

# 2019-2020 COLLECTIVE IMPACT REPORT



### Dedication: Roland Rhooms (1967-2020)

*Roland Rhooms, Director of Programs & Services at Skills for Change and a member of Peel Newcomer Strategy Group's Central Planning Table, passed away in March 2020. Roland was beloved in settlement circles and was a strong advocate for newcomers, particularly immigrant professionals. Colleagues recall Roland's laugh and humour.*

*We at PNSG remember Roland as a gentleman.*

*Peel Newcomer Strategy Group (PNSG) is a project of the United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) and is funded by:*



Funded by:

Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada



## We began the year...

- Continuing to work with stakeholders to welcome nearly 20,000 newcomers annually to Peel
- Releasing our *2019 Report on Peel Newcomers*
- Awaiting confirmation of five-year funding and pivoting towards updated strategic objectives for 2020-2025

## We ended the year...

- With our borders effectively closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Working with funders, government, organizational networks and local service providers to identify urgent priorities and opportunities for collaboration and support

## IN 2019-2020, PEEL NEWCOMER STRATEGY GROUP

- **Built awareness of our 2019 Report on Peel Newcomers** by presenting to the Region of Peel's Diversity, Equity & Anti-Racism Committee and supporting local organizations with newcomer and immigrant insights as they conducted strategic planning and competed for funding
- **Convened advisory groups**, including our Central Planning Table, Service Delivery Network and the Refugee Resettlement Working Group in response to Peel's commitment in 2019 to help resettle 250 refugee claimants in coordination with the City of Toronto
- Conducted community engagement presentations and communications to build awareness of the **Peel Immigration Web Portal (ImmigrationPeel.ca)** and enabling local service providers to use the site to promote their newcomer-focused programs and events
- Conducted our **annual settlement-sector survey** aimed at measuring newcomer-client needs and service provider capacity-building and cross-sector partnership priorities
- Worked with local stakeholders to identify gaps in supporting **newcomers with mental health challenges** through key informant interviews, a focus group with crisis support workers, surveying settlement workers and conducting a literature review, which will inform new local initiatives
- Partnered with the Mississauga Halton LHIN (local health integration network) on a cross-sector collaboration to develop a **newcomer-focused health navigation guide**

# PEEL'S LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

**Peel Newcomer Strategy Group (PNSG)** is the **local immigration partnership** for Peel Region, serving Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga. As a **community collaborative**, PNSG engages local service providers and stakeholders to optimize and coordinate services that facilitate newcomer settlement and integration.

PNSG accomplishes this through:

- Community-level strategic planning
- Stakeholder engagement and communications
- Convening and participating on community advisories
- Conducting research and formulating policy recommendations
- Managing ImmigrationPeel.ca, the region's immigration web portal

## PNSG's newcomer priority focus areas

1. Mental health
2. Healthcare
3. Women & families
4. Seniors
5. Youth

PNSG receives core funding from Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada (IRCC) with additional salary support from the Region of Peel. Our fiscal sponsor, United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT), provides salary, management and shared-services support.

PNSG emerged in 2007 through a collaboration led by the United Way of Peel Region (now UWGT), the Region of Peel and CIC (now IRCC), recognizing that a **population-level strategy** aimed at driving positive social and economic outcomes for newcomers in Peel required **broad, cross-sector participation**. By 2012, PNSG adopted a **collective impact** lens, acknowledging the **multi-stakeholder** nature of its work and that the participation of **community partners representing all sectors** is critical to achieving community-wide change.

## VISION

NEWCOMERS TO PEEL ARE INCLUDED  
IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE COMMUNITY,  
EMBRACING EVERYONE'S CONTRIBUTION  
AND ENSURING WELL-BEING FOR ALL

## MISSION

TO CHAMPION A COORDINATED AND  
COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY FOR THE  
SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT OF  
NEWCOMERS IN THE ECONOMY AND  
COMMUNITY OF PEEL

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT

- BACKBONE SUPPORT
- COMMON VISION
- CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION
- MUTUALLY-REINFORCING ACTIVITIES
- SHARED MEASUREMENT

# IMPROVING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES FOR PEEL NEWCOMERS

## SITUATION

- An average of 19,000 newcomers settle in Peel annually.
- However, it takes years for the average newcomer to reach income parity with established immigrants and Canadian-born residents in Peel.
- Newcomers are disproportionately unemployed and under-employed despite high levels of education.
- Service-providing organizations say they need better support to assist newcomer clients more holistically.
- Many newcomers rely on informal settlement supports in the community that are not connected to formal service providers.



## PNSG FUNCTIONS

- Community-level strategic planning
- Stakeholder engagement and communications
- Service integration
- Research and policy
- Project management

## STAKEHOLDERS

- Newcomers
- Settlement agencies serving newcomers
- Local service-providing organizations
- Government and funders
- Diverse community stakeholders

## INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Services for newcomers are accessible, coordinated and sensitive to their needs
- Newcomers are employed similarly to non-newcomers
- Greater connections established between informal community supports and formal service providers

## IMPACT

- ✓ Enhanced capacity to integrate newcomers more holistically and effectively
- ✓ Peel is a welcoming community for newcomers

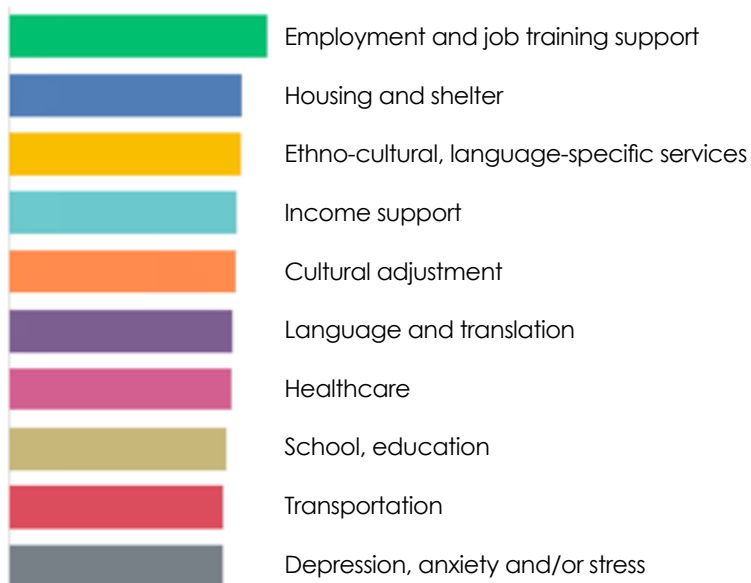
Some of the ways that PNSG worked collectively with partners in 2019-2020 to co-create this impact are featured in the pages that follow.

# 2020 SETTLEMENT-SECTOR SURVEY RESULTS

One key function of a local immigration partnership is to **monitor newcomer and service provider needs** to coordinate stakeholders in responding to those priorities. In August 2018, PNSG designed and conducted a survey for settlement-sector workers to inform the design of an IRCC-sponsored consultation. This survey was conducted online to identify and prioritize newcomer client needs, service provider capacity-building priorities and cross-sector partnership opportunities.

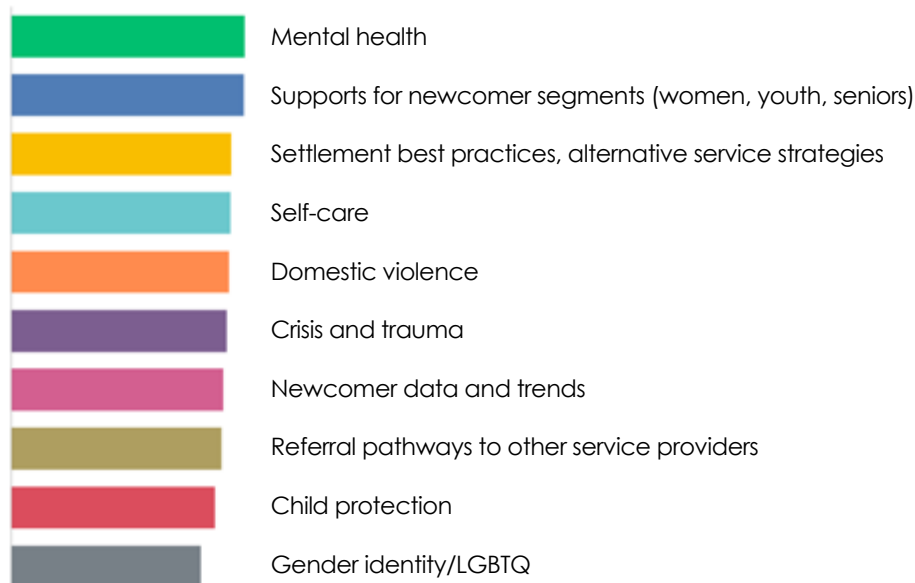
PNSG conducted the same survey in February 2020 to **track changes** in client and service provider priorities. Almost 90 settlement service workers participated in 2020. All indicated that they served at least one of 22 neighbourhoods across Peel. 67% of respondents identified as client-facing and 16% as management (17% identified as either none or both).

## TOP-RANKED NEWCOMER-CLIENT PRIORITIES



While employment persistently features as the most important priority facing newcomers, it is worth noting that **housing and shelter** as well as **income support** rank higher in the 2020 results than they did in 2018.

## TRAINING, CAPACITY-BUILDING & RESOURCE PRIORITIES



This question ranks areas in which settlement service providers seek to be better supported through professional development, capacity-building and resource initiatives. **Mental health** continues to feature highly in the 2020 survey, but a stronger emphasis on specific newcomer segments, such as **women, youth** and **seniors**, ranks higher in 2020.

Given PNSG's work with its Service Delivery Network advisory and other stakeholders, we felt it necessary to leverage the 2020 settlement-sector survey to gain a clearer sense of the nature of **newcomers' mental health** challenges. A number of insights from the 2020 survey are shared below.

## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

In any other year, these survey results would have informed PNSG's strategy and workplan formulation as well as new service coordination, professional development supports and partnership development. The **global COVID-19 pandemic** in March 2020 has had an unprecedented impact on the region's ability to support its population, including its most vulnerable residents. At time of writing, settlement and other service agencies have migrated to virtual forms of service delivery as the population heeds measures to contain the pandemic's local spread. PNSG is working cross-sectorally with government, funders and service providers to respond to urgent community needs, such as food security, mental health, family violence and seniors, to name a few. We will evaluate our ability to pivot back towards our original 2020-2025 strategy and workplan once we have collectively addressed these new priorities.

## REFERRAL-PATHWAY PRIORITIES



This category prioritizes cross-sector partnership and collaboration opportunities. While the 2020 list is consistent with 2018 results, it is notable that **persons with disabilities** now features higher in the list, moving from #12 in 2018 to #4 in 2020.

## NEWCOMER MENTAL HEALTH INSIGHTS

*Estimate the percentage of clients presenting with or reporting the following **symptoms**:*

- Anxiety, worry (64%)
- Stress, inability to cope (53%)
- Depression, sadness (51%)
- Lack of energy/sleep, tiredness (44%)
- Mood changes (43%)
- Changes in eating habits (36%)
- Suicidal thinking (11%)

*Estimate the percentage (0% to 100%) of clients citing the following **factors** that influence their mental wellness:*

- Unemployment/under-employment (73%)
- Financial struggles (73%)
- Stress associated with settling into a new community (62%)
- Feeling isolated, lack of social connections (55%)
- Trauma experienced before arrival to Canada (54%)
- Trauma experienced after arrival to Canada (39%)
- Addiction (18%)

*What urgency do you assign to the following **ideas to support newcomer clients** with their mental wellness (rank-ordered)?*

1. Improve training and resources for crisis workers at settlement agencies
2. Help settlement workers better identify mental health challenges and facilitate referrals to relevant supports
3. Create intermediary supports (e.g. peer support networks) for clients waiting months for more intensive mental health counselling from mainstream agencies
4. Design and promote culturally-appropriate, language-specific mental health supports
5. Help mainstream service providers specializing in mental health to build their capacity to serve culturally diverse clients
6. Conduct a campaign to build awareness of and reduce stigma associated with seeking mental health supports



# SERVICE DELIVERY NETWORK

Since 2012, PNSG has convened **Service Delivery Network (SDN)**, a settlement collaborative comprised of five agencies located in distinct priority newcomer neighbourhoods across Peel. SDN serves as an incubator for new service innovations, striving to improve service delivery coordination for newcomers through collaboration within and outside of the settlement sector.

In 2019-2020, SDN undertook a deep exploration of gaps related to **supporting newcomer clients with mental health challenges** within settlement service environments. Members identified a number key challenges, from addressing stigma preventing clients from seeking appropriate supports, to the lack of culturally appropriate and language-specific resources, as well as the absence of measures navigating the long wait-times associated with intensive counselling services.

SDN coordinated a focus group of its crisis support workers, and PNSG gathered local and academic literature to map gaps and opportunities. These will be released in a **joint report** early in the 2020-2021 fiscal year that will **inform new local initiatives** and **advocate for stronger collaboration** with mainstream service providers.

## SDN'S FOUNDING MEMBERS:

- CALEDON COMMUNITY SERVICES IN BOLTON
- MALTON NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES IN MALTON
- PEEL MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL IN MEADOWVALE
- POLYCULTURAL IMMIGRANT & COMMUNITY SERVICES NEAR SHERIDAN
- PUNJABI COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES IN BRAMPTON SPRINGDALE



Peel Newcomer Strategy Group



SDN participants Jagdeep Kailey of Peel Multicultural Council and Mohamed Malik of Peel CAS present at the BRIDGES 2020 conference in Toronto, describing a cross-sector pilot that replicated a joint home-visit best-practice resulting in reduced interactions among newcomers with police and children's protection agencies.



# REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT WORKING GROUP

## MULTI-REGION & LOCAL COORDINATION

In July 2019, the Region of Peel committed to **resettling 250 refugee claimant families** from Toronto shelters. The Salvation Army was selected to manage a temporary shelter in Brampton, housing 60 families at a time transferred from the City of Toronto. The meeting was convened to bring Peel stakeholders together to assist with the effort.

Similarly to the working group's 2018 meeting, the City of Toronto and the Region of Peel shared information about multi-region coordination, and the Salvation Army provided client insights so local stakeholders were prepared to contribute expertise to ensure a seamless client experience.

### Key insights:

- Refugee claimant families were willing to move farther away from the GTA to secure housing and employment
- Clients were predominantly Nigerian, highly educated with high levels of English
- Registering kids for school, assisting single mothers and facilitating greater awareness of Canadian societal norms were deemed priority needs



*Sonia Pace from the Region of Peel and Rodel Imbarlina-Ramos of PNSG facilitate an October 2019 refugee resettlement working group meeting that featured panellists Lucy Rodrigues from the Region's housing services department, Milton Barrera from the City of Toronto and Rudo Chiyangwa from The Salvation Army.*

# OUR RESEARCH IN ACTION

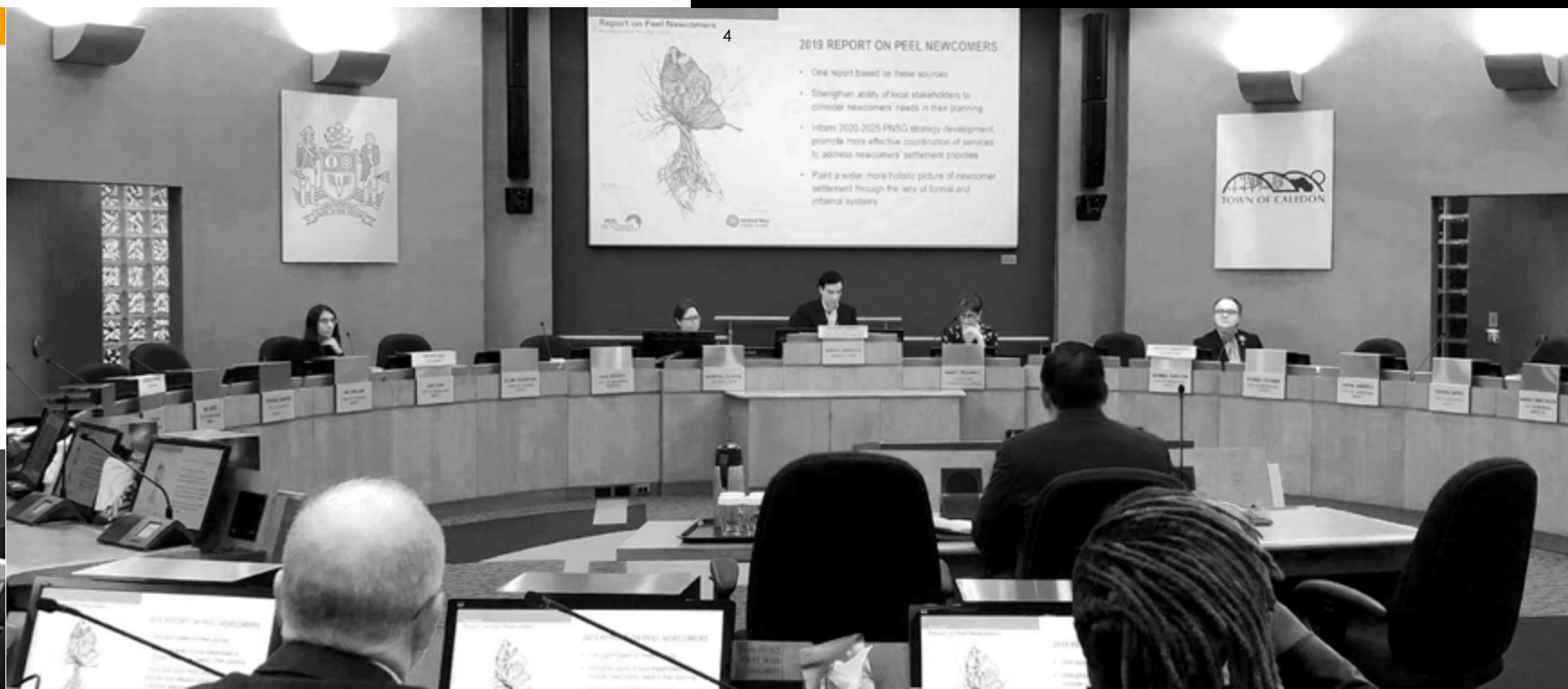
In March 2019, PNSG launched its **2019 Report on Peel Newcomers**, a compilation of Statscan data, commissioned research and community consultation insights that updated our collective picture of newcomer settlement and integration in Peel.

## IMPACT

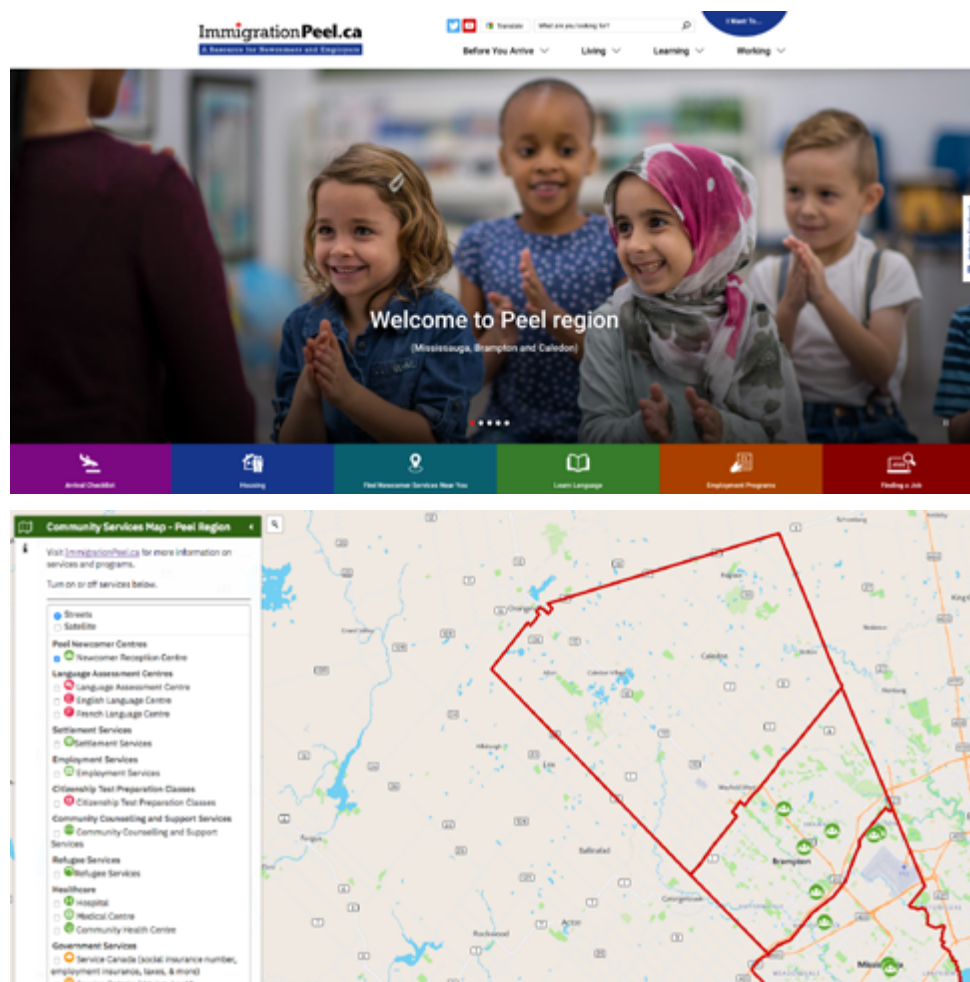
- PNSG presented the report to **Peel Regional Council's Diversity, Equity & Anti-Racism Committee**, resulting in an invitation to present to full Regional Council.
- The report served as a key reference for organizations applying for new funding opportunities, such as 2020-2025 IRCC settlement resources. This was particularly apparent among **non-settlement agencies** collaborating with newcomer-serving organizations to establish **cross-sector partnerships**.
- The **Mississauga Halton LHIN** (local health integration network) used our 2019 Report to inform the development of a newcomer health-navigation resource.

## KEY FINDINGS FROM THE REPORT

- While direct migration (settling in Peel upon arrival in Canada) is significant, **secondary migration** accounts for a higher proportion of the immigrant inflow to Peel. A large number of immigrants also leave Peel annually, and this number is rising over time.
- Peel's immigrants persistently earn **less employment income** – about 85 cents on average for every dollar earned by Canadian-born residents in Peel.
- Peel's immigrants receive **less social assistance income** – only 16 cents for every dollar that Canadian-born residents in Peel declare in social assistance income.
- Newcomers and even established immigrants in Peel are **disproportionately under-employed** compared to Canadian-born residents **despite higher levels of education**.
- Many newcomers cited leveraging **family and friend networks** to gain employment; however, this employment tends to not be aligned with their intended occupation.
- Over 62 percent feel that **newcomers are integrating faster today than in the past** thanks to self-seeking abilities and social media support.



# PEEL IMMIGRATION WEB PORTAL



The hallmarks of the 2018 relaunch of the site included the introduction of two new interactive features: a **community services map**, which provides travel directions and links to service-provider websites; and a **community calendar** allowing local organizations to promote their newcomer-focused events and programs.

When the Peel Immigration Web Portal – **ImmigrationPeel.ca** – relaunched in September 2018 with a new design, content and interactive features, a new, critical stage of the project began. Community engagement activities enabled important awareness building and measurement among newcomer and service-provider audiences in the form of:

- Promotional announcements through local stakeholder networks and social media, including Twitter and YouTube
- Paid marketing campaign on MiWay Transit, ethnic newspapers
- Online and in-person surveys measuring awareness and intent-to-use
- Numerous focus groups
- Presentations to client-facing service providers and newcomers across Peel

## IMPACT

- **8.1%** increase in new users, **5.9%** increase in sessions, **7.6%** increase in page views
- **2.6M** MiWay impressions
- **5,600+** YouTube views
- 60% of service providers surveyed expressed intent-to-use within 30 days – follow-up showed **87% usage**
- **75%** of service providers surveyed said they used the portal's Community Services Map to facilitate a client referral
- In August 2018, 29% of settlement service providers said they used ImmigrationPeel.ca to support a client with information or a referral. In March 2020, this proportion jumped to over 45%, a **54% increase over 2018**.



# COLLABORATION IN ACTION



## P2P (PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY) CONFERENCE

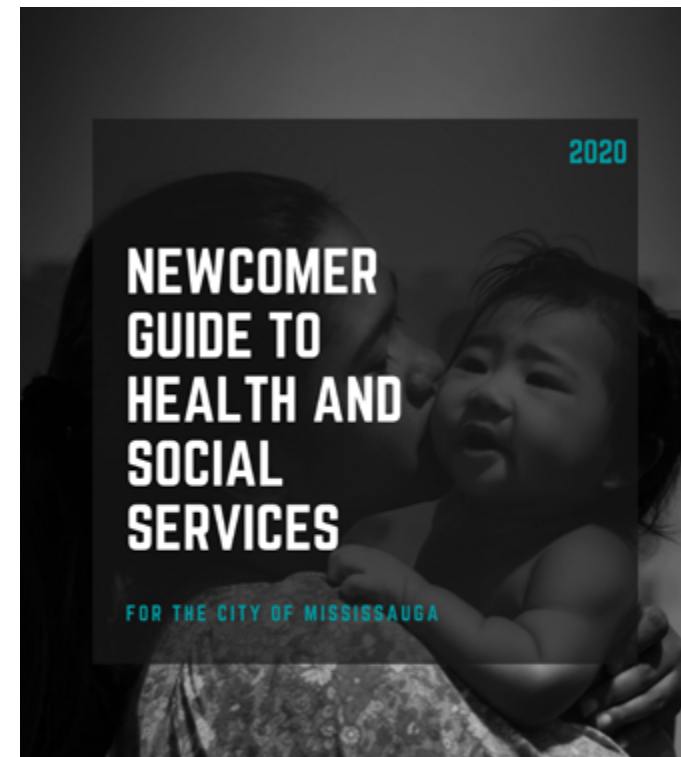
*Pathways to Prosperity*, a national alliance of university, community and government partners dedicated to fostering welcoming communities and promoting the integration of immigrants and minorities across Canada, held its annual conference in October 2019. PNSG participated on an opening panel about collaboration among local immigration partnerships by describing the work of the **905+ LIPs network**, which includes representation from nine Golden Horseshoe LIPs: Niagara, Brantford, Hamilton, Halton, Peel, York, Simcoe, Durham, and Peterborough.

## MISSISSAUGA'S NEWCOMER HEALTH-NAVIGATION RESOURCE

Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) leveraged findings from PNSG's *2019 Report on Peel Newcomers* and worked with partners to develop a **Newcomer Guide to Health and Social Services for Mississauga** aimed at helping immigrants navigate local health services.

The initiative connected the LHIN with Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre, Peel Multicultural Council and Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services to validate the guide's content and its effectiveness for newcomer clients.

The guide is currently under development and will be published on the Peel Immigration Web Portal ([ImmigrationPeel.ca](http://ImmigrationPeel.ca)) by Spring 2020.



# PNSG's REACH

## 3 advisory groups

40 organizations

116 individuals

500

email newsletter subscribers

1,700

Twitter followers

50,000

ImmigrationPeel.ca  
visitors annually

## We participate on

- Brampton-Springdale Network (BSN)
- Erin Mills Connects
- NewComer Organization Network (NCON)
- Peel Community Benefits Network (PCBN)
- Peel-Halton-Dufferin Executive Council & its Language and Settlement Partnerships
- Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Region of Peel's COVID-19 Community Response Table
- Regional Diversity Roundtable (RDR)
- Toronto Inter-LIP Executive



U6 | TORONTO STAR SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2019  
UNITED WAY

## > IMMIGRATION

# Newcomers receive relief in their struggle to find work

In a job market where immigrants' credentials may not be recognized, agencies show them they don't have to go into 'survival mode'

**RICK MCGINNIS**  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Immigration is a hot-button topic these days, but for the agencies on the front lines that work with newcomers to Canada, it's a constant challenge — everyone looking for a home here has differing needs that can vary with the hour and the day.

On the surface, Kleber Gabriel is a model of the economic migrant the country's immigration system prioritizes — a professional with an international degree in marketing from the U.K. and fluent in English. Still, he arrived in Canada from Sao Paulo, Brazil, five years ago, requesting humanitarian assistance in his immigration application.





# PNSG WORKING GROUPS

## CENTRAL PLANNING TABLE (CPT)

**ACCES Employment** – Sue Sadler  
**City of Brampton** – Roop Sandhu  
**Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir** – Marie-Pierre Daoust  
**COSTI** – Josie Di Zio  
**IRCC** – Joy Contram-Seetanah  
**Newcomer Centre of Peel** – Effat Ghassemi  
**Peel District School Board** – Louise Clayton  
**Peel Halton Workforce Development Group** – Shalini Da Cunha (co-chair)  
**Peel Multicultural Council** – Naveed Chaudhry  
**Province of Ontario** – Lorraine Hogan  
**Punjabi Community Health Services** – Baldev Mutta  
**Region of Peel** – Sonia Pace (co-chair) & Judith McWhinney  
**Regional Diversity Roundtable** – Varsha Naik  
**Skills for Change** – Roland Rhooms  
**United Way of Greater Toronto** – Ruth Crammond, Nation Cheong

## REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT WORKING GROUP

**ACCES Employment** – Sue Sadler, Vibha Vohra-Bhalla  
**Afghan Women's Organization** – Fauzia Khan, Adeena Niazi  
**Associated Youth Services of Peel** – Kelly Henderson  
**Brampton Multicultural Community Centre** – Salima Tejani, Jimena Merlo  
**Catholic Crosscultural Services** – Michael Raymond  
**Catholic Family Services Peel Dufferin** – Shelina Jeshani, Sangeeta Raina  
**Centre Francophone** – Cyriaque Njejimana  
**City of Brampton** – Alain Normand, Michelle Sullivan  
**City of Mississauga** – Jennifer Cowie Bonne  
**City of Toronto** – Vera Dodic, Nicole Watson  
**CMHA Peel Dufferin** – Tajman Grewal, David Smith, Michelle Lewis  
**COSTI** – Mirna El Sabbagh, Josie Di Zio, Lara Hussein  
**Family Services of Peel** – Sandra Rupnarain  
**FCJ Refugee Centre** – Loly Rico  
**Findhelp / 211** – Angela Finateri  
**IRCC** – Cliff Fast, Ana Raicevic  
**Malton Neighbourhood Services** – Jacquie Lewis  
**Mississauga Community Legal Services** – Ritu Gupta  
**Mississauga Public Library** – Ambreen Kamal

## SERVICE DELIVERY NETWORK (SDN)

**Caledon Community Services** – Francesca Bernadowitsch, Cathy Perennec McLean & Grace Scire  
**Malton Neighbourhood Services** – Jacquie Lewis  
**Peel Multicultural Council** – Naveed Chaudhry & Jagdeep Kailey (outgoing co-chair)  
**Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services** – Marwan Ismail (incoming co-chair)  
**Punjabi Community Health Services** – Baldev Mutta (co-chair), Amanjit Kahlon, Amal Murtaja & Anu Randhawa  
**IRCC** – Joy Contram-Seetanah, Feaven Abidta  
**Peel CAS** – Mary Beth Moellenkamp, Liz Okai, Danielle Ungara, Mohamed Malik & Harpreet Thind  
  
**Muslim Community Services** – Sandra Kaldas  
**Muslim Council of Peel** – Rabia Khedr  
**My Furniture Bank** – Kathryn Palangio, Jay Siva  
**Newcomer Centre of Peel** – Effat Ghassemi  
**Peel CAS** – Mohamed Malik, Mary Beth Moellenkamp  
**Peel Children's Centre** – Donna McIlroy  
**Peel District School Board** – Ted Byers, Louise Clayton, Brooke Derousseau, Nala Moorthy, Jim Van Buskirk, Christin Hanna, Lavaughn Samuel, Lisa Hill, Martha Brunet  
**Peel Multicultural Council** – Jagdeep Kailey  
**Peel Regional Police** – Janice Aavasalmi, Karlene Krusch, Cameron Walker  
**Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services** – Marwan Ismail, Nadia Sokhan  
**Province of Ontario** – Lorraine Hogan, Raghad Hussami  
**Punjabi Community Health Services** – Amandeep Kaur, Baldev Mutta  
**Region of Peel** – Ann-Marie Koumettou, Augustina Nagberi-Asseez, David Hodkin, Gehna Singh Kareckas, Lucy Rodriguez, Nicole Carasco, Beth Lefebvre, Sonia Pace, Adaoma Patterson, Beth Storti, Melissa Toney  
**The Salvation Army** – Melody Watson, Allison Waltho, Rudo Chiyangwa  
**United Way of Greater Toronto** – Ruth Crammond, Nauman Khan, Nation Cheong





**PEEL NEWCOMER STRATEGY GROUP TEAM IN 2019-2020**

**Seba Jessri**, Service Integration Specialist

**Maryum Siddiqui**, Peel Immigration Web Portal (PIWP) Web Specialist

**Trisha Scantlebury**, Research and Policy Specialist

**Rodel Imbarlina-Ramos**, Director



PAMA, Peel Art Gallery, Museum & Archives in Brampton, hosted Refugee Canada – a travelling exhibit from the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 – in 2019 and invited visitors to reflect on the impact of refugee newcomers on our community.