

# Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue

Barriers Affecting the Integration of Non-Regulated  
Occupation Immigrants into the Canadian Labour Market





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C C C B E T



C C O C D E

Canadian Coalition  
of Community-Based  
Employability Training

Focusing On People  
Creating Employment Pathways

#### Project Focus:

**Specific issues and barriers preventing the integration of non-regulated occupation immigrants and refugees into the Canadian workforce were identified and measured. Using that information as a basis for discussion, CCCBET provided a unique national event “The Dialogue” between Sector Councils and immigrant serving agencies with the purpose of promoting networking, sharing of information, and partnerships among participants with an added component of follow-up interviews to further enhance animation of partnerships.**

It is an economic imperative that Canada, the provinces and communities find ways to integrate and utilize the skills that immigrants bring to Canada. Years of underemployment represent a waste of human capital and potential. In order to enjoy a robust economy in the future, this waste of capital must be resolved.

The Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET), formed in 1992 and incorporated in 1994, is a pan-Canadian, NGO whose membership is comprised of appointees from provincially chartered community-based training associations. Its goal is to help community-based trainers become known worldwide for excellence in client-centered training and employment services.

The Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET) supported by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the Ministry of Economic Development BC created “The Dialogue” initiative as an initial step to look at the dimensions of the problem and to enhance the labour market participation of immigrants to Canada.

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# Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue



## Executive Summary



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## I. INTRODUCTION

This report provides a summary of the Pan-Canadian Sector Council and Immigrant Dialogue, an initiative of the Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET). The Dialogue Initiative was supported by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the British Columbia Ministry of Economic Development.

The Dialogue initiative consisted of three components:

- Background research
- A Dialogue event held on September 8 - 9, 2005 at the Sheraton Hotel in Ottawa, Ontario
- Dialogue follow-up interviews

## 2. BACKGROUND RESEARCH

The main objective of the background research was to support the design of the Dialogue event by identifying and measuring specific issues and barriers preventing the integration of non-regulated occupation immigrants and refugees into the Canadian workforce.

A literature review of past and current publications was conducted to identify broadly defined issues regarding lack of integration. Based on these issues, a research questionnaire was designed, and telephone interviews were conducted with nine Sector Councils (of an estimated total of 35) and ten Immigrant Serving Agencies (of an estimated total of 30).

The top three barriers affecting the hiring in Canada of non-regulated occupation immigrants reported by survey respondents were: language skills, recognition of foreign work experience and credentials, and Canadian work experience. Additional barriers mentioned included cultural issues, discrimination issues, and issues related to access to employers/jobs.

There was consensus between the Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies that were surveyed that language skills, foreign experience, and foreign credentials were the most significant limitations affecting the integration of immigrants into the Canadian labour market. However, there was a “disconnect” between the two respondent groups on the issues of limited or no Canadian work experience, and discrimination causing barriers.

A wide variety of solutions for addressing gaps in information and services were identified.

### 3. DIALOGUE EVENT

The Dialogue took place on September 8 - 9, 2005 at the Sheraton Hotel in Ottawa, Ontario. The purpose of the event was to promote networking, sharing of information, and partnerships among participants. Approximately 90 people participated in the Dialogue, with representatives from 19 Sector Councils, 40 Immigrant Serving Agencies from nine provinces, along with representatives from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the provincial governments of British Columbia and Quebec.

During the Dialogue, participants heard presentations from Sector Councils, Immigrant Serving Agencies, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and watched a video on Sector Councils provided by HRSDC. During the evening networking event, Dr. David Foot, Professor of Economics, University of Toronto, gave a presentation on a demographic perspective on immigrants and business.

Small group discussions during the Dialogue focused on identifying issues and solutions affecting the employment of immigrants in the Canadian workforce. The key issues raised by participants were:

- Language challenges
- Canadian work experience

One of the Dialogue groups expressed views with regard to “*Canadian Work Experience*” and “*Lack of Canadian Work Experience*” as follows:


In the term “Canadian work experience”, the word “Canadian” may be an inappropriate qualifier. No matter where work experience is gained it has to be weighed on its own merits.

It also has a human rights dimension in the sense that we can no more speak of or ask as a job requirement that a person have “Canadian work experience” than we can of “male” work experience, or “older” work experience or “able bodied” work experience or “English” work experience ... since all of these qualifiers go counter to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and would promote discrimination. To speak of “Canadian work experience” is to give it an ethnic and national origin thus clearly against the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which forbids discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

In other words, work experience has to be evaluated by measurable and reasonable criteria, i.e. number of years, related to a specific field or a specific job and it cannot be defined on the basis of where (the country) it was acquired.

The dilemma for an employer is how to properly evaluate work experience gained by an immigrant outside of Canada. The challenge is to demonstrate how their work experience is directly transferable to the employers’ situation in Canada.





The lack of "Canadian work experience" should not invalidate any candidate and the term should be avoided completely. The more accurate term should be "relevant" work experience.

- Verification and/or validation of foreign work experience
- Pre-entry issues
- Personal biases

## 4. FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

The purpose of conducting interviews after the Dialogue event was to assess the value of the event to participants, to gather information on current and potential partnerships between participants as a result of the Dialogue, and to find out how CCCBET could support and assist with animating these partnerships.

Interviews were conducted by telephone from October 1, 2005 to December 21, 2005. All 19 Sector Councils and 40 Immigrant Serving Agencies represented at the Dialogue were approached, but not all were available to participate. In total, 16 (84%) Sector Councils and 35 (88%) Immigrant Serving Agencies participated in the interviews. A second set of follow-up interviews were conducted from January 3, 2006 to April 15, 2006, to continue to provide information to Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies and further assist them in forming partnerships.

The interviews revealed that:

- The majority of Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies have done additional networking following the Dialogue.
- Only three Sector Councils reported having pre-existing partnerships with Immigrant Serving Agencies. However, three other Sector Councils noted that their provincial partners (i.e. provincial Sector Councils) had partnerships with Immigrant Serving Agencies and two others indicated potential partnerships.
- Of the 32 Immigrant Serving Agencies that reported current pre-existing partnerships, only three instances of partnerships with employer groups were specified. The majority of partnerships reported were with individual employers.
- Close to half of the Sector Councils interviewed had had ideas about partnerships since the Dialogue. Their ideas for partnerships included programs for career bridging and gaining Canadian work experience, and providing information so that Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies know more about each other. Some Sector Councils gave specific indications as to how CCCBET could help them make connections.
- Close to 60% (20 out of 35) of the Immigrant Serving Agencies interviewed had had ideas about partnerships since the Dialogue. They also expressed interest in a wide range of sectors, including trucking, health care and retail/customer services, and tourism.

## Executive Summary

All Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies that participated in the interviews indicated interest in participating in a follow-up event to the Dialogue. The most common suggestions for a follow-up event were to make it more action and goal-oriented and focused on next steps; and to share case studies (both success and failures), partnership models and best practices. Respondents proposed holding regional or provincial Dialogues.

### **5. PARTNERSHIPS & INFORMATION SHARING RESULTING FROM THE DIALOGUE**

As a result of the Dialogue event and follow-up interviews, 20 partnerships and 38 information sharing opportunities have occurred.





# Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue

**Background Research**

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## **PAN-CANADIAN SECTOR COUNCIL & IMMIGRANT DIALOGUE**

### **Barriers Affecting the Integration of Non-Regulated Occupation Immigrants into the Canadian Labour Market**

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET), supported by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the BC Ministry of Economic Development, has created an initiative meant to enhance the labour market participation of immigrants to Canada.

It is an economic imperative that Canada, the provinces and communities find ways to integrate and utilize the skills that immigrants bring to Canada. Years of underemployment represent a waste of human capital and potential. In order to enjoy a robust economy in the future, Canada must find ways to integrate this human potential.

This initiative looks at the dimensions of the problem in light of the disconnectedness of the knowledge base of employer groups as it relates to immigrant issues and the expertise of Immigrant Serving Agencies. In addition, it is meant to increase the Immigrant Serving Agencies knowledge base around labour market needs and entry points. Essentially, this study serves to identify and measure the specific issues and barriers limiting the integration of immigrants and refugees into the Canadian workforce.




#### **Project Goals**

- The reduction of skills gaps in industries that the Sector Councils represent.
- The labour market integration of immigrants and refugees through successful initiatives that are framed and informed by the most current knowledge and research.

#### **Project Objectives**

- Enhance the knowledge base around the integration and utilization of immigrant skills and experience.
- Enhance the knowledge base around the workforce needs and entry points of private sector employers.

- 
- Increase networking and contacts between Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies.
  - Animate partnership initiatives.
  - Report on the unique needs of both the Sector Councils' industries and the immigrant populations living or newly arrived in Canada.

## Statement of Work

This study was completed to support the pan-Canadian Dialogue to be held in Ottawa on September 8 - 9th, 2005. The focus of this research is on the integration of immigrants to Canada into non-regulated occupations. The work tasks included two distinct phases:

### **Secondary Research**

- Complete a literature review around the main impediments to immigrant labour integration.
- Develop a questionnaire related to key documented barriers to gather primary research information from Dialogue participants, Immigrant Serving Agencies and Sector Councils.

### **Primary Research**

- Complete focused research to identify the barriers for employer Sector Councils, the challenges and barriers to be overcome by immigrants, and the disconnect between employers, Sector Councils and the Immigrant Serving Agencies.
- Key themes are a) awareness on each side; b) what benefits could come from these connections; c) benefits from working with newcomers; d) existing and potential solutions.

## Research Process/Methodology

The following research methodology was used to gather and analyze the required information:

1. *Secondary research* - involved a literature review to assist with identifying the broadly defined issues regarding lack of integration.
2. *Primary research* - administer a research questionnaire to Sector Council and Immigrant Serving Agencies representatives. This phase involved the telephone interviewing of nine Sector Councils (of the estimated 35 total) and ten Immigrant Serving Agencies (of the estimated 30 total) named by the committee members.
3. *Analyzed data* - the accumulated data was analyzed to determine the core issues and barriers affecting the integration of immigrants into the Canadian workforce.

### **Type of Occupations Defined**

As noted on the Citizenship & Immigration Canada website, in Canada some occupations are regulated under provincial and territorial legislation to protect public health and safety. Approximately twenty percent of the work force is employed in regulated occupations. A provincial or territorial regulatory body must recognize a person's qualifications before that person can work in one of those regulated occupations.

The regulatory bodies establish the requirements for admittance to a profession, assess applicants' qualifications, and issue licenses to practice. The process varies among provinces and territories and among occupations. Generally, persons must wait until they arrive in Canada to have their qualifications recognized and receive a license.

While many studies have been completed on the issue of integration of immigrants into professionally designated occupations, there is much less research on their integration into non-regulated occupations. Non-regulated occupations have no set requirements.

### **Type of Immigrants Defined**

In addition to the regulated and non-regulated nature of the immigrants' job skills, they are often categorized according to the classification under which they are applying for immigration; their country of origin (related to language); and their ethno-cultural group.

There is a well-defined subset of issues related to the successful integration of immigrants into the Canadian workforce that apply to immigrants who fall into the category of visible minority also known as 'racialized' immigrants. 'Racialized' immigrant groups currently represent 75% of immigrant workers and this is expected to increase to 100% by 2011.<sup>1</sup>

“What is noteworthy is that the traditional trajectory that saw immigrants ‘catch up’ with other Canadians over time seems to have shifted with the change in immigrant source country. With the shift in the majority of immigration sources to countries in the global South in the 1980s, there has been a marked decline in the labour market performance of immigrants.”<sup>2</sup>

## **SECONDARY RESEARCH**


During the secondary research phase of this study, past and present publications were reviewed to identify the factors at play in the effective integration of immigrants into the Canadian labour market. Numerous factors were identified and grouped into the following four barrier categories as a result of this research:

1. Language Skills & Accents
2. Lack of Familiarity with Canadian “Way”

<sup>1</sup> Teelucksingh, Cheryl Ph.D. & Galabuzi, Grace-Edward, Ph.D. *Working Precariously: The impact of race and immigrants status on employment opportunities and outcomes in Canada*, Research Associates Centre for Social Justice Canadian Race Relations Foundation March 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



- 
3. Lack of Recognition of Foreign Work Experience and Credentials
  4. Hiring Practices: “Fit” and “Personal Suitability” Criteria, Different Standards of Performance

While many of these issues are not mutually exclusive, and 12 different questions were eventually extrapolated from these categories, for the purposes of this report a definition of these four broad barrier categories provides background on the issues which form the barriers.

## 1. Language Skills & Accents

The issue of language skills is noted in nearly all studies related to the barriers affecting the integration of immigrants into the Canadian labour market. Certainly, this is understandable given the ever-increasing importance placed on effective communication in the workplace; whether communicating product specifications with customers, workers’ ability to communicate effectively for safety issues; and/or workers’ need to understand increasing complex jargon-based workplaces.

“The stringent demand for fluency in English presents greater difficulties” for immigrants seeking employment in Canada.”<sup>3</sup>

A number of references are made to the lack of access to adequate, occupation-specific educational/training upgrading, language training and testing. While most language skills references were related to a ‘working knowledge’ of language as it relates to most workplaces, some references also related to issues of discrimination.

“...merely speaking with an accent can cost immigrants job opportunities.”<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Lack of Familiarity with Canadian “Way”

This category encompasses many issues and can be grouped into four subcategories:

### A. Lack of Canadian Work Experience

This report refers to the term “Canadian Work Experience” since this term is used throughout the secondary research and in common usage. Please refer to Appendix 3 for views expressed by one of the Dialogue groups with regard to the use of the term “Canadian Work Experience.”

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<sup>3</sup>Hiebert, Daniel. *Immigrant Experiences In Greater Vancouver: Focus Group Narratives*, Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, Vancouver BC September 1998, Page 2.

<sup>4</sup>Baklid, Bente; Cowan, Allison P.; MacBride-King, Judith L. and Mallett, Aretha. *Business Critical: Maximizing the Talents of Visible Minorities—An Employer’s Guide*, The Conference Board of Canada March 2005, Page 88.

Lack of Canadian work experience is one of the key issues affecting immigrants' employment in Canada. As one study states, it is a Catch 22 situation where the requirement for Canadian experience is coupled with a lack of any Canadian job opportunities to gain that experience.<sup>5</sup>

“...the ‘no experience, no job’ problem is compounded for immigrants; that is, applicants who have relevant work experience before they come to Canada find that the general rule becomes ‘no Canadian experience, no job’.”<sup>6</sup>

### **B. Understanding of Canadian Occupations and Workplaces**

For many immigrants, the Canadian workplace culture is very different from the culture of their country of origin. Understanding this culture can be a lengthy and difficult process. Many immigrants lack information about how to access a profession or trade as well as its standards and regulations. The literature also points to a lack of consistent, transparent and accessible assessment practices for occupational or academic credentials.<sup>7</sup>

### **C. Connection with Community**

The old adage ‘it’s not what you know but who you know’ appears particularly valid for immigrants, especially as it relates to gaining the contacts and knowledge required to connect with the work community. Immigrants often have no knowledge or no basis from which to develop personal networks and access to the many “hidden jobs” which are not advertised.

### **D. Understanding Cultural Mores**

People traveling abroad often experience the “unwritten rules” of a respective culture. They are the customs or conventions regarded as essential to the characteristics of the community and are common knowledge of the residents. The same can be said for immigrants trying to decipher Canadian community and workplace cultures’ unwritten rules:

“...the social mores surrounding employment relations in a new country are often opaque and can present obstacles to immigrants.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Canadian Labour and Business Centre, Draft *Moving Forward* Internationally Trained Workers Project, Ottawa February 2004, Page 11.

<sup>6</sup>Hiebert, Daniel. *Immigrant Experiences In Greater Vancouver: Focus Group Narratives*, Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, Vancouver BC September 1998, Page 23.

<sup>7</sup>Alboim, Naomi and The Maytree Foundation *Fulfilling the Promise: Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Canadian Economy* April 2002, Page 11.

<sup>8</sup>Hiebert, Daniel. *Immigrant Experiences In Greater Vancouver: Focus Group Narratives*, Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, Vancouver BC September 1998, Page 23.





### 3. Lack of Recognition of Foreign Work Experience and Credentials

Much attention is given to the recognition of foreign work experience and credentials in the secondary research reports, as noted in 'Fulfilling the Promise' "key among the barriers is the non-recognition of international credentials."<sup>9</sup> The lack of recognition of foreign work experience, training and credentials is true of both regulated and unregulated positions.

New immigrants experience "difficulty in gaining recognition of foreign credentials due to unfamiliarity of regulatory bodies, employers, and academic institutions with foreign educational, training, technological, and professional standards."<sup>10</sup> It is also noted that there are different occupational standards across provinces and territories, individual communities and even between individual employers.

### 4. Hiring Practices: "Fit" and "Personal Suitability" Criteria

"Visible minorities in the focus groups felt that managers look for their mirror images in hiring or, as some said, they tend to 'hire like me'."<sup>11</sup>

While it is not fair to ignore the possibility of racial discrimination affecting the integration of immigrants into the Canadian labour market, it is also not fair to omit related issues, which are often difficult to completely separate from discussions involving racialized immigrants. The reasons for this "discounting" of immigrants may be varied.

"One is pure racial discrimination. A second is that immigrants' less proficient English and French language skills prevent them from fully utilizing and thus receiving the complete benefits of their educational qualifications. Another possibility is that the quality of the education and experience credentials held by immigrants is, on average, lower than that of native-born Canadians."<sup>12</sup>

#### Questionnaire Development

For the purposes of this study's primary research phase, these four barrier categories were further defined and split into 12 specific issues. These 12 barrier questions addressed:

1. Candidate's **Lack of Rapport** with manager and/or interviewer.

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<sup>9</sup>Alboim, Naomi and The Maytree Foundation *Fulfilling the Promise: Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Canadian Economy* April 2002, Page 11.

<sup>10</sup>United Way/Centraide of Ottawa and LASI/World Skills. *Interim Report for the Integration of Internationally-Trained Workers Project*, Canadian Labour and Business Centre September 15, 2003, Page 2.

<sup>11</sup>Baklid, Bente; Cowan, Allison P.; MacBride-King, Judith L. and Mallett, Aretha. *Business Critical: Maximizing the Talents of Visible Minorities—An Employer's Guide*, The Conference Board of Canada March 2005, Page 87.

<sup>12</sup>Alboim, Naomi; Finnie, Ross and Meng, Ronald *The Discounting of Immigrants' Skills In Canada*, Institute for Research on Public Policy, Choices Volume 11 Number 2 February 2005, Page 2.

2. Managers hiring their **Mirror Image**.
3. Candidate must have **Proven Performance** way beyond the rest of the candidates so the manager isn't accused of promoting just on minority status.
4. **Different Names** may represent different people who may not fit in an organization.
5. Difficulty recognizing/verifying **Foreign Experience**.
6. Difficulty recognizing/verifying **Foreign Credentials**.
7. **Language Accents** may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization.
8. **Personal Presentation** isn't consistent with Canadian norms.
9. **Printed Presentation** isn't consistent with Canadian norms (resume, letters).
10. **Finding/Accessing** immigrant candidates.
11. Limited or no **Canadian Work Experience**.
12. Limited or no **English and/or French**.



## PRIMARY RESEARCH

*Note: The research results are presented in the same order as used on the survey instrument. Please refer to Appendix 1 and 2 - CCCBET Questionnaire.*

### Top Barriers to Non-Regulated Occupation Immigrants being Hired

Survey respondents were asked to provide their three “top of the mind” (unaided) barriers affecting non-regulated occupation immigrants being hired in Canada. These were:

- Language skills
- Recognition of foreign work experience & credentials
- Canadian work experience

Language skills issues ranged from position related language requirements, to lack of ESL training, to insufficient ESL training and to lack of workplace/occupational language training.

The most prevalent additional barriers were:

- Cultural issues
- Discrimination issues
- Access to employers/jobs issues

Cultural issues concerned employers' limited understanding of cultural diversity/awareness, and the implementation of workplace culture training. Tied to cultural issues were comments on the existence of racism and discrimination in the workplace and in employers' hiring practices. (Note: all of these comments were from Immigrant Serving Agencies)

## Rating and Comments Concerning Predefined Barriers to Non-Regulated Occupation Immigrants being Hired

The following results were based upon the respondents' rating of each predefined barrier on a scale of one to five where one represented "Little or No Barrier" and five represented "Very Significant Barrier." In addition to the ratings, respondents were asked to comment on what they felt were the best solutions to these barriers. These ratings and comments are presented below:

### I. Candidate's Lack of Rapport with Manager and/or Interviewer

Summary of Barrier  
 "Fit" and "Personal Suitability" Criteria

Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
2.85	0.54	3.39
Agency View	Sector Council View	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigrants require more language/labour market information before approaching workforce.</li> <li>• Employers need to know the advantages of diversity.</li> <li>• The awareness and education of employers must be increased re: benefits of a diverse workforce.</li> <li>• Efforts need to be made to increase the consciousness/awareness of diversity.</li> <li>• We provide Network Building and Interview Skills support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This issue applies to all aspects of our industry because attitude is important. Solving bad attitude problems is difficult and most of our members don't know how to do this effectively.</li> <li>• Perhaps the interviewers can get more information to understand the cultures of people they're hiring so it doesn't become a deterrent.</li> <li>• This issue is true for everyone in every industry. While it is not a big issue in our industry, accents can create issues.</li> </ul>	

## 2. Managers hiring their ‘Mirror Image’

Summary of Barrier

### Hiring Practices

Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
2.85	0.52	2.33

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not an issue at all for me, maybe others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We don't find mirror image in this industry (truckers) as most employees don't want a long-term commitment to this job.</li> <li>Recruiting the right skill set is more important. The challenge is to hire skilled employees (retail). We must formalize best practices for selection and recruitment.</li> </ul>



## 3. Candidate must have ‘Proven Performance’ way beyond the rest of the candidates so the Manager isn’t accused of promoting just on minority status

Summary of Barrier

### Different Standards of Performance

Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
2.50	0.50	2.00

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is true of Government agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our key focus is looking for people who will stay in the industry.</li> </ul>

## 4. Different Names may represent different people who may not fit in organization

Summary of Barrier

### Hiring Practices

<i>Agency Score</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sector Council Score</i>
<b>2.92</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>1.78</b>

<i>Agency View</i>	<i>Sector Council View</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There must be an increased awareness of cultural diversity issues and values among employers.</li> <li>• This is a factor particularly in smaller centres.</li> <li>• There must be more done to educate employers and the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Comments</li> </ul>

## 5. Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Experience

Summary of Barrier

### Lack of Recognition of Foreign Work Experience

<i>Agency Score</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sector Council Score</i>
<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>3.89</b>

<i>Agency View</i>	<i>Sector Council View</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More information on credentialization process prior to coming to Canada; prior assessment.</li> <li>• More information on positions in various countries and the related training and how it relates to Canadian training – How do they compare?</li> <li>• Implementation of employer incentive programs for newcomers to give opportunities for employers to see skill. (HRSDC has this in other provinces.)</li> <li>• There needs to be a greater awareness of this issue among all groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our industry is ignoring experience documents and we do our own assessments. Different rules require us to provide training anyway (truckers).</li> <li>• Employers don't know who to call to verify. We provide a tool kit to help employers. We also provide an internship program and work experience (petroleum).</li> <li>• Industry and government must find a method to integrate employees.</li> <li>• It's the technical aspects that are difficult to assess.</li> </ul>

Continued on next page

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLA accreditation for employment counselors and education of employers would provide a better solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do foreign credentials match or compare with Canadian credentials? A challenge is to get valid information from foreign institutions to compare to Canadian data. Note: Credentials are often hidden as some are afraid to be overqualified.</li> <li>Have a standardized national foreign recognition program.</li> </ul>

## 6. Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Credentials

Summary of Barrier

**Lack of Recognition of Foreign Credentials**



Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
3.80	0.21	4.11

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness of equivalency — employers must be better educated and government must do more to recognize equivalence.</li> <li>Any information is helpful for employers as they can't do reference checks and need help understanding the terminology.</li> <li>PLA accreditation for employment counselors and education of employers would provide a better solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We focus on providing immigrants the required training and upgrading here.</li> <li>Professional associations having reciprocal arrangements with other countries. Using a national assessment system would be very helpful.</li> <li>Government or industry led initiatives as a whole to articulate training.</li> <li>Better comparative information required between Canadian and foreign. Many are working on this but not enough has been developed. It requires a lot of effort to keep the information up to date and accurate.</li> <li>We are currently working to resolve this issue through an initiative led by the construction sector council.</li> <li>Have PLAR accreditation for Employment Counselors, Education of Employers.</li> </ul>

## 7. Language Accents may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization

Summary of Barrier

### Accents

<i>Agency Score</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sector Council Score</i>
<b>3.17</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>3.11</b>

<i>Agency View</i>	<i>Sector Council View</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are past this issue — we work well with all employers.</li> <li>• I think there needs to be a stronger business case made for diversity — especially if potential customers are the same background.</li> <li>• While some sectors are very open to diversity, i.e. tourism, some are not, i.e. teaching — parents don't want foreign teachers.</li> <li>• Depends on the business of communication — significant where employer believes clear communication is important to their business.</li> <li>• There needs to be a better education of employers and staff with this issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The people who have to cross into the US have problems (truckers).</li> <li>• We've developed business language skills and employer toolkits and workshops.</li> <li>• Literacy programs depend on job requirements. In our industry specific language training is required to learn terminology.</li> <li>• As customers are also diverse, it's not as much of an issue (retail).</li> <li>• Not so much in our industry — shifts all speak native language though safety is an issue (plastics).</li> <li>• ESL programs should address this issue.</li> </ul>

## 8. Personal Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms

Summary of Barrier

### Lack of familiarity with the Canadian "Way"

<i>Agency Score</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sector Council Score</i>
<b>3.00</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>2.22</b>

<i>Agency View</i>	<i>Sector Council View</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have this issue under control. We deliver 5 weeks of training through career work-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural issues do exist in our industry e.g. personal space is defined differently in many cultures.</li> </ul>

Continued on next page

Agency View	Sector Council View
<p>shops/career essentials. Personal presentation would be a problem without this type of training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The solution should include both diversity training for the workplace and increased awareness of workplace norms for newcomers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is more of a recruitment issue. New hires are sought to represent the 'brand' (retail) so once they are on the front-line, the issue has been handled with uniform and presentation (removal of nose rings).</li> <li>We find that people in Canada are more comfortable with multicultural community.</li> <li>Immigrants don't always understand legislated requirements, e.g. from a safety perspective, hard hats being required.</li> </ul>



## 9. Printed Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms (resume, letters)

Summary of Barrier

**Lack of familiarity with the Canadian "Way"**

Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
2.33	0.11	2.44

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are covered here.</li> <li>Immigrants benefit from basic service on how to do print presentations. i.e. in India it is common to bring in a huge amount of information — most Canadian employers don't want large life story.</li> <li>I feel we provide excellent service — that it's up to the standards.</li> <li>The solution involves the delivery of employment preparation classes for newcomers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immigrants need to know occupational specific terminology and Canadian technical language. (petroleum)</li> <li>There seems to be lots of help out there.</li> <li>There have been a lot of programs developed to train and assist.</li> </ul>

## 10. Finding/Accessing immigrant candidates

Summary of Barrier

### Finding/Accessing Immigrant Candidates

Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
2.60	0.51	3.11

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Employers need better information on how to connect with potential employees.</li> <li>· We find employees on behalf of employers — they can find us since we're in the media a lot. An increasing number of employers call us for seasonal/term work.</li> <li>· Employers should encourage cultural diversity by making their job ads more inclusive to attract immigrants. Difficulty in accessing is higher in smaller communities and certainly Edmonton is less diverse than Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.</li> <li>· There must be increased employer networks with employment counselors for newcomers and government promotion of employment counselors for newcomers with local employers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· We've created materials that promote jobs to immigrants. Our provincial government recognized the need for truck drivers and let immigrants in.</li> <li>· Our industry relies too heavily on web-based recruiting and we recognize it may not provide effective access to immigrants so we also access candidates through immigrant serving organizations.</li> <li>· When we have a labour shortage we use outreach programs and specific channels to access immigrants. We've looked at the best practices for new Canadians.</li> <li>· There needs to be better linkages between governments — i.e. information/analysis shared between countries on a sector basis.</li> </ul>

## 11. Limited or no Canadian Work Experience

Summary of Barrier

### Limited or no Canadian Work Experience

Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
4.67	1.45	3.22

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· We use employer education to help them with the recognition of work experience and try to get them to ignore the Canadian work experience factor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Given the nature of our industry, we must and do provide training to upgrade skills. Candidates must take an exam. (trucking)</li> </ul>

Continued on next page

## Background Research



Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a real dilemma for immigrants since most employers can't assess foreign experience and so immigrants are judged on their limited Canadian experience.</li> <li>• We use a work placement program that involves immigrants doing five weeks in class and five weeks on the job (with option for up to 10 weeks on job).</li> <li>• Immigrants just have to find paid or volunteer employment. Must use network of contacts. There needs to be an increased awareness on behalf of employers regarding how immigrants' foreign work experience relates to Canadian work experience.</li> <li>• The best solutions involve work placements and volunteer work experience matching services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a number of solutions we work with, such as an internship or work experience program; business language skills training programs; funding for a short Canadian certificate programs, i.e. safety WHMIS, driver training program, a program to teach immigrants about the Canadian environment (this includes a certificate that is recognized by Canadian employers).</li> <li>• Our intern program gets them employed even if just as a volunteer. There doesn't appear to be any standardization among settlement agencies.</li> <li>• Proof of experience is a barrier in our industry.</li> <li>• We use a prior learning assessment to identify skills, measure and compare, and put candidates through appropriate training (construction).</li> </ul>

## 12. Limited or no English and/or French

### Summary of Barrier

#### Limited or no English and/or French

Agency Score	Gap	Sector Council Score
4.40	0.07	4.33

Agency View	Sector Council View
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training programs in our province are inadequate. Government doesn't provide the necessary funding to an acceptable level — other provinces not so good either.</li> <li>• Must get language at school — levels 1 to 8 — they know they need the language. We have an adequate program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESL is acceptable to cross border (truckers).</li> <li>• Hazardous teams — need to understand each other. This is a total barrier. Language training is a must; otherwise, they will not get job.</li> </ul>

<i>Agency View</i>	<i>Sector Council View</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESL must be made accessible to all people as it is currently not readily accessible.</li> <li>• Improvements in language instructions are required. Whose jurisdiction is it? Federal or local? At the school level – 60 hours of total training is inadequate.</li> <li>• Improved access to ESL or FSL training and higher levels of language training with work related language is required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embassy promotional material should be more factual so that it encourages immigrants to do a better job of preparing for entry to and finding employment in Canada. More information needs to get into the country of origin re: what stumbling blocks exist and the requirement for English or French. There needs to be a standards/diploma created for comparison to Canada.</li> <li>• There's greater importance placed on computer operations, i.e. sewing equipment (apparel). The candidates must have sufficient literacy and numeracy skills.</li> <li>• Employers need better access to ESL programs as it is currently difficult for them to access (plastics).</li> <li>• ESL programs should be specific to the occupation.</li> </ul>

## Ratings Analysis Summary

The following table provides a summary comparison of all limitations/barriers mean ratings split by respondent group. A Gap calculation has been completed to identify the issues where Immigrant Serving Agencies and Sector Councils have similar and differing opinions of the relevant importance of each issue as a barrier to workforce entry.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Agency Rating</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sector Council Rating</i>
1. Candidate's Lack of Rapport with manager and/or interviewer	3.14	0.25	3.39
2. Managers hiring their Mirror Image	2.86	0.53	2.33
3. Candidate must have Proven Performance way beyond the rest of the candidates so the manager isn't accused of promoting just on minority status	2.50	0.50	2.00

Continued on next page

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Agency Rating</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Sector Council Rating</i>
4. Different Names may represent different people who may not fit in organization	3.07	1.29	1.78
5. Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Experience	4.14	0.25	3.89
6. Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Credentials	4.00	0.11	4.11
7. Language Accents may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization	3.43	0.32	3.11
8. Personal Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms	3.29	1.07	2.22
9. Printed Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms (resume, letters)	2.57	0.13	2.44
10. Finding/Accessing immigrant candidates	2.83	0.28	3.11
11. Limited or no Canadian Work Experience	4.57	1.35	3.22
12. Limited or no English and/or French	4.50	0.17	4.33



There appears to be a relative consensus between the two respondent groups that language skills, foreign experience, and foreign credentials are the most significant limitations affecting the integration of non-regulated occupation immigrants into the Canadian labour market. On the other hand, there appears to be a disconnect between the two respondent groups on the issues of limited or no Canadian work experience, and different names causing barriers.

## Immigrant Serving Agencies Ratings & Ranking

The following table provides a summary of the Immigrant Serving Agencies limitations/barriers mean ratings ranked by significance.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Limited or no Canadian Work Experience	4.57
Limited or no English and/or French	4.50
Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Experience	4.14
Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Credentials	4.00

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Language Accents may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization	3.43
Personal Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms	3.29
Candidate's Lack of Rapport with manager and/or interviewer	3.14
Different Names may represent different people who may not fit in organization	3.07
Managers hiring their Mirror Image	2.86
Finding/Accessing immigrant candidates	2.83
Printed Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms (resume, letters)	2.57
Candidate must have Proven Performance way beyond the rest of the candidates so the manager isn't accused of promoting just on minority status	2.50

## Sector Council Ratings & Ranking

The following table provides a summary of the Sector Council limitations/barriers mean ratings ranked by significance.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Limited or no English and/or French	4.33
Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Credentials	4.11
Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Experience	3.89
Candidate's Lack of Rapport with manager and/or interviewer	3.39
Limited or no Canadian Work Experience	3.22
Language Accents may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization	3.11

Continued on next page

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Finding/ Accessing immigrant candidates	3.11
Printed Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms (resume, letters)	2.44
Managers hiring their Mirror Image	2.33
Personal Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms	2.22
Candidate must have Proven Performance way beyond the rest of the candidates so the manager isn't accused of promoting just on minority status	2.00
Different Names may represent different people who may not fit in organization	1.78



## Gap Analysis Ranking

While the previous sections discussed the Ratings and Rankings within each of the two respondent groups, this section focuses on which rated issues received similar and dissimilar scores from the respondent groups. The following table defines the gap between the Immigrant Serving Agencies mean ratings and those of the Sector Councils mean ratings.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Limited or no Canadian Work Experience	1.35
Different Names may represent different people who may not fit in organization	1.29
Personal Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms	1.07
Managers hiring their Mirror Image	0.53
Candidate must have Proven Performance way beyond the rest of the candidates so the manager isn't accused of promoting just on minority status	0.50
Language Accents may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization	0.32

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Finding/Accessing immigrant candidates	0.28
Candidate's Lack of Rapport with manager and/or interviewer	0.25
Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Experience	0.25
Limited or no English and/or French	0.17
Printed Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms (resume, letters)	0.13
Difficulty recognizing/verifying Foreign Credentials	0.11

The greatest gaps in opinion as to the relative importance of each issue between Immigrant Serving Agencies and Sector Council respondent groups were: 'limited or no Canadian work experience'; 'different names may represent different people who may not fit in organization'; and 'personal presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms'.

With each issue the Immigrant Serving Agency respondent group rated the issue higher than the Sector Council respondent group, providing a clear indication that Immigrant Serving Agencies believe these issues are much more prevalent than do Sector Councils. Further work is required to ensure both the Immigrant Serving Agencies and Sector Councils understand the significance that these three issues are playing in terms of immigrants integrating into the workforce.

## Gaps in Information & Services

Through both secondary and primary research several gaps in information and services have been identified. One cannot underestimate the significance of obstacles such as:

"...a lack of information about labour market integration provided to applicants overseas before they arrive in Canada, the requirement that immigrants have Canadian work experience, the lack of effective tools to assess qualifications, and the lack of labour market language training and bridging programs to address specific gaps in qualifications."<sup>13</sup>

"...skilled immigrants [need] to have clear, accurate, current information on the Canadian labour market, entry requirements for their occupation and Canadian upgrading programs, especially while overseas."<sup>14</sup>

"...the sooner an individual knows what is required, the sooner he or she can begin the assessment process and start addressing the identified gaps, reducing time, energy and money for all involved and facilitating successful labour market entry."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> McIsaac, Elizabeth *Immigrants in Canadian Cities: Census 2001- What do the data tell us?* Policy Option May 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Alboim, Naomi and The Maytree Foundation *Fulfilling the Promise: Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Canadian Economy* April 2002, Page 18.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

Several limitations affecting the integration of immigrants into the Canadian labour force are noted to begin prior to the immigrants' entry into Canada. Immigrants may have developed unrealistic expectations of their employment capabilities:

“Skilled immigrants are attracted from their home countries by an aggressive immigration policy which promises the potential to improve their lives and be successful contributors to a modern economy and multicultural society. Many then find themselves relegated to precarious employment in low wage sectors and low end occupations...”<sup>16</sup>

“Many immigrants who are accepted as skilled workers understandably mistake the federal government's granting of ‘points’ for their occupation, education and training as recognition and approval of their qualifications. These immigrants assume that they then will be able to practice their profession or trade in Canada.”<sup>17</sup>

All of the above references suggest that much is known about the barriers to the integration of foreign-trained workers into the economy. McIsaac (2003) has argued in a recent article that the “barriers that make access to the labour market difficult for immigrants are systemic.”<sup>18</sup> This observation would suggest that perhaps there is a need to take the discussion to the next level, that of policy development and implementation.



## Solutions

There were a wide variety of solutions mentioned by both Immigrant Serving Agencies and Sector Council representatives during the primary research phase. The following section summarizes the solutions that are in place and managed by the Immigrant Serving Agencies and Sector Councils that responded in the primary research interviews.

### Agency Solutions

**Assessment Program** – includes employment counseling; career planning; job search; skill training (specific skills to find, do, keep jobs); work experience program; job fair (employer visits – talks about needs and connects with candidates); resource centre; job matching; job postings.

**Tailored Programs** – Our Agency determines employers' specific needs by sector and tailors programs to suit their needs; our initiatives are tied to that specific need and we make connections between immigrant agencies and employers.

**Access Program** – focuses on helping immigrants to acquire skills and career essentials, community and employment connections, mentoring immigrants, portfolio development, post-secondary readiness to continue studies; our agency also provides language skills training and support.

<sup>16</sup> Teelucksingh, Cheryl, Ph.D. & Galabuzi, Grace-Edward, Ph.D. *Working Precariously: The impact of race and immigrants status on employment opportunities and outcomes in Canada*, Research Associates Centre for Social Justice Canadian Race Relations Foundation March 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Brouwer, A. *Immigrants Need Not Apply*. Caledon Institute of Social Policy and The Maytree Foundation, Ottawa October 1999, Page 7.

<sup>18</sup> McIsaac, Elizabeth *Immigrants in Canadian Cities: Census 2001- What do the data tell us?* Policy Option May 2003.



**Literacy Levels – Audit Program** – as we handle a lot of inner city issues.

**Staff Diversity Training** – our agency audits the demographics of the community/staff/clientele then brings in speakers to talk with staff and board (workshop/training – created by staff for staff); the key is to provide a safe environment for staff to engage in a dialogue about cultural diversity issues.

**Employment Counseling & Preparation Program** – counseling covers plans, barriers, and resume; employment preparation program is 4 to 6 weeks in length.

**Job Developers Program** – we work with employers instead of using the work experience programs which are no longer available.

**Assessment Programs** (i.e. intellect and motor skills) – our agency performs diagnostics for disabilities and other issues.

**Apprentice Programs** – our agency’s best success involves partnering with a school to develop specific apprenticeship program; we cover the cultural aspects and the school does skills training.

**Our Agency Provides –**

- 16 week Level 4/5 Work Related ESL Classes
- Employment Orientation and Preparation Classes followed by 12 week paid work placements
- Employment Classes and Employment Counselling to find part time and full time work early in the settlement process while attending LINC classes
- Workplace subsidies such as Workability, Equal Employment Opportunity, Assertiveness and Self Esteem Classes
- Computer Classes general (Microsoft Office) and specific such as Simply Accounting
- Employment Counselling in both Official Languages
- Immigrant Leadership Course
- Parenting Classes
- Assistance to enroll children in daycare, after-school and summer programming (assistance to obtain sponsorship/subsidy, if required)
- Super Host (Tourism Training)
- Youth Programming, etc.

### Council Solutions

**Outreach Strategies** - designed to better understand non-traditional workers; provide industry information on occupation and career paths; define competencies and standards for non-regulated occupations; develop attraction/retention models and tools for employers.

Our **Council** has developed tools and products, and provides information links to immigrant hiring issues; assesses country of origin skill sets; provides assessment programs for foreigners to check their skills against Canadian standards.

**Retail Certification and Training Program** - we assist new immigrants understand retail landscape in Canada; we host a Toronto job fair for new Canadians and stakeholders to connect with labour groups.

**Training/interactive CD** - aids learning the Canadian production process and trade (i.e. sewing machine operator, pattern making). The self guided CD has been approved by industry; took three years to develop and outlines skills needs regardless of origin.

**Awareness Campaign** (re: employment opportunities) - the campaign uses a brochure to highlight why the industry is a good place to work; we study and consult with Immigrant Serving Agencies regarding employment barriers and ways to get over them.

**Labour Market Information Program** - to know the requirements in Canada, know what resources are available in Canada, what's the national approach to recognizing credentials.

**National Safety Training Program** uses an e-learning approach with CD. Our Council also focuses on essential skills such as foreign credential recognition and career awareness for foreign workers.

**Foreign Competency Recognition Program** - it has been very helpful in recruiting but national standards must be established as currently every province does it on different criteria.

**Environment Employee Careers Package** - includes a section for new comers; there's a National Certification Program, based on competency not just degree and requires five years of experience.

**Practitioner in Training Designation** - immigrants get Canadian credentials via the Internet while they are still in their home country. They register in the program with one year post secondary (thirty credits); complete their courses; and then are granted designation.



# APPENDIX I

## IMMIGRANT AGENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

On behalf of the Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training or CCCBET, we are gathering information from both industry Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies in an effort to better understand the barriers affecting immigrant employees entering non-regulated occupations in the Canadian workforce.

As you are probably aware this information is being gathered in part for the Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue to be held in Ottawa in September of 2005.

### Question #1

In your opinion, what do you think are the top three barriers for your non-regulated occupation immigrant clients to being hired into the Canadian workforce?

- A.
- B.
- C.

(If unique barriers were identified in Question #1, place the reference number and a brief description in Question #2 (either number 13, 14, or 15) and include that information in the barriers listing.)

### Question #2

Now I'm going to read a list of several potential barriers to immigrants being hired in the Canadian workforce. Please rate each limitation on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means little or no limitation and 5 means a very significant limitation.

Issues	1 Little or No Barrier	2	3	4	5 Very Sign. Barrier	What do you feel is the best solution? (ASK FOR ISSUES RATED 4 OR 5)
1. Candidate's Lack of Rapport with Manager and/or Interviewer						
2. Managers hiring their Mirror Image						
3. Candidate must have Proven Performance way beyond the rest of the candidates so the Manager isn't accused of promoting just on minority status						

## Background Research

Issues	1 Little or No Barrier	2	3	4	5 Very Sign. Barrier	What do you feel is the best solution? (ASK FOR ISSUES RATED 4 OR 5)
4. Different Names may represent different people who may not fit in organization						
5. Difficulty recognizing/ verifying Foreign Experience						
6. Difficulty recognizing/ verifying Foreign Credentials						
7. Language Accents may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization						
8. Personal Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms						
9. Printed Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms						
10. Finding/Accessing immigrant candidates						
11. Limited or no Canadian Work Experience						
12. Limited or no English and/ or French						
13.						
14.						
15.						





## APPENDIX 2

### SECTOR COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE

On behalf of the Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training or CCCBET, we are gathering information from both industry Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies in an effort to better understand the barriers affecting immigrant employees entering **non-regulated occupations** in the Canadian workforce.

As you are probably aware this information is being gathered in part for the Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue to be held in Ottawa in September of 2005.

#### Question #1

In your opinion, what do you think are the top three barriers for non-regulated occupation immigrants to being hired in your industry?

- A.
- B.
- C.

(If unique barriers were identified in Question #1, place the reference number and a brief description in Question #2 (either number 13, 14, or 15) and include that information in the barriers listing.)

#### Question #2

Now I'm going to read a list of several potential barriers to immigrants being hired in the Canadian workforce. Please rate each limitation on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means little or no limitation and 5 means a very significant limitation.

Issues	1 Little or No Barrier	2	3	4	5 Very Sign. Barrier	What do you feel is the best solution? (ASK FOR ISSUES RATED 4 OR 5)
1. Candidate's Lack of Rapport with Manager and/or Interviewer						
2. Managers hiring their Mirror Image						
3. Candidate must have Proven Performance way beyond the rest of the candidates so the Manager isn't accused of promoting just on minority status						



Issues	1 Little or No Barrier	2	3	4	5 Very Sign. Barrier	What do you feel is the best solution? (ASK FOR ISSUES RATED 4 OR 5)
4. Different Names may represent different people who may not fit in organization						
5. Difficulty recognizing/ verifying Foreign Experience						
6. Difficulty recognizing/ verifying Foreign Credentials						
7. Language Accents may indicate potential difficulties in communication and fit within the organization						
8. Personal Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms						
9. Printed Presentation isn't consistent with Canadian norms						
10. Finding/Accessing immigrant candidates						
11. Limited or no Canadian Work Experience						
12. Limited or no English and/ or French						
13.						
14.						
15.						





## APPENDIX 3

### “CANADIAN WORK EXPERIENCE”

One of the Dialogue groups expressed views with regard to “*Canadian Work Experience*” and “*Lack of Canadian Work Experience*” as follows:

In the term “Canadian work experience”, the word “Canadian” may be an inappropriate qualifier. No matter where work experience is gained it has to be weighed on its own merits.

It also has a human rights dimension in the sense that we can no more speak of or ask as a job requirement that a person have “Canadian work experience” than we can of “male” work experience, or “older” work experience or “able bodied” work experience or “English” work experience ... since all of these qualifiers go counter to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and would promote discrimination. To speak of “Canadian work experience” is to give it an ethnic and national origin thus clearly against the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which forbids discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

In other words, work experience has to be evaluated by measurable and reasonable criteria, i.e. number of years, related to a specific field or a specific job and it cannot be defined on the basis of where (the country) it was acquired.

The dilemma for an employer is how to properly evaluate work experience gained by an immigrant outside of Canada. The challenge is to demonstrate how their work experience is directly transferable to the employers’ situation in Canada.

The lack of “Canadian work experience” should not invalidate any candidate and the term should be avoided completely. The more accurate term should be “relevant” work experience.

# APPENDIX 4

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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# Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue

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**Dialogue Event**

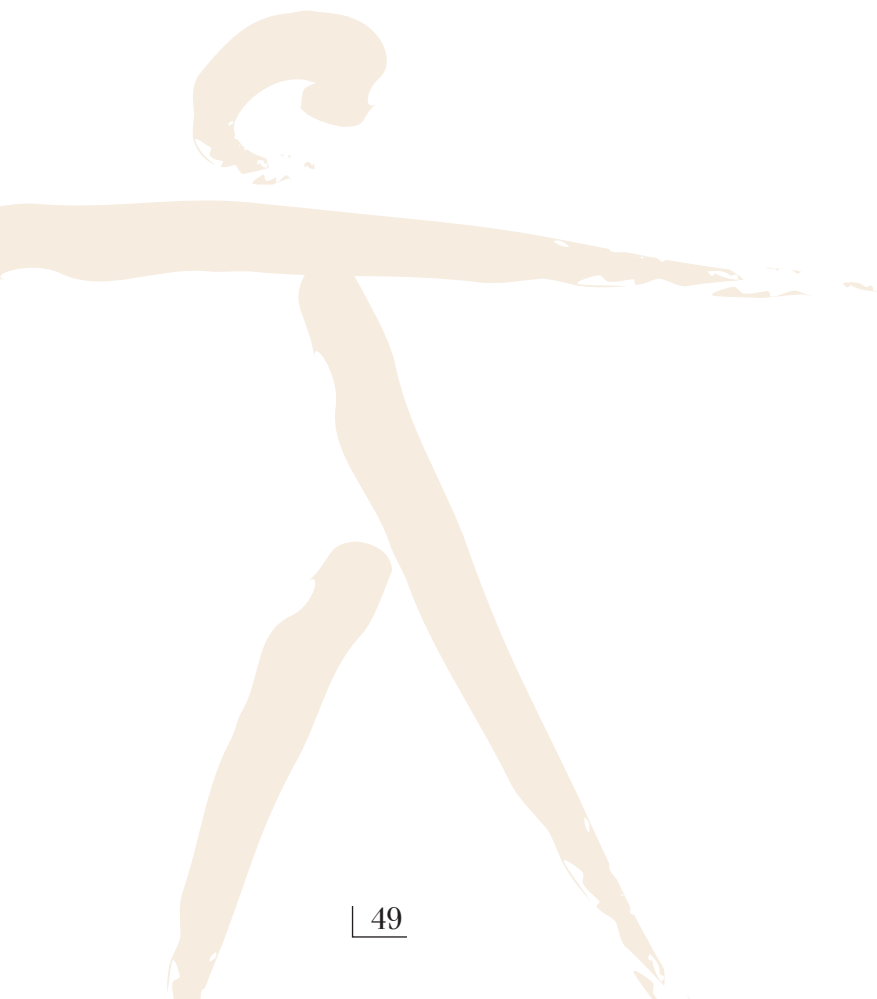
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## I. Background

The Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue took place on September 8 - 9, 2005 at the Sheraton Hotel in Ottawa, Ontario. Approximately 90 invited guests participated in the Dialogue, with representatives from 19 Sector Councils, 40 Immigrant Serving Agencies from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island, along with representatives from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the provincial governments of British Columbia and Quebec.

The Dialogue was held by the Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET), with partial funding by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the B.C. Ministry of Economic Development and its purpose was to promote networking, sharing of information, and partnerships among participants.

This report summarizes the presentations made during the Dialogue and the results of small group discussions focusing on following five questions that were developed based on findings of research commissioned by the CCCBET dealing with the integration of immigrants into the Canadian labour market.

### 1. Language

From your perspective what are the key issues regarding language challenges experienced by immigrants either entering or in the workplace?  
What are the optimum solutions? Who should lead these solutions?

### 2. Canadian Work Experience

From your perspective, what are the issues affecting immigrants' lack of relevant Canadian work experience?

### 3. Foreign Work Experience

What are the issues impacting the verification and/or validation of foreign work experience?

### 4. Pre-Entry Issues

From your perspective, aside from language, what are the key issues regarding Immigrants' preparations prior to entering Canada?

### 5. Discriminatory Attitudes and Practices

Do you feel discriminatory attitudes and practices have an impact on the hiring of Immigrants in Canada? If so, what do you feel are the key issues?

Dialogue presentations are summarized in Sections 2 to 6, and small group discussions in Section 7. Closing remarks and "Next Steps" following the Dialogue are presented in Section 8.





## 2. Welcome

Nicole Galarneau, Co-Chair of the Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET) opened the Dialogue with a welcome address. She thanked the members of the Dialogue Steering Committee for their efforts in organizing the event, and expressed confidence that the Dialogue would result in concrete achievements.

Participants spoke briefly about their expectations from the Dialogue. Among these expectations were the development of long-term partnerships, new ideas and solutions, more sharing of information, knowledge and best practices, recognition of common and distinct elements among provinces, more resources, and better services for temporary workers as well as for immigrants in remote areas and small communities. Participants called for concrete action and substantial results to build a “healthier Canada.”

## 3. Sector Councils and What They Do

Grant Trump, President and Chief Executive Officer of Environmental Careers Organization (ECO Canada) gave a presentation on Sector Councils (full slide presentation may be viewed at [www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublique.asp](http://www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublique.asp)). He described the purpose, mission and mandate of The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC), and spoke of the role Sector Councils play in developing human capital. He noted that Sector Councils cover 47% of the labour market, and that they receive both public and private funding. He stressed the importance of Sector Council partnerships with industry groups, associations, NGOs, and educational and training institutes.

In response to participant questions, Mr. Trump indicated that TASC would work on common issues with provincial and territorial Sector Councils. He drew attention to their job bank, and remarked on the differences between regulated and non-regulated occupations. He referred participants to Sector Council websites for documentation on national occupational standards.

Participants then watched a video provided by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) entitled *Canada's Sector Council Program: Partnerships at Work*.

## 4. Immigrant Serving Agencies and What They Do

Three representatives from Immigrant Serving Agencies gave a joint presentation on Immigrant Serving Agencies (full slide presentation may be viewed at [www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublique.asp](http://www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublique.asp)).

Marie Josée Duplessis, Coordinator of *La table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes*, began the presentation by outlining the profile of immigrants in Canada.

Josie Di Zio, Vice-President of the Ontario Council of Immigrant Serving Agencies, followed by describing the role and mandate of provincial umbrella groups for immigrant services. Ms. Di Zio noted the distinction between the settlement and employment services provided by Immigrant Serving Agencies.

Joy Andrews, Employment Services Coordinator for the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, concluded the presentation with an overview of employment services offered by Immigrant Serving Agencies. She identified four different stages in providing employment services: pre-employment, employment tools and search, placement services, and follow-up. She emphasized the flexibility and motivation of immigrants as positive attributes in the labour market.

## 5. Immigrants and Business a Demographic Perspective

Dr. David Foot, a Professor of Economics at the University of Toronto and a renowned writer and demographics expert, gave a presentation on a demographic perspective on immigrants and business. Dr. Foot's presentation materials are not available due to copyrights. However, information on this outspoken and controversial demographics expert can be found at [www.footwork.com](http://www.footwork.com).



## 6. Bridge to Work

Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General, Foreign Workers and Immigrants Workplace Skills Branch, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) gave a presentation entitled "Bridge to Work" (full slide presentation may be viewed at [www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublicque.asp](http://www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublicque.asp)). She introduced the major components of the federal government's Internationally Trained Workers Initiative (ITWSI), and spoke in particular about the program Bridge to Work. She cited examples of successful programs such as Career Bridge (an internship program in the Greater Toronto Area), the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers' Engineering Technologists Integration Program, and the International Pharmacy Graduate Program.

Ms. Prince-St-Amand noted that while the Bridge to Work initiative had not yet secured dedicated funding, the government was very receptive to ideas that may emerge from the Dialogue. She emphasized that as the initiative was national in scope, models or pilot projects brought forward by Dialogue participants should be replicable across provinces.

In response to participant questions, Ms. Prince-St-Amand indicated that HRSDC would work with both regulated and non-regulated occupations, and suggested that consensus from interest groups be obtained before proposals were put forward. She also acknowledged the importance of the trades and welcomed further discussion on collaboration in this area. She commended the Edmonton Mennonite Centre on replicating its program for technologists to assist accountants.



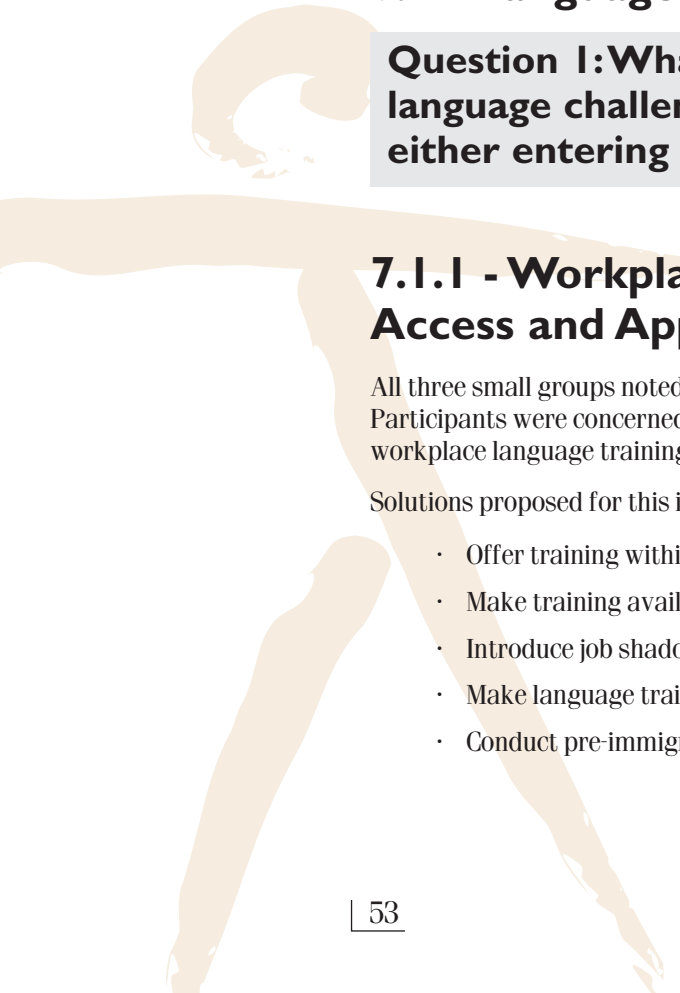
## 7. Discussion Questions

Dialogue participants broke into small groups to discuss the five pre-determined questions dealing with barriers affecting the integration of immigrants into the labour market. Each group was assigned a facilitator and recorder. During discussion, each group was further divided into three to four tables of no more than eight people each, with a mix of representation from Immigrant Serving Agencies, Sector Councils and government.

Following the presentation of each question to the small groups, individual table discussions first took place within each small group. Following presentations on table discussions, the entire small group together identified three to five priority issues for attention. Group discussion then focused on solutions to these issues, and the required leadership. All three small groups presented the results of their discussion at plenary sessions, and questions and comments were invited from the floor.

The following sections summarize the main themes that emerged from group discussion (slides on individual small group presentations may be viewed at [www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublique.asp](http://www.savie.qc.ca/ccocde/an/accueilpublique.asp)).

### 7.1 - Language



**Question 1: What are the key issues regarding language challenges experienced by immigrants either entering or in the workplace?**

#### 7.1.1 - Workplace Language Training: Availability, Access and Appropriateness

All three small groups noted workplace language training as a priority issue for attention. Participants were concerned about the availability of, access to, and the appropriateness of workplace language training.

Solutions proposed for this issue included:

- Offer training within or near the workplace.
- Make training available at flexible times (not just during work hours).
- Introduce job shadowing and mentoring in the workplace.
- Make language training work-specific (employers to take the lead for this solution).
- Conduct pre-immigration training and assessment.

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- Expand eligibility criteria for language training (leadership to come from government, the community and Sector Councils).
- Develop language training that meets the Canadian labour market's sectoral, regional and seasonal needs.
- Develop benchmarks to standardize language and competencies for specific occupations.
- Involve the user in the development of workplace materials and use focus groups and committees to validate materials (leadership to come from community agencies, post-secondary institutions, the National Visible Minority Council and the media).
- Identify and demonstrate how employees and immigrants can benefit from the availability of a wide range of language training.
- Develop and share creative approaches for training and training resources.
- Get small communities to work with large communities to coordinate language training (government to take the lead)
- Develop different funding criteria for small communities and employers (government should take the lead, working with community and Sector Councils)
- Advocate for adequate allocation of funds to language training (umbrella organizations to take the lead).
- Get funders to act in partnership.
- Leverage and use existing resources for language training.



### 7.1.2 - Assessment of Requirements and Skills

One group was concerned about the difficulties employers and immigrants face in assessing language requirements and skill levels.

The group proposed the following solutions:

- Get employers, Sector Councils, community organizations and educational institutes to work in partnership on this issue.
- Market existing resources to employers and demonstrate how they will benefit from investment in this issue.
- Integrate language training into other learning programs.



### 7.1.3 - Perception versus Reality

One group discussed how immigrants' language abilities often influenced others' perceptions of their work ability. Although immigrants may be highly skilled, their difficulty in using both verbal and non-verbal language often lead to employers and colleagues perceiving them as unsuitable for the job.

Solutions proposed were as follows:

- Provide more cross-cultural communication training (leadership for this solution should come from key stakeholders such as employers, labour, professionals and associations).
- Develop tool kits to help change perceptions among employers (community groups and Sector Councils to take leadership).
- Develop a clearing house or a database of existing materials and services dealing with this issue (community groups and Sector Councils to take leadership).

### 7.1.4 - Lack of Resources

One group brought up the issue of lack of resources to deal with language challenges.

The group suggested the following solutions:

- Partner with other organizations and pool resources.
- Develop more electronic resources in the country of origin and in Canada.
- Allow for more flexibility in funding to deal with language issues (develop new approaches and identify gaps).
- Identify those who will benefit from improved language skills.

## 7.2 - Canadian Work Experience

**Question 2: From your perspective, what are the issues affecting immigrants' lack of relevant Canadian work experience\*?**

\*Note: One of the Dialogue groups expressed views with regard to "*Canadian Work Experience*" and "*Lack of Canadian Work Experience*" as follows:

In the term "Canadian work experience", the word "Canadian" may be an inappropriate qualifier. No matter where work experience is gained it has to be weighed on its own merits.

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It also has a human rights dimension in the sense that we can no more speak of or ask as a job requirement that a person have "Canadian work experience" than we can of "male" work experience, or "older" work experience or "able bodied" work experience or "English" work experience ... since all of these qualifiers go counter to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and would promote discrimination. To speak of "Canadian work experience" is to give it an ethnic and national origin thus clearly against the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which forbids discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

In other words, work experience has to be evaluated by measurable and reasonable criteria, i.e. number of years, related to a specific field or a specific job and it cannot be defined on the basis of where (the country) it was acquired.

The dilemma for an employer is how to properly evaluate work experience gained by an immigrant outside of Canada. The challenge is to demonstrate how their work experience is directly transferable to the employers' situation in Canada.

The lack of "Canadian work experience" should not invalidate any candidate and the term should be avoided completely. The more accurate term should be "relevant" work experience.

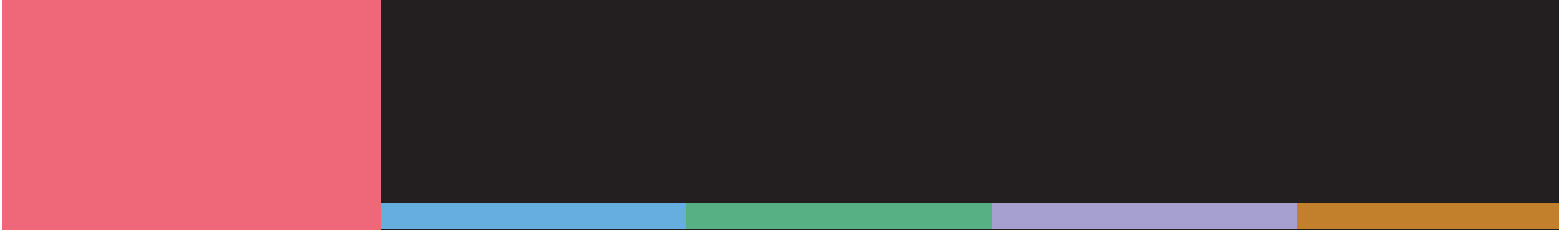


### 7.2.1 - Competency versus Experience

All three groups discussed the issue of hiring requirements that focus on Canadian experience instead of competencies needed for the job. One group perceived this practice as discriminatory. Another group noted that this practice could lead to false shortages in labour as potential labour sources were not used.

Solutions proposed for this issue were as follows:

- Create employer understanding of the issue through cross-cultural training, workplace training, use of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) and learning portfolios, subsidies, coaching and mentoring, and working with the media.
- Incorporate sensitivity and cultural awareness into recruiting and hiring practices to eliminate preconceptions and concentrate on the individual's skills and competencies.
- Get employers to define their requirement for Canadian experience; conduct research to find out employer perspectives on this issue (employers and Sector Councils to take the lead for this solution).
- Develop better tools that support employers in selection processes that target the hiring of newcomers (Sector Councils to take the lead).
- Do more research overseas to promote Canadian recognition of foreign training and work experience.

- 
- Provide training in specific competencies.
  - Provide newcomers with industry orientations and with terminology commonly used in the specific Canadian industry (community agencies should partner with Sector Councils to ensure that relevant information is provided in immigrant services).
  - Establish a national system for academic assessments, Canadian work experience (see note in para. 7.2), equivalencies and transferable competencies.

## 7.2.2 - Transferability of Skills

One group discussed how immigrants that lack requisite Canadian experience have skills that should be transferable between job categories within an industry or sector.

The group suggested the following solutions:

- Allow immigrants to gain experience through co-op initiatives.
- Develop culturally sensitive systems for testing skills.
- Train employees to understand variations in skill levels.
- To deal with “protectionism,” implement solutions with all stakeholders involved (unions, professions, employees, etc.).
- Communicate the definition of employability skills and requirements (e.g., academic qualifications, personal management and teamwork skills) to both employers and immigrants (CCBET to take the lead).



## 7.2.3 - Difficulty in Assessing Immigrant Skills

Two groups noted the difficulty of assessing the skills and competencies of immigrants.

The group proposed the following solutions:

- Prepare national standards to be used for all occupations.
- Standardize credentialization in all provinces.
- Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies should help newcomers establish and use proper terminology to deal with requirements for Canadian experience.
- Develop assessment tools to be used abroad by potential immigrants to Canada.
- Build on models such as the *Régime d'apprentissage en milieu de travail* in Quebec.

### 7.3 - Foreign Work Experience

#### Question 3: What are the issues impacting the verification and/or validation of foreign work experience?

#### 7.3.1 - Lack of Standardized Assessments

Two groups noted the need for greater standardization in the assessment of education and credentials, work experience and competencies, both within Canada and internationally.

Solutions proposed included:

- Develop work placements to enable employers to assess skills.
- Compare competencies for similar sectors in other countries.
- Develop a national cross-sectoral strategy to standardize assessments.
- Develop international reciprocity agreements.



#### 7.3.2 - Establishing Equivalencies

One group focussed on the question of equivalencies. The group discussed how it was difficult to compare jobs within Canada to those abroad.

The group proposed the following solutions:

- Show immigrants how to present resumes in an appropriate way for Canada (community and employment service agencies to take the lead).
- Get employers to use “former” newcomers to assess newcomer experience and qualifications.
- Share current best practices among employers (e.g., use of peer industry experts in the interview process; online interviews; conducting interviews in the home country of the immigrant using technology).
- Ensure better co-ordination of information regarding credentials between relevant bodies such as Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), HRSDC and credential recognition bodies.
- Ensure multi-stakeholder involvement in solutions leading to one-stop industry-specific consortia (leadership to come from government, employers, community agencies and umbrella groups).
- Establish international agreements.
- Review immigration policy as it relates to independent immigrants (i.e., the point system) to align with labour market.



### 7.3.3 - Reliability of Documents

One group brought forward the issue of how it was difficult to determine the reliability of documents (e.g., diplomas, certificates, letters of reference) presented by immigrants.

The group proposed the following as solutions to this issue:

- Get Citizenship and Immigration Canada to approve letters of reference.
- Develop resources in source countries such as a portal on finding information (maintained by the Government of Canada).
- Develop questionnaires for employers on competencies and job skills that prospective employees can fill out.

### 7.3.4 - Lack of Formal Qualifications

One group noted how highly skilled immigrants often lack formal qualifications.

The group proposed the following solutions:

- Work on portfolio development (using PLAR and e-portfolios).
- Introduce job shadowing and job placements for immigrants, with evaluations by Canadian skilled workers.
- Develop competency and assessment tools to measure skills for immigrants without formal documentation or paper certification.



### 7.3.5 - Inadequate Marketing Skills

One group discussed how immigrant workers lack the ability to market themselves appropriately to Canadian employers.

The group suggested the following solutions:

- Get immigrants to prepare a career portfolio.
- Help immigrants to validate and demonstrate their credentials and experience.
- Get immigrants to provide verifiable references.

### 7.3.6 - Balancing Credibility and Cost

One group noted the need to take into consideration cost factors in establishing the credibility of foreign credentials.

Solutions proposed for this issue include:

- Provide newcomers with more tools (e.g. portfolios, photos, PLAR) to explain their experience (Immigrant Services Agencies to take the lead).
- Develop employer-focused websites (e.g. [www.lookingahead.bc.ca](http://www.lookingahead.bc.ca), [www.hireimmigrants.ca](http://www.hireimmigrants.ca)) and skills-check CDROMs.
- Use available technology (e.g. web conferencing at libraries, embassies, universities).
- Get stakeholders within an industry to “buy into” standards (look at current best practices).
- Develop a communications strategy to share available resources.



### 7.4 - Pre-Entry Issues

**Question 4: From your perspective, aside from language, what are the key issues regarding immigrants' preparations prior to entering Canada?**

#### 7.4.1 - Immigrants' Misconceptions

One group noted that many immigrants arrive with misconceptions about the requirements of the Canadian work environment.

The group proposed the following solution:

- Make sure that services in the country of origin provide accurate and current information on the requirements of the Canadian work environment.

#### 7.4.2 - Lack of Labour Market Information

Two groups noted the lack of realistic and accurate labour market information available to immigrants prior to their coming to Canada. It was noted that immigration professionals as well needed to know and understand the Canadian labour market.

Solutions proposed for this issue included:

- Identify and publicize the technical and professional requirements of the Canadian labour market, and prepare immigrants psychologically for the changes they



will experience (immigration professionals and immigrants to be responsible for this solution)

- Professions should undertake their own real-time labour market analysis, make the results accessible in other countries and link the analysis to the work done by all sectors, Statistics Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) (Sector Councils, regulatory bodies and CIC to take the lead).
- Fund services for “prior to arrivals” (government and community agencies to take the lead).
- Facilitate access to accurate and honest information (leadership to come from the federal government in consultation with stakeholders).

### 7.4.3 - Lack of Regional Information

One group brought up the lack of relevant, accurate and up-to-date regional information.

The group identified the following solutions to this issue:

- Provide regional information online through a government portal and also on regional sites (e.g. Quebec roadmap).
- Make the information reader-friendly and available at embassies for approved immigrants.
- Include socialization issues (e.g. dealing with solitude, housing, etc.) in the information.
- Provide video presentations.

The group indicated that leadership for these solutions should come from the federal and provincial/territorial governments, private organizations, content providers, embassy staff and immigrant consultants.

### 7.4.4 - Inadequate Orientation Overseas

One group indicated that immigrants receive inadequate orientation overseas, and so lack information on settlement, the labour market and employment, and understanding of the Canadian context and infrastructure.

The group proposed the following solutions:

- Develop a comprehensive web portal in plain language, providing information from federal, provincial, regional government and sectoral sources.
- Provide a broad summary of the Canadian federal/provincial/municipal context prior to immigrant entry (through websites, seminars abroad and distribution of resource materials at Canadian embassies).
- Develop alternative delivery methods for people without access to computers

(e.g. information kiosks, printed copies).

- Develop a marketing strategy so that new and potential immigrants know how to access available information.
- Assign immigrants an access code so that they can obtain information for their specific needs and appropriate contacts.

### 7.4.5 - Lack of Human Contact

One group noted that accessing information through portals was not sufficient for immigrants to understand the Canadian environment; more human interaction would be helpful.

The group proposed as solutions:

- Assess the serious understaffing situation at Consulates (Federal Government to take the lead).
- Get immigrants to return to their countries and share information (leadership to come from Sector Councils, Immigrant Serving Agencies and governments).



### 7.4.6 - Inadequate Assessment of Credentials

One group noted that immigrants were unable to get their credentials properly assessed before coming to Canada.

The group proposed the following as solutions:

- Provide immigrants with specific information on their professions in Canada (e.g. brief lawyers on differences between civil and common law).
- Give immigrants the opportunity to address professional gaps online.

The group indicated that professional regulatory bodies should take leadership for these solutions.

## 7.5 - Personal Biases

**Question 5: Do you feel discriminatory attitudes and practices have an impact on the hiring of immigrants in Canada? If so, what do you feel are the key issues?**



## 7.5.1 - Reluctance to Discuss Discrimination

One group discussed the issue of how people may fear to speak about discrimination. If discrimination is not addressed transparently, it is difficult to identify and to combat.

The group suggested the following solutions for this issue:

- Inform people about discrimination and work on sensitization.
- Inform and train hiring committees about discrimination.
- Work on learning to recognize non-verbal norms of communication.
- Create obligations to respect hiring equity, and provide incentives and recognition for those who meet obligations.

The group proposed that leadership for these solutions should come from private sector organizations, funders, and other groups such as parents and youth.

## 7.5.2 – Public Perception of Immigrants

One issue raised during small group discussion was the public perception of immigrants. It was noted that pre-conceived notions were often inaccurate and could result in discrimination.

Recommended solutions included all of the proposed solutions for Issue *7.5.3 Discriminatory Attitudes and Practices*, as well as the following:

- Make sure a resource/support person is available for both the employer and jobseeker.
- Provide jobseekers with training on the Employment Standards Act (community groups, government and Sector Councils to take the lead).
- Conduct a public education campaign to counter mainstream media images.

## 7.5.3 - Discriminatory Attitudes and Practices

All three groups discussed the existence of discriminatory attitudes and practices. One group noted that discrimination exists despite good intentions. Immigrants may be discriminated against on the basis of accents or personal suitability. Another group noted that subtle discrimination may be practised. Yet another group noted the issue of systemic discrimination in hiring.

Solutions proposed to deal with the discrimination issue included the following:

- For overt discrimination (Sector Councils to take leadership to develop these solutions within their own sector):

Continued on next page

## Dialogue Event

- Provide diversity training within organizations (focus on similarities between immigrants and Canadians).
- Communicate to the public the benefits that foreign trained workers bring with them (identify the specific skills of immigrants).
- Provide incentives for work placements and memberships.
- Identify best practices in diversity training that exist in the private sector (note variance in small and medium enterprises).
- Provide information on and enforce the sections of the Charter of Rights that deal with discrimination.
- Get to know existing solutions and use and share these practices (e.g. neighbourhood business safe harbours in Nanaimo, BC).
- For subtle discrimination:
  - Provide ongoing cross-cultural training for *all* employers, employees, job-seekers and regulatory bodies.
  - Introduce cross-cultural training in the school system (use resources from the department of Canadian Heritage resources for this).
  - Provide training in diversity management for human resource practitioners and supervisors (community services to take the lead in providing training for employers; Sector Councils to play a part as well).
  - Use the ISO model to enforce standards and equity.
  - Support new workers in their new workplaces.
- For systemic discrimination in hiring practices:
  - Identify areas of concern and provide training to immigrants to address these concerns.
  - Provide jobseekers with training in human rights (community organization to take the lead).
  - Provide employers with resources, funding, tools and training to support changes in their hiring practices.
  - Reward and showcase employers that demonstrate successful integration programs in the workplace.



- 
- Develop and share guidelines and tools for bias-free hiring practices (Chambers of Commerce and community groups to take the lead).
  - Share best practices and success stories.

## 7.5.4 - Artificial Barriers

One group noted that artificial barriers played a role in discriminating against the hiring of immigrants. These artificial barriers can come in the form of hiring requirements specifying Canadian experience, language ability, credential recognition and Canadian education.

Proposed solutions included:

- Provide support to immigrants in understanding the Canadian workplace, culture and hiring process.
- Provide diversity training.
- Provide incentives for implementing and marketing internship, co-ops and work placement programs.
- Introduce stronger legislation to enforce human rights.

## 8. Next Steps and Closing Remarks



The Dialogue participants were informed that follow-up interviews would take place during the three months following the Dialogue event. Actions and partnerships resulting from the Dialogue would be monitored by CCCBET. A comprehensive report on the Dialogue (including research, Dialogue proceedings and resulting partnerships and initiatives) would be developed and circulated to all participants in the first quarter of 2006.

The Dialogue ended with a closing address by Bernadette Beaupré, Co-Chair of CCCBET. Ms. Beaupré noted that the Dialogue had effectively articulated issues on access to employment and identified best practices and solutions. She welcomed the “360 degree” perspective of the discussions during the event, with contributions from all stakeholders. She drew attention to the National Integrated Delivery Strategy and the launch of a website with materials from all Sector Councils. She thanked all participants for their contribution to the Dialogue, and acknowledged the efforts of the organizers, and the support of HRSDC.

A stylized, light green silhouette of a person standing and holding a globe. The figure is positioned on the left side of the page, with the globe held in their right hand. The background is a solid green color. At the top of the page, there is a horizontal bar divided into four colored segments: blue, red, purple, and brown.

# Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue

A white, brushstroke-like graphic that tapers at both ends, serving as a background for the text below.

Follow-Up Interviews,  
Partnerships, Next Steps

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the information gathered in interviews following the Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue of September 8 - 9, 2005 which was held at the Sheraton Hotel in Ottawa, Ontario.

The purpose of the Dialogue event was to promote networking, sharing of information, and partnerships among participants. The purpose of conducting interviews after the Dialogue was to assess the value of the event to participants, to gather information on current and potential partnerships between participants, and to find out how CCCBET could support and assist with animating these partnerships.

The Dialogue event and the follow-up interviews were part of an initiative put forward by the Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET) and supported by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the British Columbia Ministry of Economic Development.

## 2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The follow-up interviews were designed to help CCCBET move forward following the Dialogue event. Interview questions were not intended to gather rigorous statistical information, but to elicit ideas from interviewees, and to provide CCCBET with information that it could use for further action. The list of interview questions is provided in Appendix 1.

Interviews were conducted by telephone over a two and a half month period, from October 1, 2005 to December 21, 2005. All 19 Sector Councils and 40 Immigrant Serving Agencies represented at the Dialogue were approached for interviews, but not all were available to participate. In total, 16 (84%) Sector Councils and 35 (88%) Immigrant Serving Agencies participated in the interviews. The interviews were conducted by the Dialogue Project Manager, with the exception of three interviews in French that were conducted by a bi-lingual associate.

A second set of follow-up interviews were conducted from January 3, 2006 to April 15, 2006, to continue to provide information to Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies and further assist them in forming partnerships.

## 3. INTERVIEW PROFILES

### A. Sector Councils

The 16 Sector Councils that participated in the interviews represented a range of workforce sizes, as shown in Table 1. The smallest workforce size represented by a Sector Council was 50,000 to 69,000 people, while the largest was 1.67 million (2 Sector Councils).

## Follow-Up Interviews, Partnerships, Next Steps

**Table 1 Size of Workforce Represented by Sector Councils**

Size of Workforce (people)	Sector Councils
50,000 – 100,000	4
100,000 – 200,000	4
200,000 – 399,000	4
400,00 and above	6

Note: One Sector Council is not included in the table. This Sector Council does not represent a workforce but is affiliated with about 30 organizations involved in labour force development issues.

All 16 Sector Councils indicated that they represent the workforce in all parts of Canada; however, the locations of their Sector Council offices are in one location, e.g. Ontario, Alberta or Manitoba.



### **B. Immigrant Serving Agencies**

Most of the 35 Immigrant Serving Agencies interviewed had fewer than 60 staff members, as shown in Table 2. Close to half (15 agencies) had fewer than 20 staff. Five agencies reported having more than 130 staff members. However, it should be noted that responses were not consistent. Some agencies included part-time staff in their personnel count while others specifically excluded part-time staff. Some simply reported a staff count without specifying full-time or part-time.

**Table 2 Number of Staff at Immigrant Serving Agencies**

Number of Staff (people)	Immigrant Serving Agencies
Under 20	15
20 - 60	12
80 - 100	2
130 and up	5



## 4. NETWORKING AMONG DIALOGUE PARTICIPANTS

### A. Sector Councils

Of the 16 Sector Councils interviewed 87.5% noted that they had done additional networking as a result of the Dialogue. The type of networking reported included:

- Attendance at meetings and conferences (8 instances)
- Working together on a proposal or a new initiative (6 instances)
- Networking using the Internet and other communication tools (5 instances)
- Sharing information from the Dialogue internally within the Sector Council (3 instances)
- Meetings with other organizations and with other Dialogue attendees (2 instances)

### B. Immigrant Serving Agencies

About a quarter of the Immigrant Serving Agencies interviewed (9 out of 35 Immigrant Serving Agencies) noted that they had not done any additional networking following the Dialogue.

Immigrant Serving Agencies reported doing the following types of networking:

- Networking with other Dialogue attendees (15 instances)
- Networking as part of regular, ongoing work (12 instances)
- Attendance at meetings and conferences (9 instances)
- Working together on a proposal or new initiative (4 instances)
- Sharing information from the Dialogue internally within the Immigrant Serving Agencies (3 instances)
- Networking with government (1 instance)

## Follow-Up Interviews, Partnerships, Next Steps

## 5. EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

### A. Sector Councils

Only three (19%) Sector Councils reported having pre-existing partnerships with Immigrant Serving Agencies. The partnerships included working on language classes for a specific profession, sharing information through presentations and websites, and participation on steering committees.

Two Sector Councils reported that their partnerships were working well, while one noted “mixed experiences.” The reasons given for the partnerships working well were support from employers and including partnerships as part of the Council’s strategic planning. One Council noted that lack of funding was affecting its partnerships.

Of the 13 Sector Councils that reported not having pre-existing partnerships, three noted that their provincial partners (i.e. provincial Sector Councils) had partnerships with Immigrant Serving Agencies, and two indicated potential partnerships.

### B. Immigrant Serving Agencies

In direct contrast to the Sector Councils, only three Immigrant Serving Agencies reported not having any current partnerships with employer groups or individual employers. Of these three, one agency noted that it had no partnerships because it was an umbrella agency, and one indicated a potential partnership.

Of the 32 (91%) Immigrant Serving Agencies that reported current partnerships, only three instances of partnerships with employer groups were specified. The other types of partnerships reported included:

- Working with individual employers as part of job placement and job development services (19 instances)
- Working with individual employers as part of a program (16 instances)
- Serving on committees (1 instance)

Immigrant Serving Agencies reported partnerships with many different types of employers, including:

- Hotels
- Hospitals and residential care homes
- Restaurants
- Retailers
- Telecommunication firms
- Supermarkets
- Small businesses and professional firms
- Financial institutions





Immigrant Serving Agencies reported partnerships with employer groups such as Chambers of Commerce, Regional Immigrant Councils, Boards of Trade and Economic Development Corporations.

The majority (28 Immigrant Serving Agencies) reported that their partnerships were working well. They gave the following reasons for their partnerships working well:

- Careful assessment, initiation and placement of employees (13 instances)
- Reputation and credibility established over time (11 instances)
- Relationship developed and maintained with employers (9 instances)
- Meeting of employer standards and needs (8 instances)
- Monitoring of and follow-up on placements (6 instances)
- Employer's attitudes (4 instances)
- Current shortage in job market (3 instances)
- High profile of agency in community (3 instances)

Other reasons cited included networking, graduates of programs becoming employers, evidence of benefits, provision of short-term intensive services, clear identification of responsibilities, and provision of employer tools.

When asked what was “not working” with their partnerships, 11 Immigrant Serving Agencies responded citing lack of resources (6 instances), employer attitudes (8 instances), lack of supporting programs (2 instances), and other reasons such as lack of transportation, internal staffing changes and inter-cultural communication.

## **6. PARTNERSHIP IDEAS FROM PARTICIPANTS**

### **A. Sector Councils**

Over half (56%) of the Sector Councils interviewed (9 out of 16 Sector Councils) indicated that they had had ideas about partnerships since the Dialogue. Their ideas for partnerships included:

- Programs for career bridging and gaining Canadian work experience (4 instances)
- Providing information so that Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies know more about each other (2 instances)
- Standardizing the credential assessment process

## Follow-Up Interviews, Partnerships, Next Steps

- Creating a model for working relationships between Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies at the provincial level
- “Virtual” partnerships using the Internet (e.g. hosting “virtual” visits on an interactive website)
- Working on foreign competency recognition and competency development
- Matching immigrant workforce to industry needs
- Sharing information, tool kits, and best practices among Sector Councils, Immigrant Serving Agencies and immigrants

Sector Councils indicated that CCCBET could help them make connections with ASPECT (2 instances), with Immigrant Serving Agencies located in major centres, with the Bridges to Work Program, and with Immigrant Serving Agencies that can address reading test skills.

When asked which Immigrant Serving Agencies they would like to work with, the following were mentioned:

- Community-based training agency associations (e.g. ONESTEP, TCRI and ASPECT) (4 instances)
- Immigrant Serving Agencies in areas of industry growth (2 instances)
- Immigrant Serving Agencies in major urban centres
- Agencies that understand employer needs and standards
- All agencies!

One Sector Council noted that in its sector, it was the provincial associations and not the national Sector Council that worked directly with Immigrant Serving Agencies. Another Sector Council noted that it would most likely take a national approach and work with multiple agencies to implement a national initiative. Yet another Sector Council indicated that some Immigrant Serving Agencies were not developed enough (i.e. they were too small and did not yet have appropriate tools).

### **B. Immigrant Serving Agencies**

57% (20 out of 35) of the Immigrant Serving Agencies interviewed indicated that they had had ideas about partnerships since the Dialogue. Their ideas for partnership included:

- Partnering with specific Sector Councils (8 instances)
- Partnering with other Immigrant Serving Agencies or Immigrant Serving Associations (4 instances)
- Apprenticeships with local businesses



- Working with local employers in specific sectors
- Certifying employment counsellors to conduct prior learning assessments
- Working with an employer group on an assessment tool
- Working with national Sector Councils to influence Sector Councils at the provincial level
- Retraining professionals for other careers
- Holding regional discussions
- Providing information to potential immigrants on the Internet on how things are done in Canada (resume writing, presentation skills, etc.)
- Providing opportunities for direct contact between Sector Councils and clients (e.g. job fairs with direct Sector Council participation)
- Having regional instead of provincial immigrant nominees

The Immigrant Serving Agencies were asked what Sector Councils they would like to work with and what connections CCCBET could help them make.

The most commonly mentioned sectors were:

- Tourism (21 instances)
- Health Care (12 instances)
- Retail / Customer services (11 instances)
- Hospitality (10 instances)
- Construction (9 instances)
- Trucking (7 instances)
- Engineering (4 instances)
- Pharmaceuticals (4 instances)
- Regulated professions (3 instances)
- Textiles (3 instances)
- Education—universities and colleges (2 instances)
- Trades (2 instances)
- Training boards and agencies (2 instances)

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## Follow-Up Interviews, Partnerships, Next Steps

Other sectors cited more than once by Immigrant Serving Agencies included the HR Council's Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector, the Canada Bus Association and Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada, arts and culture, telecommunications and information technology, financial and other services.

One agency noted that it would like to see Sector Councils in Quebec share information with other Sector Councils in the country.

Some agencies suggested that CCCBET could further help agencies by keeping agencies informed on Sector Council developments, taking the lead on putting into action some of the ideas from the Dialogue event, and informing employers/councils of cultural differences in immigrant employees.

One Immigrant Serving Agency noted the importance of forming partnerships at the appropriate (federal versus provincial) level.

## 7. VIEWS ON HAVING A DIALOGUE FOLLOW-UP EVENT



All Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies that participated in the interviews indicated interest in participating in a follow-up event to the Dialogue. Some, however, noted that their attendance might be affected by the timing of the event (2 instances) and the availability of resources (2 instances). Three respondents indicated that they would only attend if the follow-up event focused on next steps, and three others thought that some other more appropriate person from their organization might attend the event.

Many respondents commented positively on the Dialogue event. Appendix 2 provides a list of these positive comments. Respondents also provided feedback on how the Dialogue could have been improved. These comments are listed in Appendix 3.

When asked what a follow-up event would look like, one respondent thought it should be fairly similar, while the majority gave suggestions as follows:

- Make the follow-up event more action and goal-oriented, and focused on next steps (24 instances)
- Share case studies (both success and failures), partnership models and best practices (12 instances)
- Hear from employers about their issues and needs (7 instances)
- Focus more on practical, concrete issues and how to work together (6 instances)
- Provide more information on Sector Councils (6 instances)
- Share information among Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies (6 instances)

- Allow opportunities for networking (4 instances)
- Allow opportunities for matchmaking (4 instances)
- Focus on available tools for partnerships (3 instances)
- Include specific topics such as self-assessments, foreign credential recognition, language assessment tools, soft skills (vs. hard skills), and employment counselling (3 instances)
- Provide employers with information on the benefits of hiring immigrants, the supply of immigrants and strategies for hiring immigrants (2 instances)
- Focus on partnership relationships between national Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies (2 instances)
- Focus on sectors that have uptake potential
- Group people that have a common interest
- Use the Internet: encourage people to go on-line to find information or participate in an information exchange
- Hold the event once a year
- Provide information on the event ahead of time to allow participants to reflect and to prepare for the event

One respondent suggested inviting immigrants to the event to provide information directly, while another respondent warned against doing so.

Nine respondents proposed holding regional or provincial Dialogues, while three suggested that the follow-up event have more regional focus (although one of these three noted interest in getting a “pan-Canadian view” of Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies). One Immigrant Serving Agency expressed interest in seeing more Quebec Sector Councils attend and more information on Quebec.

## 8. PARTNERSHIPS & INFORMATION SHARING RESULTING FROM THE DIALOGUE

As a result of the Dialogue event and follow-up interviews, 20 partnerships and 38 information sharing opportunities have occurred.

### A. Partnerships

- Five BC Sector Councils and one BC Immigrant Serving Agency partnered on an RFP with the Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT) to share resources and training. Results included two signed memorandums of understanding and an alliance formed to use a training tool. (6 instances)

## Follow-Up Interviews, Partnerships, Next Steps

- As a result of the Dialogue, the Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects (ONESTEP) and the Association of Service Providers for Employability & Career Training (ASPECT) have representation on:
  - the Advisory Committee of the Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Internationally Trained Workers Project; and
  - their respective provincial National Integrated Delivery Strategy (NIDS) committees. (4 instances)
- As a result of relationships formed at the Dialogue event, three successful resettlements of immigrant families have taken place. The relationships were between the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society and the Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society for placement of a family from Vernon to Victoria, BC; the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies in Calgary, AB for placement of a family from Victoria, BC to Calgary, AB and the Settlement & Integration Service Organization in Hamilton, ON for placement of a family from Victoria, BC to Ontario. (3 instances)
- As a result of attending the Dialogue event the Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society became a member of the Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT). Speaker and training information was provided by ASPECT to the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George, BC. (2 instances)
- A presentation was made by the Plastics Sector Council to newcomers for an Immigrant Serving Agency in Toronto. Another Immigrant Serving Agency in Toronto partnered with the Plastics Sector Council in regard to recruitment of employees, bridging programs, and sharing job descriptions. (2 instances)
- A Sector Council and an Immigrant Serving Agency in Ontario collaborated on a proposal to improve hiring of newcomers. (1 instance)
- Two clients were successfully placed with Early Childhood by the Association for New Canadians in St. John's, NF. (1 instance)
- The Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects (ONESTEP) became involved with the HR Council's Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector's initiative, Working Group on Labour Force information. (1 instance)



### **B. Information Sharing**

- A workplace literacy report by the National Visible Minorities Council/Canada Career Consortium was provided to three Sector Councils in Ontario and an Immigrant Serving Agency in Quebec. Upon completion, their best practices handbook for holding consultations with visible minority communities will also be provided. (4 instances)
- The contact information of three Immigrant Serving Agencies in Ontario was provided to the HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-Profit Sector. (3 instances)

- 
- The contact information of the Retail Council was provided to three Immigrant Serving Agencies in Ontario. (3 instances)
  - The contact information of the Textiles Human Resources Council was provided to three Immigrant Serving Agencies, two in Ontario and one in Quebec. (3 instances)
  - The contact information of the Canadian Tourism Human Resources Council was provided to Immigrant Serving Agencies in BC and Ontario and contact was made by an association for new Canadians in NF. (3 instances)
  - Two Sector Councils in Ontario looking for information on collective agencies and assessment tools were contacted by the Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT). (2 instances)
  - The contact information of the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers was provided to two Immigrant Serving Agencies, one in Quebec and one in BC. (2 instances)
  - The contact information of the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies in Edmonton, AB was provided to an Immigrant Serving Agency and a Sector Council in Ontario. (2 instances)
  - The Canadian Technology Human Resources Board provided their assessment and profiling tool to an Immigrant Serving Agency in Ontario and their contact information was provided to another Immigrant Serving Agency in Toronto. (2 Instances)
  - An Immigrant Serving Agency in Ontario shared their curriculum for enhanced language training with another agency in Ontario. (1 instance)
  - The contact information of the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council was provided to an Immigrant Serving Agency in Ontario. (1 instance)
  - The contact information of the Canada Bus Association and Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada has been provided to an Immigrant Serving Agency in Ontario. (1 instance)
  - Discussions regarding partnering on an RFP took place between an Immigrant Serving Agency in BC and an agency in Ontario. (1 instance)
  - The Dialogue Project Manager provided:
    - various immigrant agency member lists to six Sector Councils in Ontario and an apprenticeship list and link to website to an Immigrant Agency in Alberta. (7 instances)
    - member lists for AMSSA, ONESTEP and TCRI to the Canadian Plastics Sector Council. These groups were then contacted to assemble a compendium of products and services offered by each of them. This compendium will be on the

Continued on next page

## Follow-Up Interviews, Partnerships, Next Steps

Canadian Plastics Sector Council website [www.cpsc-ccsp.ca](http://www.cpsc-ccsp.ca) so that all employers in their sector will be aware of what such groups offer in order to better connect them to new Canadians as an important target group. (1 instance)

- local contact information for both Tourism and Agriculture to the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada. (1 instance)
- the contact information of COSTI to the Multicultural Association of Fredericton, NB regarding training materials for Level 4/5 enhanced language program. (1 instance)

## 9. SUMMARY

The “1st contact” goal of the Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue initiative was achieved by bringing together Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies from across Canada for the first time on a national basis.

In terms of the number of partnerships that were animated and the number of instances of information sharing, the Dialogue project has been deemed a success. It is expected that more partnerships will be animated over time as a result of the Dialogue experience.



## 10. NEXT STEPS

During the Dialogue event both the Sector Councils and Immigrant Serving Agencies expressed a desire to have more information about the other, the challenges they face and how those challenges are being handled. Both expressed a desire to come together to discuss more specific issues and to include employers in the discussions.

In addition, during the Dialogue and in the follow-up interviews, numerous requests were made to have “regional” dialogues (Ontario, Quebec and BC). As an outcome of this expressed interest and to further facilitate initiatives for non-regulated occupations, a proposal has been submitted by the Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET) to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) to have three regional dialogues involving sector councils, employers and immigrant serving agencies that would focus on examples of partnerships already in place and an exchange of information that would be specific to each province. Response from HRSDC is forthcoming; however, at the time of writing this report, the concept has garnered support from provincial governments in BC and Ontario.

CCCBET views this as an opportunity to offer solutions to connect employer sector councils, employers, and immigrant job seekers in order to allow the immigrants to contribute their skills and abilities to a healthy and robust Canadian economy.



## Appendix I List of Interview Questions

### IMMIGRANT AGENCY FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

1. How many staff does your agency have?
2. Have you done any additional networking following the Dialogue?  
If so, what is it?
3. Do you currently have any partnerships with any employer groups or individual employers?  
If yes, are they working well?  
If so, why is the partnership working so well.  
What is not working?
4. In the evaluation we had a lot of people (71%) who indicated that they were very likely to explore partnerships as a result of the Dialogue. Have you had any ideas about partnerships since the Dialogue?  
If yes, What is the idea?  
What connections can we help you make?  
If no, Are there any Sector Councils you would like to work with?
5. If we enable a partnership, who in your agency would be the contact person?
6. If we had a follow-up event to the Dialogue, would you participate?  
What would that look like to you?

### SECTOR COUNCIL FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

1. What is the size of the workforce you represent?
2. What parts of Canada are you in?
3. Have you done any additional networking following the Dialogue?  
If so, what is it?
4. Do you currently have any partnerships with immigrant agencies?  
If yes, are they working well?  
If so, why is the partnership working so well.  
What is not working?
5. In the evaluation we had a lot of people (71%) who indicated that they were very likely to explore partnerships as a result of the Dialogue. Have you had any ideas about partnerships since the Dialogue?  
If yes, What is the idea?  
What connections can we help you make?  
If no, Are there any Immigrant Agencies you would like to work with?
6. If we enable a partnership, who in your organization would be the contact person?
7. If we had a follow-up event to the Dialogue, would you participate?  
What would that look like to you?

## Appendix 2 Positive Comments on the Dialogue

...The first session was good in helping [me] to understand Immigrant Serving Agencies issues and what services they provide.

It was a good learning experience (eye opening)...[I] made good connections that would not have necessarily been made otherwise.

... liked the structure of the Dialogue event... it was well facilitated, the facilitators were very strong. The concepts at the Dialogue were good but we now need a motivation and energy building action.

...found the Dialogue very positive. It was very focused and [I] found meeting employers/Sector Councils very helpful. During the Dialogue, a good job was done of identifying the needs and programs to integrate.

The facilitators were excellent. The Dialogue was very well organized. The language issue was addressed well via simultaneous translators...[I] liked the questions asked and appreciated the level of the replies.

The Dialogue was a good starting point for building relationship. The Dialogue...[is like] a first date, where people try and get to know each other better and start to build trust...it is very important to continue to meet to build on that trust. Once trust has been established, people are more likely to talk about the real issues...“the good, the bad and the ugly.” Overall... the Dialogue was a good start. Now we need a good continuation.

The Dialogue was a great first step... it enhanced the level of awareness.

The Dialogue event was an eye opener. We [Immigrant Serving Agencies] knew there was a shortage of labour in Canada but it was only after talking with those in industry (Sector Council members)... [that we] realized it was a far greater problem...

The Dialogue format was conducive to discussion. It was unique and different from other functions...[I] liked having a question to work around and then work on solutions.

...[I] met interesting people, made good connections and shared good ideas... [I] thought the Dialogue was very much worthwhile.

The Dialogue event was great because it dealt with key core issues.

...[I] appreciated the number of Sector Councils...[that] attended the Dialogue.

The Dialogue was interesting and it was interesting to meet people. A lot of times you get more out of one-on-one conversations that take place than even from the sessions.





## Appendix 3

### Comments and Feedback on how the Dialogue could have been improved

...[I] had mixed views about the Dialogue event...goals were good, [but] the method used [in my opinion] was not going to achieve the goal of partnerships. As an example, the sessions were broken down and too structured to allow for effective networking...a more free-flowing discussion would have been more useful and less process focused. Partnerships develop when people are not in a structured environment, i.e. during breaks, in exhibit time, etc.

The Dialogue was a good opportunity to meet representatives from Immigrant Serving Agencies but there was a lot of overlap in the information.

...the Dialogue was not an effective link as it had National Sector Councils and Local Immigrant Serving Agencies...it would be far more effective to have "local" Sector Council and "local" Immigrant Serving Agencies.

The Dialogue event was a good introduction to a vital topic but now there needs to be follow-up. Needs have been established, now we need to find ways to fill them.

The Dialogue was very organized and...[I] made a lot of contacts. ...[I] was pleased with the setup and was happy to have all the contacts. It was a very useful experience for...[me] and...[our] team. However, there were too many things packed into one day and it was very tiring...[we] needed a bit of free time.

Dr. Foot, the dinner speaker, was one of the best parts of the Dialogue.

Although...the Dialogue went very smoothly, there was no opportunity for networking. It was, however, a good opportunity to see what Sector Councils are about and even that they exist.

It was well organized, but [I] would [have] like[d] the keynote to be at the beginning of the day to put ideas into our head. [...] less topics within the day, get deeper into discussions on fewer points. [...] would like translation in more breakouts so we can move around and hear from different people.

...(My) feeling is that the Sector Councils still focus too much on their own research, reference materials, statistical and LMI compilation work. Yet, the collaborative issues on how the councils could work with Immigrant Serving Agencies to enhance labor market integration are not given high priority.

Sector Councils need to work outside the box (of researches, statistics and fancy reading materials...) and get onto concrete services/program/training that could "directly" benefit skilled immigrants in labor market integration.

... Sector Councils should get their employers out to strike a balanced demand and supply outcome.

A stylized, light purple silhouette of a person with their arms outstretched horizontally, set against a purple background. The figure is positioned on the left side of the page. At the top of the page, there is a horizontal bar divided into four colored segments: blue, red, brown, and green.

# Pan-Canadian Sector Council & Immigrant Dialogue

A white, brushstroke-style graphic that tapers at both ends, serving as a background for the text.

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*the Dialogue*  
IMMIGRANT SERVING AGENCIES & SECTOR COUNCILS