

# Workforce Focus

From the Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford, Local Training Board.

- Employers Perspectives
- Local Trends

## “Bringing Employers into the Immigration Debate”

A survey of Canadian employers and human resource managers was conducted this past fall by Environics Research Group for The Public Policy Forum. The survey gathered experiences and views regarding immigrant workers. Those findings along with the local areas immigration trends are now in focus.

### Immigrant Populations

Immigrated between 1991-2001

County	Males	Females	Total
Middlesex	9,200	10,010	19,210
Elgin	1,075	1,035	2,115
Oxford	730	720	1,455

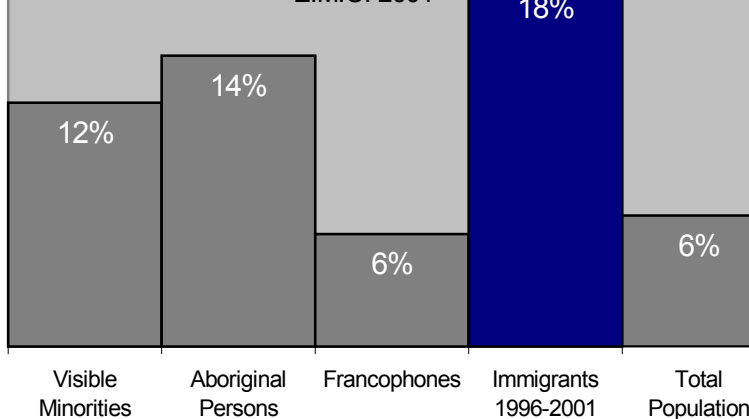
Source: 2001 Community Profiles, Statistics Canada

### Employing Immigrants

Most employers have at least some experience hiring immigrants and dealing with immigrant applications, though organizations tend to have relatively few immigrant employees (in many cases, less than 10% of the workforce). With most employers expecting to increase their workforce or replace retiring workers, a majority are considering hiring immigrants as part of their strategy. The perceived skill shortage factors most in encouraging organizations to hire more immigrants. It was found very unlikely that hiring directly from abroad would be considered strategy; very few have even tried to do this.

### Unemployment Rates

E.M.O. 2001



Source: 2001 Census Data, Statistics Canada

Recent immigrants have the highest unemployment rate of any group.

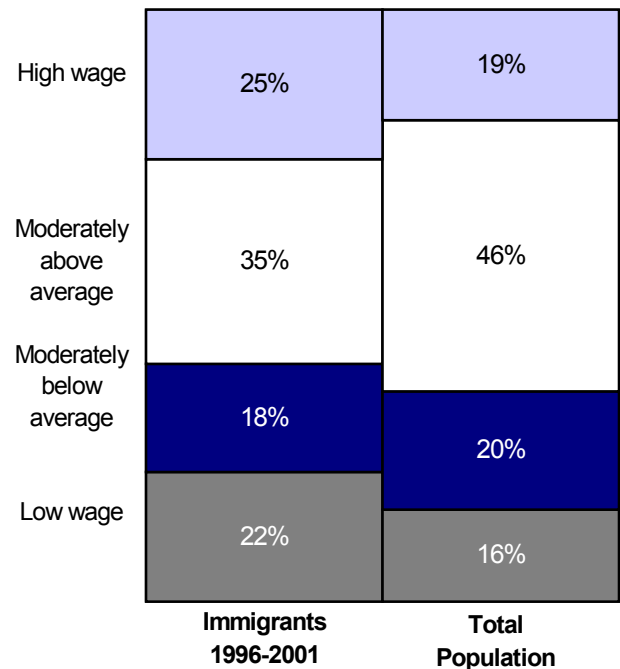
### The Immigrant Image

No-one image of the immigrant worker is perceived among employers, though immigrants are thought more likely than not to:

- Have a range of educational qualifications
- Be visible minorities
- Be skilled workers
- Be French-speakers in Quebec, and English or other language speakers outside of Quebec.

### Incomes

Employment Share within Groups by Occupational Wage Rate, E.M.O. 2001



Source: 2001 Census Data, Statistics Canada

The polarization of incomes is greater among recent immigrants than among the total population. A greater share of immigrants are employed in the high wage occupations, yet a greater share also work in low wage occupations.



For more information please contact The Local Training Board at:  
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## Challenges brought by Immigrant Workers

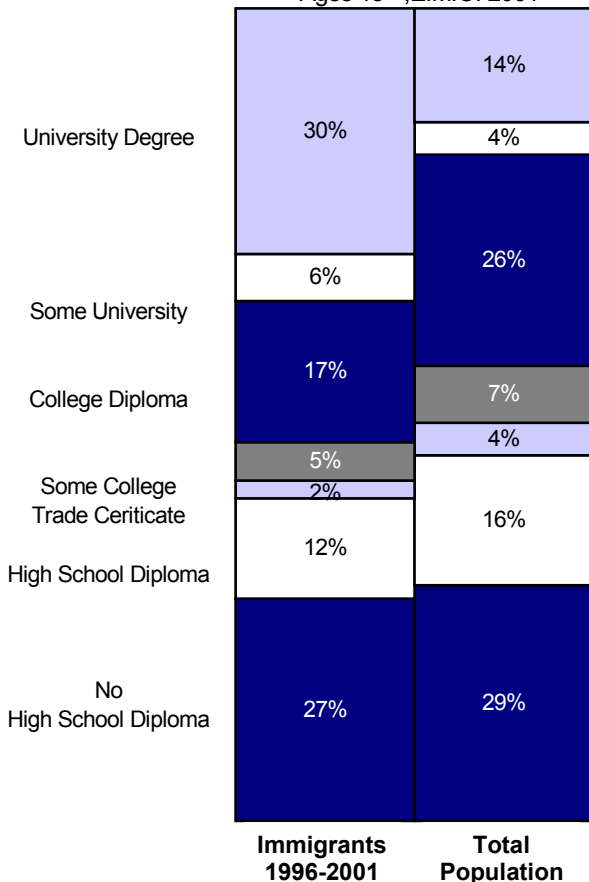
The greatest difficulties employers report are language-related and experienced most at the initial application phase and calls for interviews. Upon hiring, immigrants can experience language difficulties, communication difficulties, and cultural misunderstandings with staff or customers.

## Benefits brought by Immigrant Workers

Employers feel immigrants can give organizations a great advantage with the language skills they bring. They can also enhance the organizations capacity to generate new ideas and enhance the organization's reputation. It is generally felt that immigrants have an easy time adjusting to an organization's culture, though few employers would say very easy. Most employers do not anticipate difficulties related to additional training needs, unreliable credentials, reduced security and openness, or tensions between immigrants and other employees.

### Education

Highest Educational Attainment Share within Groups  
Ages 15+ ,E.M.O. 2001



Source: 2001 Census Data, Statistics Canada

Recent immigrants have over double the rate of university degrees compared to the total population.

### Foreign Credentials

Employers feel they are more likely to accept foreign credentials at par than as less relevant than Canadian work experience. About half of the surveyed employers have experience with checking educational and work experience credentials of foreign-trained workers and have generally had positive rather than negative experiences with these procedures. Very few employers can name an organization that provides credential recognition services, but most feel a range of related services would be useful to them.

### University Degrees Up, Without High School Diplomas Down

Immigrants to E.M.O., 15 years old and up

Highest Educational Attainment	1991-1996	1996-2001
University Degree	1,865	2,560
Some University	1,155	1,125
College Certificate	1,370	840
Some College	665	400
Trades Certificate	395	185
With High School Diploma	1,510	1,045
No High School Diploma	3,270	2,315
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,235</b>	<b>8,465</b>

Source: 2001 Census Data, Statistics Canada

### Public Policy Evaluation

- Canada's immigration policies over the past decade got tentatively positive ratings from employers for getting immigrants with the right job skills.
- A clear majority of employers are satisfied with current overall immigration quotas.
- Most employers have not seen any need for additional policies to encourage the hiring of special groups such as immigrants.
- Most employers would not require that an immigrant employee's salary be subsidized before they would be interested in a bridging program and there is wide-spread openness to partnering with governments in order to provide Canadian work experience to immigrants.
- About a third of organizations already, do or would like to offer services to linguistic minorities other than English or French and most agree that immigration could be an effective way to fill labour gaps in this service.

Canada

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