

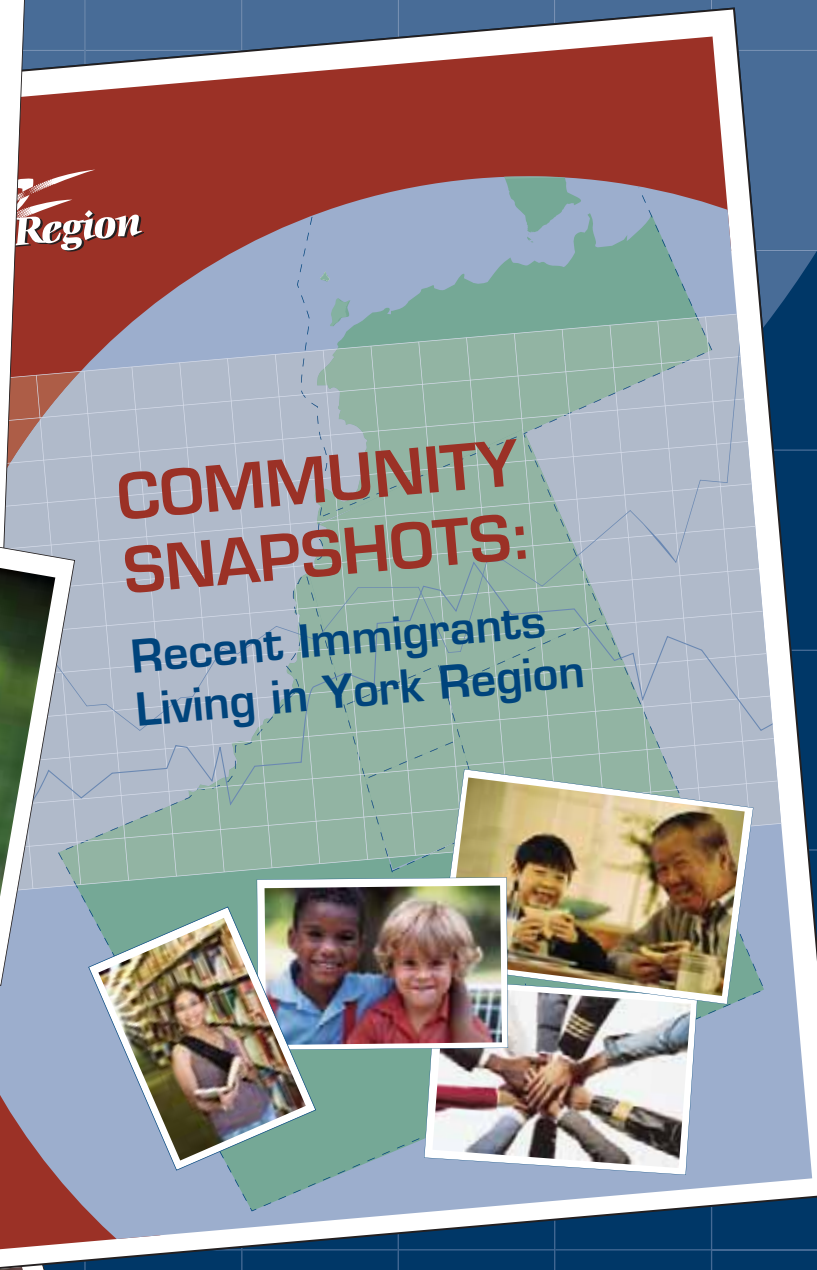


HIGHLIGHTS

F R O M

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS:

Recent Immigrants Living in York Region





Mayor
Tom Taylor
Town of Newmarket



Mayor
Tim Jones
Town of Aurora



Mayor
James Young
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor
Robert Grossi
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor
Danny Wheeler
Town of Georgina



Mayor
Margaret Black
Township of King



Regional Councillor
A.J. (Tony) Van Bynen
Town of Newmarket



Regional Chair and CEO
Bill Fisch



Mayor
Donald Cousens
Town of Markham



Mayor
William F. Bell
Town of Richmond Hill

A Message from Regional Council

York Region is pleased to present *Community Snapshots: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region*. This report provides information about the socio-economic status of recent immigrants in York Region.

The high quality of life we enjoy in York Region, and the region's proximity to Toronto, with its diverse population and services, have served to make York Region an attractive place for newcomers to Canada. At an increasing rate, new Canadians are choosing York Region as their home.

As this report shows, recent immigrants in York Region bring with them many attributes - they are generally well educated and highly skilled. Immigrants come to York Region from many different parts of the world, adding greatly to the cultural and social richness of our communities.

York Region is committed to assisting immigrants in maximizing their potential and integrating into the region's communities. This commitment is embedded in *Vision 2026*, the Region's strategic plan. One of the goals of the plan is to foster "quality communities for a diverse population". The strategic plan identifies the need to respond to our diversity with innovative service delivery options, and respond to the needs of vulnerable residents. York Region has been involved in a number of initiatives to help immigrants integrate into our communities. This report is a tool that can be used to respond to needs and enhance initiatives.

It is also hoped that the information in this report will put York Region (i.e. government and the broader community) in a better position to advocate for equitable funding. We also anticipate that this work will assist municipalities, agencies and organizations in understanding the attributes, challenges and needs of recent immigrants so that they can be provided with the right balance of services and programs necessary to support their integration into York Region and their ability to more quickly enhance their contributions to our economy, community and quality of life.



Regional Councillor
Frank Scarpitti
Town of Markham



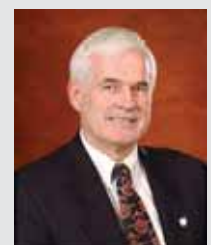
Regional Councillor
David Barrow
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Jack Heath
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Brenda Hogg
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Jim Jones
Town of Markham



Mayor
Michael Di Biase
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Mario Ferri
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Linda D. Jackson
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Joyce Frustaglio
City of Vaughan

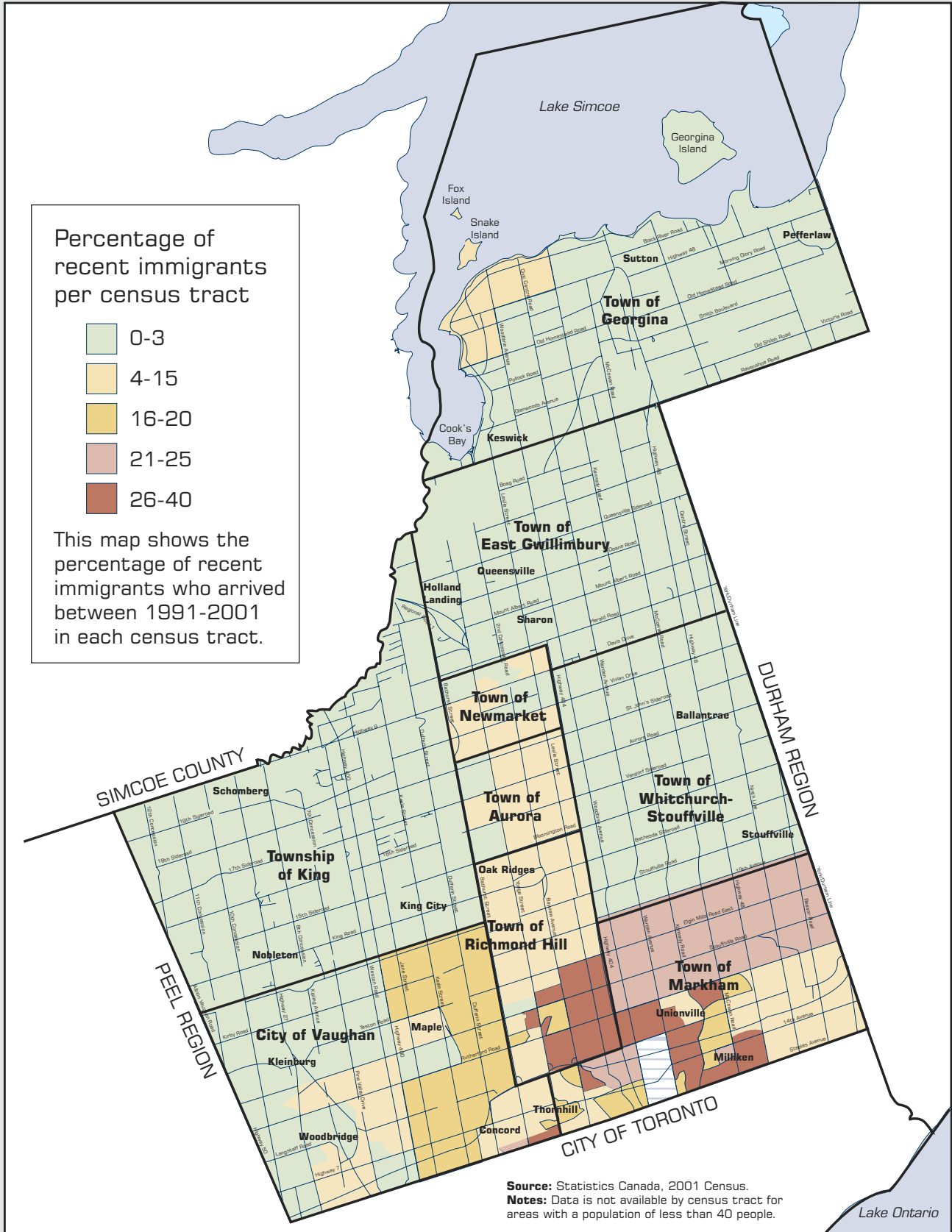


Mayor
Sue Sherban
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



Regional Councillor
Bill O'Donnell
Town of Markham

RECENT IMMIGRANTS Living in York Region



COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS:

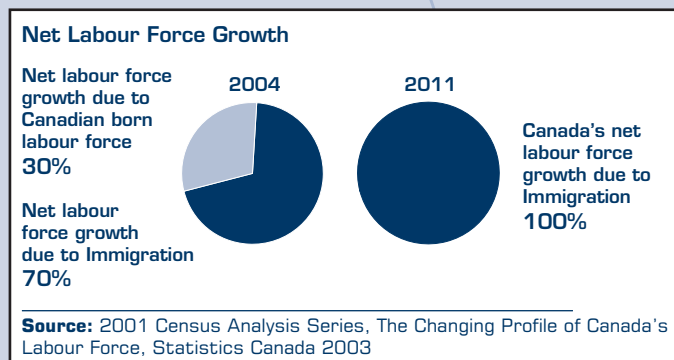
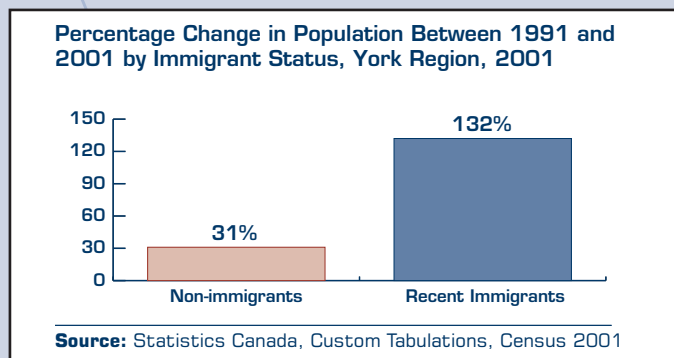
Recent Immigrants Living in York Region

THE COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS REPORT

The *Community Snapshots: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region* report is the first in a series of reports. These reports are intended to improve community service planning and delivery by increasing the understanding of the socio-economic make-up of diverse communities in York Region. This report provides a profile of recent immigrants in York Region. Recent immigrants are generally considered to be people who immigrated to Canada between 1996 and 2001. Recent immigrants are arriving in York Region at the prime of their lives, at a time when the Canadian labour force is shrinking and the need for labour is growing. The second chart below shows the net labour force growth due to the shrinking Canadian born labour force.

RECENT IMMIGRANTS ARE THE FASTEST GROWING SEGMENT OF YORK REGION'S POPULATION

Between 1991 and 2001, 69% of Canada's population growth was a result of people immigrating to Canada.¹ In York Region, our newest Canadians - the recent immigrant population - are increasing at a faster rate than the non-immigrant population. Between 1991 and 2001, the number of recent immigrants increased by 132% and the number of non-immigrants increased by 31%.



WHY IS YORK REGION ATTRACTIVE TO NEW CANADIANS?

A study prepared by Statistics Canada sheds some light on the reasons why immigrants settle where they do. The largest proportion of immigrants (41%) settle in a particular location because of the presence of a spouse, partner or family member. Another 18% identified the presence of friends as a determining factor. Other factors include job prospects (14%), education prospects (5%) and housing (4%).²

DID YOU KNOW?
As of the 2001 Census, there were approximately 100,000 recent immigrants in York Region.

DID YOU KNOW?
The Canadian-born work force is shrinking and the demand for labour is growing.

The relatively high quality of life experienced in York Region could be another factor contributing to the popularity of this area. Recent studies by the Federation of Canadian

Municipalities show that York Region compares favourably with other Canadian municipalities in terms of education, employment, health, lack of crime, and good income.³



¹ Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 89-613-MIE - No. 009, p. 13
² Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada, Statistics Canada, 2003
³ Quality of Life Reporting System Theme Reports 1, 2, and 3, Federation of Canadian Municipalities

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS:

Report Highlights



DEMOGRAPHICS

The data tells us that:

- Since 1981 there has been a shift in the main place of origin of York Region's recent immigrant population from Southern Europe to Asia and Eastern Europe.
- Most recent immigrants come to York Region in the prime of their lives. In York Region, about two-thirds of recent immigrants are of working, voting and childbearing age (i.e. 25 to 54 years old).
- Recent immigrants are eager to commit to Canada. Three out of five recent immigrants have chosen to become Canadian citizens.
- 71% of recent immigrants are visible minorities, with Chinese being the most commonly represented visible minority group. Only 13% of the non-immigrant population are visible minorities.
- Recent immigrants in York Region are almost twice as likely to be living with relatives, as part of an extended family, than the total population.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the past, most of York Region's immigrants settled first in other urban areas before migrating to York Region? Now most come directly to York Region from their home countries.

EDUCATION

The data shows that:

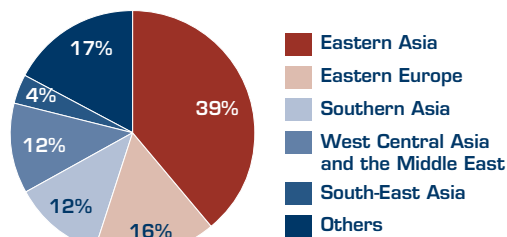
- York Region's recent immigrants have a higher rate of enrollment in courses that lead to post-secondary accreditation than the total population.
- York Region's recent immigrants are generally highly educated. They have a higher or equal level of education than non-immigrants.
- Despite this, York Region's recent immigrants generally earn significantly less than non-immigrants who have the same level of education. For example, a recent immigrant with a university education earns an average of \$38,400, compared to \$63,800 for a non-immigrant.

DID YOU KNOW?

The children of recent immigrants tend to pursue higher levels of education than the non-immigrant population.

WHAT THIS MEANS: Education levels of recent immigrants need to be more appropriately recognized.

Top Five Places of Birth for Recent Immigrant Population (1996-2001)



Source: Statistics Canada, Custom Tabulations, Census 2001

WHAT THIS MEANS: The Region's cultural and ethnic diversity is increasing and influencing communities in York Region. Services need to continue to be responsive to the changing population.

HOUSING

In York Region, residents spend a higher level of their income on housing than families in other parts of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Recent immigrant families, perhaps due to lower income, are even more likely to spend more of their household income on housing than the total population, regardless of whether they are owners or renters.

Like the general population, most recent immigrant families (87%) are home owners. This compares with 90% of the general population.

WHAT THIS MEANS: There is a need for more affordable housing options in York Region.

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Data on employment and income shows that:

- Despite having generally higher education, recent immigrants regardless of ethnicity are almost three times more likely to be low income earners than are non-immigrants.
- The average median employment income for recent immigrants is about two-thirds of the employment income for non-immigrants.

DID YOU KNOW?

Immigrants who have been in Canada for over 15 years do as well or better than non-immigrants in terms of their rates of employment, levels of education and income.

WHAT THIS MEANS:

- More emphasis needs to be placed on matching recent immigrants with suitable employment, and
- Employment and settlement services are most critical in the first few years after immigration.

PUBLIC TRANSIT/COMMUTING

- In York Region, one of the most common modes of transportation to work for recent immigrants is public transit (15%). This is a higher rate of use than the total population (9%). Recent immigrants are also more likely to be passengers than the rest of the population.
- 9% of employed recent immigrants work at home. Over 70% work in a different municipality, not necessarily in York Region, than they live in, and 27% work in their area municipality of residence.

DID YOU KNOW?

Immigrants who live in the GTA spend more than \$25.1 billion per year in the GTA alone.

WHAT THIS MEANS: There is a need for efficient public transit in areas that have high concentrations of recent immigrants.

RELIGION

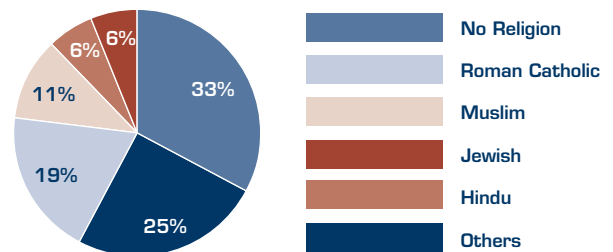
Knowledge of religion gives us another sense of the make-up, service needs and backgrounds of recent immigrants.

- The most common religious affiliation for York Region's total population is Roman Catholic (35%), followed by "No Religion" (17%), Jewish and United Church (8% each).
- The most common religious affiliations for recent immigrants are "No Religion" (33%), followed by Roman Catholic (19%) and Muslim (11%). There could be a variety of reasons for the high 'no religion' response, e.g. fear of reprisals, lack of a specific denomination, etc.

DID YOU KNOW?

The most common place of birth for recent immigrants in Aurora and Vaughan is the Russian Federation. The most common places of birth for recent immigrants in Markham and Richmond Hill is Hong Kong. In Newmarket the most common place of birth is the United States.

Top Five Religions for Recent Immigrants (1991 - 2001), York Region, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, Custom Tabulations, Census 2001

WHAT THIS MEANS: Recent immigrants require a variety of community supports which could include the faith community.

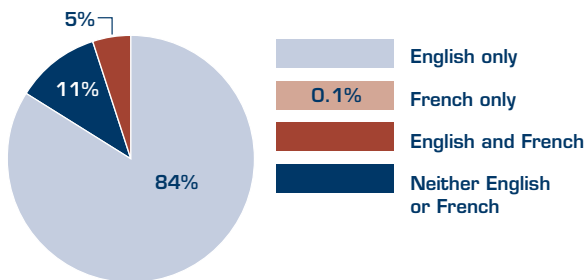


LANGUAGE

With respect to language, the data shows:

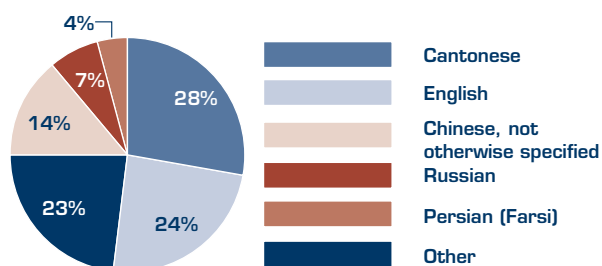
- 89% of recent immigrants speak English and/or French.
- York Region, however, has the highest percentage of recent immigrants that have no knowledge of either official language in relation to other GTA municipalities.
- Over 10,000 recent immigrants (almost 11%) have no knowledge of either official language.
- There are about 3,300 recent immigrant children and youth, aged 19 years and under, in York Region who have no knowledge of either official language.
- Cantonese is the single most common non-official language spoken at home and at work by recent immigrants in York Region.

Knowledge of Official Languages for Recent Immigrants (1991-2001), York Region, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, Custom Tabulations, Census 2001

Top Five Home Languages (single response) for Recent Immigrants (1991-2001), York Region, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, Custom Tabulations, Census 2001

WHAT THIS MEANS: There is a need for language skills supports for a number of recent immigrants and their children in York Region.

OPPORTUNITIES

The large number of recent immigrants choosing York Region as home presents many opportunities. For example, recent immigrants:

- Add to the cultural and social richness of the Region.
- Provide a highly skilled and educated labour force pool to offset the shrinking Canadian born labour force.
- Provide a diverse consumer base for business.
- Create opportunities for new products and services in local markets. In this era of global economy, skilled immigrants can give Canadian companies a competitive advantage in doing business with the world.

CHALLENGES

The diversifying population of York Region creates excellent opportunities, but also some challenges.

- In their first few years, recent immigrants are more socially and/or economically vulnerable.
- Services are generally limited and not necessarily designed to include the needs of recent immigrants.
- York Region does not receive its fair share of provincial and federal funding for immigration settlement services.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Invest time in:

1. Information Sharing and Service Planning

The hope is that the information in Community Snapshots will get people, and organizations from a variety of sectors, talking and working even more closely together to seize the opportunities we have. Community Snapshots can also be used as an effective planning tool.

2. Pursuing settlement funding opportunities.

The new Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement gives us new opportunities. The Agreement includes municipal say in immigration settlement services and is an opportunity to receive a fair share of funding. York Region intends to play an active role in discussions regarding the implementation of the Agreement.



COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS: RECENT IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN YORK REGION

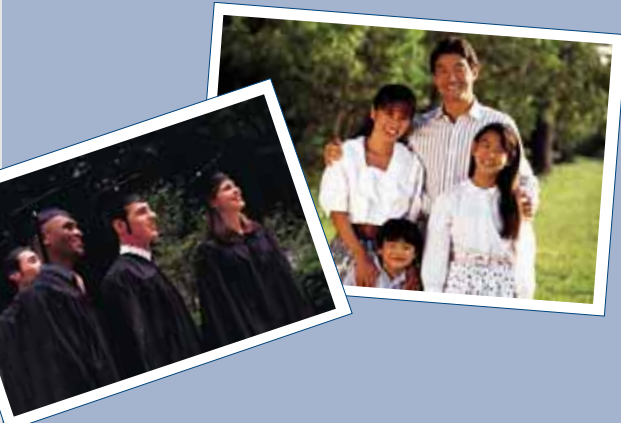
The report was prepared by York Region's Community Services and Housing Department, in collaboration with a consortium and community partners.

Co-Chairs:

Tom Taylor, Mayor of the Town of Newmarket
Rahul Bhardwaj, Chief Executive Officer, United Way of York Region

Members:

- Big Brothers/Big Sisters York Region
- Catholic Community Services of York Region
- Human Services Planning Coalition
- Markham Board of Trade
- Regional Municipality of York
- York Catholic District School Board
- York Region District School Board
- York Regional Police
- York South Simcoe Training and Adjustment Board



FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Community Snapshots report also contains:

- Maps showing the distribution of recent immigrants in the more urban municipalities of York Region - Aurora, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan
- Socio-economic profiles of recent immigrants in York Region's urban municipalities
- Tables and charts

More information is available at the Community Social Data Web site at www.york.ca, including:

- The *Community Snapshots: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region* report
- Interactive maps showing ethnicity, knowledge of official languages, and language spoken at home in Aurora, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan
- Work sheets containing data on socio-economic characteristics for York Region's total population



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Produced by the Community Services and Housing Department, Regional Municipality of York on behalf of York Region's Community Social Data Strategy Consortium.

York Region's Community Social Data Strategy Consortium

