funding for startups (often focused on low-income groups); many with streams catered to immigrants	Funded by provincial, federal governments, private funders (CIBC, Alterna, etc.), and foundations (Metcalf)	ACCESS Community Capital Fund; MaRS; Futurpreneur Canada; Windmill Microlending; BDC
Employers/ Private-Sector Initiatives for Newcomers	Initiatives and pilot programs to increase immigrant employment in organizations	Primarily employer practices and policies related to inclusive training and hiring (Enbridge ; RBC)	In progress	RBC, Enbridge, Scotiabank, B.C. Hydro, KPMG, Providence Healthcare, etc.
Employer Support Organizations and Councils	While many settlement organizations have offerings for employers, there are organizations geared exclusively to employers to support them in hiring immigrant workers. Immigrant employment councils also offer support in this area.	Employer training and connections/networking with immigrant talent (BC Job Connect ; TRIEC mentoring partnership); and direct support to immigrants (information, training)	Federal and provincial governments, foundations (Trillium, Maytree), private-sector sponsors (Scotiabank, RBC, Manulife)	Hire Immigrants; Canada-Ontario Job Grants (funding for training employees); TRIEC; IEC-BC
Research and educational institutions	Research and action-research initiatives by universities, councils and advocacy organizations	Immigrant employment and settlement sector reports and programs	Various funders/sponsors and partnerships including federal and provincial governments and organizations in the sector	Pathways to Prosperity , Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance, York University, Ryerson University’s Diversity Institute

In the area of employment, a scan of the literature and reports of services provided by key players in Ontario, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, showed the following common programs:

Table 11

**Table in alphabetical order*

Mapping employment-related and entrepreneurial supports – Program types

Main program types/ training or services offered for newcomers	Description	Example program	Types of Organizations Typically Administering this Service
Alternate Credential Assessment	Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council, Intact Financial Corporation and World Education Services (WES) are piloting an alternative credential assessment project for refugees to have their qualifications recognized in Canada without traditionally required documents (unique program)	WES Gateway Program [in collaboration with] TRIEC Alterante Credential Assessment	Community Services (in collaboration with educational institutions, credentialing bodies)
Career Mentoring	Matches immigrants, usually skilled immigrants or entrepreneurs with professionals in their field	TRIEC mentoring program matches internationally trained professionals with mentors of similar professional backgrounds	Various
Employer support	Trains employers on diversity issues, or connects employers with immigrant talent through various formats (job-matching, mentorship connection)	IECBC's B.C. JobConnect tool (online tool connecting job-ready newcomers to B.C. employers)	Employer support organizations, councils and others
Expedited Credential Attainment	Bridging Programs and other courses offered to those with international credentials	Various bridging programs listed by ISANS (engineering, finance, nursing, dentists, trades) and Bridge to Work program	Research and Educational Institutions
Information and referral	Offers general information on settlement in Canada (where to access services, Canadian culture/regulations, etc.)	Online resources/databases, such as through settlement.org	Settlement Organizations
Job Placement	Internship/apprenticeship opportunities and job placements and shadowing	COSTI Job Search Counselling, Placement and Job Retention Services (employment consultation, apprenticeships, job trials, shadowing, etc.)	Settlement organizations; Community Services

Job search skills	Resume writing, Canadian labour market knowledge, interview etiquette, etc.	JVS Toronto Job Search Workshops for Newcomers (includes a personalized action plan, certificate of completion and access to job postings);	Settlement organizations and Community Services; educational institutions
Language training for the workplace	Supplements general language training to provide vocabulary for the Canadian workplace as well as occupation-specific terminology	Occupation-specific language training (free 180-hour courses offered by Ontario colleges: Helps to communicate with clients, supervisors; network; understand specific sectors) offered in business, health, child work, tech, trades. Same offered by JVS Toronto and Colleges Ontario	Settlement organizations; Community Services; research and educational institutions (universities and colleges)
Networking and connections opportunities	Matches new immigrants with established businesses, creating informal networking opportunities	The Connector Program by the Halifax Partnership	Settlement organizations; employer support organizations and councils
Pre-arrival services	Majority of programs offered through IRCC's Settlement Program within Canada are also offered in person and online abroad under Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP); includes employment services	Canadian Immigration Integration Program (CIIP)	Settlement organizations
Resources and Tools	Organizations that offer toolkits and other resources for services providers, employers and immigrants	Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) Client-Management System (website for multi-service agencies across Canada to record client information and auto-generate reports)	Varies
Skills training (general)	Workshops to train or upskill, e.g. computer access or basic use, general business communication	St. Stephen's Community House Connections Program (18-week program for immigrants on social assistance)	Settlement Organizations and Community Services
Skills training (occupation specific)	Non-college/university courses that offer skills upgrading, e.g. in coding, cooking, etc.	Employers; non-profits such as ComIT; Canada Learning Code; Free Code Camp	Community Services, Private Sector
Startup and small business support/funding	Entrepreneurship training, resources and funding	BDC New Canadian Entrepreneur Loan; Windmill microlending	Incubators and enterprise support

