



Investing in newcomers is investing in Ontario's future



Newcomers continue to choose Ontario as their first choice of province to settle in Canada. Immigrants make significant contributions to our economic and social prosperity and account for as much as 47% of Ontario's workforce. Yet, Ontario receives fewer resources to help immigrants compared to other provinces.

Immigrants face many challenges upon arriving to Canada and require the appropriate resources and supports to help them fully adjust and settle in the province. Among the areas newcomers require assistance include: English language training, housing, and employment training and skills development.

The Province plays a key role in delivering programs and adopting policies like minimum wage, employment standards and enforcement, social assistance, employment and training, and labour market integration for newcomers. These programs and policies have a strong impact on the lives of many newcomers and should be further strengthened. Unfortunately, the federal government cut nearly \$45 million in settlement funding to Ontario in 2011 forcing many organizations to end programs and services to newcomers. The Province must step in and ensure that immigrants have access to the services they need by filling in the funding gap or lobbying the federal government to restore funding levels.

Ontario's immigrants require better access to labour market

The recent recession has resulted in substantial job losses throughout the province. During such economic downturns, newly arrived immigrants are the first to lose out on employment. Many immigrants already face barriers in accessing the labour market due to discrimination, lack of Canadian work experience or unrecognized education credentials from their home country. This has resulted in many newcomers living in poverty. **In Halton Region, the poverty rate for recent immigrants is 26%.**

The Province needs to increase its investment in successful employment programs, such as paid internships or bridging programs, to help internationally trained professionals receive the opportunities they deserve.

Ask your candidates:

- Will your party lobby to restore federal cuts to Ontario settlement services?
- How will your party work to reduce poverty among recent immigrants in Ontario?
- What strategies will your party use to help internationally trained professionals find employment that matches their skills?

Resources:

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants: www.ocasi.org

Settlement.org: www.settlement.org

Halton Newcomers Strategy: www.haltonnewcomerstrategy.com



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