Local Immigration Partnerships: Outcomes 2008-2013

Citizenship and Immigration Canada





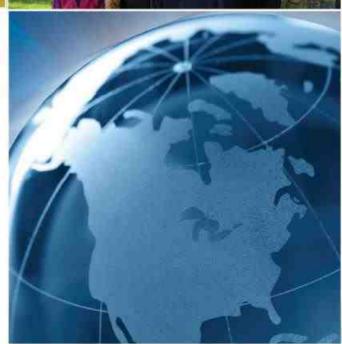








Table of Contents

Introduction	
What are the LIPs?	3
Planning: Engagement and Capacity-Building	
Broadening the Tent	4
Identifying Needs and Priorities	6
Funding and Resources	
Implementation: Action and Impact	
 Enhancing Capacity and Accessibility of Services 	8
Building Welcoming Communities	
Informing Community Planning	13
, ,	
Annex	
LIPs funded by CIC in 2012-13	14

Introduction

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) have come a long way since they first received funding by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) in 2008 in Ontario. Building on local structures and activities, they have shown tremendous capacity to innovate and optimize local approaches to engagement, planning and coordination in the field of newcomer settlement and integration. They are creating and maintaining a momentum for action in local communities, and making way for new and more efficient practices and partnerships.

This document presents the key findings collected from the LIPs annual reports. It shares examples of successful activities and innovative practices undertaken by the LIPs since their inception and highlights examples of results achieved. It demonstrates the value of the process of change initiated by the LIPs since 2008 and paves the way for continued collaborative work to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities¹.

What are the LIPs?

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are community-based partnerships that aim to:

- Foster local engagement of service providers and other institutions in newcomers' integration process;
- Support community-based knowledge-sharing and local strategic planning; and,
- Improve coordination of services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration.

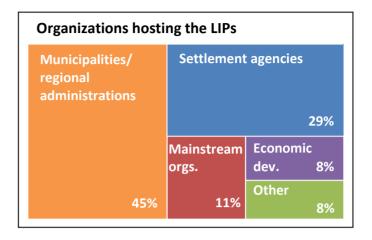
LIPs do not deliver services directly to newcomers, but provide a collaborative framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers that are local [or regional] in scope. They aim to enhance collaboration, coordination and strategic planning at the community level in order to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities and improve settlement and integration outcomes.

A LIP secretariat acts as backbone organization for each partnership and ensures progress towards the LIP goals by:

- 1. Creating an inclusive partnership council that is representative of the community
- 2. Conducting research on the needs of newcomers and of the community and raising awareness of these needs
- 3. Establishing a local settlement strategy identifying key priorities for the community
- 4. Developing action plans with specific, measurable and time-bound activities
- 5. Supporting the implementation of action plans and report on results achieved

¹ The activities and outcomes shared in this report are the results of collective efforts undertaken by LIP members to address local needs and priorities. While CIC supports and contributes financially to the LIP process, it does not necessarily endorse or fund all projects presented here.

This secretariat is housed in a local organization that has received the support from the community for leading the LIP process. Most LIPs are based in municipal/regional administrations or in settlement agencies, but mainstream organizations (United Ways, YMCAs) and economic development organizations (workforce planning boards, economic development corporations) have also stepped in to take that role.



In 2012-13, CIC provided funding to 35 LIPs across Ontario, the majority of which had reached the implementation phase and were carrying out activities to address the needs and priorities identified in their communities. New LIPs were also starting up in Calgary (Alberta), and as pilot projects in St. John's (Newfoundland) and Halifax (Nova Scotia). These communities were at the beginning of the LIP process, exploring the community capacity for collective action and building a network for engagement.

The following sections present key results achieved by the LIPs in leading the partnership planning process and in supporting the implementation of the community strategy.

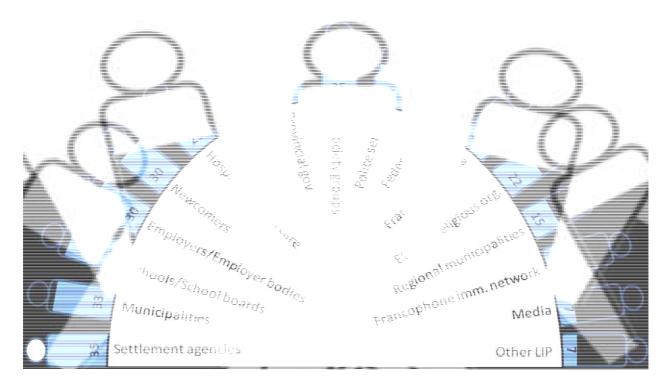
Planning: Engagement and Capacity-Building

The first years after the creation of the partnership focus on building capacity for collective action in the community: at this stage, the LIPs' efforts are directed primarily towards expanding membership, identifying needs, raising awareness of gaps, and determining priorities for action.

Broadening the Tent

LIPs are enhancing the engagement of local actors in newcomer settlement and integration, and have expanded their membership to become more diverse and representative of their communities. By 2012-13, the vast majority of LIPs had secured participation from the key stakeholders that provide services to newcomers and support their integration.

The figure below illustrates the number of LIPs with representation from these stakeholders:



Other common members participating on LIP councils and committees include: libraries, employment services, housing services, community centres, workforce planning boards, chambers of commerce, immigrant employment councils, women's services, child or youth services, senior services, as well as individual community volunteers.

LIPs are using a number of strategies to build connections with new members and secure commitment to the partnership's goals and vision. For many, the most successful attempts at engaging partners have been those that rely on a personal approach, such as targeted outreach, individualized presentations or face-to-face meetings. Other strategies used to encourage participation included:

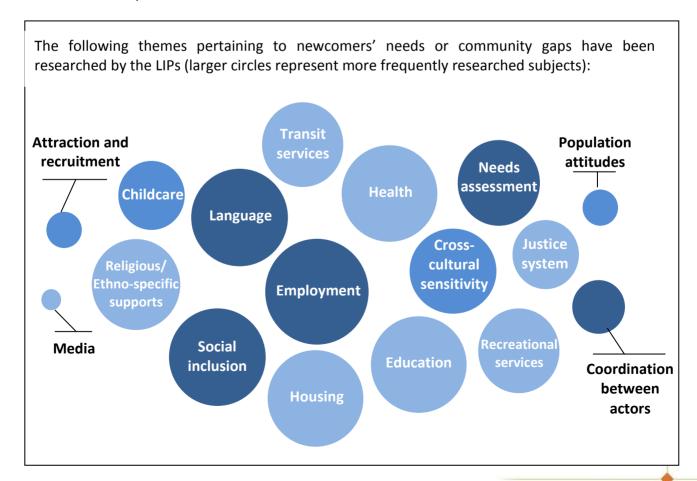
- To reach out to new organizations, the LIP Renfrew and Lanark instigated the "Bring a colleague" meetings, where current members are asked to invite colleagues from other sectors. As a result, participation was quickly expanded to all parts of the counties.
- For the Leeds and Grenville partnership, offering something of value to the business community was the first step in securing their participation and support: by offering workshops and diversity training, the Council learned more about employers' needs, raised awareness of the role of the LIP, and facilitated further outreach to this group to encourage involvement in LIP activities.
- In Toronto, the complexity of the playing field and the number of local actors brought
 the City-wide LIP to create multiple engagement opportunities, providing different ways
 for stakeholders to engage with and stay connected to the partnership: stakeholder
 involvement ranges from taking part in local activities or attending forums and
 conferences to participating on the Newcomer Leadership Table, the LIP's main council.

 In Sarnia-Lambton, a Nomination Committee is responsible for maintaining appropriate representation from the six sectors that make up the Council, while limiting participation from other members to avoid overcrowding. This committee also provides orientation to new members.

The benefits of a broad engagement process have been noted by a number of LIPs. In Toronto East, the LIP created an Immigrant Council to facilitate the ongoing participation of newcomers in the LIP's work, and reinforce the connection between the immigrant communities and local service providers. It used members' informal networks to engage newcomers who had had no prior contact with settlement agencies, and ensure that their voice and needs were heard. In Calgary, the outreach of the very young LIP has already raised awareness about settlement and integration outcomes and the role of local organizations. Stakeholders that used to be absent from the conversation are now at the table and actively contribute to building the LIP vision.

Identifying Needs and Priorities

LIPs gather the expertise of numerous actors and conduct research on the needs of newcomers as well as on local service gaps in order to inform their settlement strategy. They engaged a wide range of newcomers, including those having not accessed settlement services, to gather information on the specific challenges faced in their communities. The LIP research is often the most comprehensive analysis of needs undertaken at the local level: it covers thematic areas pertaining to all facets of creating welcoming communities, and is not limited to the provision of settlement-specific services.

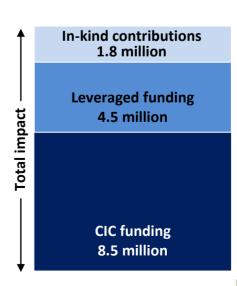


This analysis of local needs supported the development of community-specific strategies and solutions. Action plans created by the LIPs over the past five years highlight a number of common themes and priorities for local communities:

Newcomer attraction, retention and business development	 Mentoring programs and internships Enhanced language training Employment and business information services
Children and youth	 Social integration through activities conducted by mainstream organizations Improving information provided to newcomer parents about their children's educational opportunities and experiences
Community civic resources	 Public transportation Services for immigrant women and seniors
Education and education policy	 English language training Improving education supports and coordination of educational services Fostering cultural competence in schools
Health and healthcare	 Improving mental health Removing systematic barriers to care and promoting cultural competency Enhancing health literacy
Social, cultural and political inclusion	 Improving access and content of information about community services Increasing newcomer civic engagement Reducing racism and lack of cultural understanding in the host community
Workplace integration	 Recruitment and bridging programs Recognition of international credentials More receptive organizational culture

Funding and Resources

To complement the funding provided by CIC and maximize their impact, LIPs have leveraged significant resources, including financial resources, from partner organizations and the broader community. In 2012-13, LIP partners and funders (outside of CIC) contributed more than 4.5 million dollars towards the LIPs process and the implementation of LIPs action plans, demonstrating their support for this initiative and its goals. In addition to financial resources, in-kind contributions supported LIPs for an estimated 1.8 million dollars, consisting largely of staff hours and physical resources.



LIPs have introduced a number of tools and practices to secure new resources, expand their funding opportunities, and support their members in seeking financial support for collective projects. For example, some LIPs have created sub-committees focusing on resource development: these build on the knowledge of experienced LIP members to identify effective leveraging strategies, assist partners with grant writing, and address specific challenges pertaining to securing funds. Other LIPs have been successful in leveraging funding by profiling the collaborative projects initiated by their various working groups. In these cases, the endorsement of specific initiatives by the partnership provided them with visibility and credibility, which helped convince funders to commit resources.

LIPs have also facilitated connections between service providers and local funders. In Durham, the LIP is distributing regular "funding opportunities notifications", gathering and sharing information on available grants and contributions funds with its members and their networks. A number of organizations reported having applied and received additional funding as a result of this practice. A few LIPs have also created "funders tables", bringing together various private organizations, government representatives and other funders to discuss needs with local agencies, identify synergies and guide resource allocations to achieve effective community results.

Implementation: Action and Impact

Five years after the launch of the initiative, most LIPs have moved into the implementation phase and are working with partnership members to carry out their strategic and action plans. The results reported suggest that these collaborative projects have had significant impact on enhancing coordination of and accessibility to services, adapting local practices to foster more welcoming communities, and increasing the weight of settlement and integration issues in informing further planning or funding decisions.

Enhancing Capacity and Accessibility of Services

LIPs have improved the coordination of services (both settlement-specific and public services) by enhancing capacity for collaborative action and providing opportunities for sharing and mutual learning. As a result, the accessibility of services to newcomers has increased in local communities. One common example of the role of LIPs in this regard is the creation and dissemination, online and in print, of **inventories of services** to help newcomers find the information and programs they need. Through the Windsor-Essex LIP, settlement agencies and mainstream institutions have updated the community's service directory to improve newcomer access to the programs they deliver. Members of the Partnership & Service Collaboration Committee of the Toronto South Quadrant collaborated to research and draft a Newcomer "Welcome" Brochure, which provides links to resources available in the community in the areas of settlement, employment, health and housing: it is now being widely piloted across Toronto South. Similarly, the Inventory of Service Catalogue created by the Niagara LIP has received very positive feedback: not only are newcomers finding the services they need more quickly, but

providers have also been using this tool to identify service gaps, and responded by extending their hours of operation and adding locations for services.

The vast majority of LIPs have also indicated that the opportunities for collaboration and information-sharing have enhanced partners' ability and willingness to make **referrals** between organizations. The West Quadrant LIP in Toronto observed that the relationships formed because of the LIP have increased members' knowledge of services available, and led to greater ease in recommending the most appropriate option for newcomers. For the North Quadrant LIP, enhanced collaboration has increased the capacity of agencies to make more effective referrals and, in turn, improved the immigrant experience by allowing newcomers to access the needed resources much faster. As a result, a number of settlement providers across LIPs communities have also reported an increased uptake of services. In Peterborough, for example, the New Canadians Centre has seen its annual number of new clients increase by a factor of 2.5 since the creation of the LIP in 2009.

LIPs report the creation of a number of new partnerships between LIP members as well as the strengthening of relations between local organizations. They worked on breaking silos between sectors and made it easier to address needs at the intersection of two or more fields of services. The work of LIP staff has also allowed to streamline efforts, reduce duplication, and build more comprehensive mechanisms and structures for collaboration in their communities.

- A number of LIPs have carried out mapping exercises to help agencies learn about services offered in the community and plan cooperatively. For example, the Chatham-Kent LIP used a Geographic Information System mapping to identify the farms hiring migrant workers as well as health care service providers, which helped enhance awareness of need and coordinate services.
- In Halton, LIP members have collaborated to create common documents for service providers, including a client consent form, a template for client testimonials, and marketing materials for local programs.
- In Greater Sudbury, the LIP has built a strong partnership with the Francophone community, and has been instrumental in bringing together local Francophone and mainstream providers to ensure the success of joint events. The LIP and the Réseau du Nord are now represented on each other's councils, which facilitates further coordination of goals and activities.
- In Waterloo Region, the Immigrant Employment Network was merged with the LIP to simplify the collaborative structure and improve coordination between all organizations.

In doing this work, LIPs highlighted the inherent value of the partnerships' committees, which provide venues for members to discuss their respective activities and share successful practices. Cross-sector working groups, or opportunities for all LIP committees to work collaboratively, are identified as particularly valuable in bringing members to learn about the resources, materials or research produced in other sectors and to start coordinating their efforts and activities.

"Prior to the HIPC being established it was the case that providers worked in silos and competition among them prevented them from working together toward a common goal. The work of the HIPC has coordinated their efforts resulting in a pooling of resources to accomplish a great deal toward the settling of newcomers. One community partner commented in the HIPC Impact Assessment report "There is more collaboration and less competition among providers because of the HIPC.""

- Extract from the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) Annual Report

Collaboration between LIP members has also helped create new resources and programs in order to address local needs and bridge identified service gaps:

- In Timmins, a LIP report and recommendation led to the opening of a local settlement agency, the Timmins & District Multicultural Center, in 2011. Continued collaboration has since brought about an increase in information services for newcomers, as well as the introduction of French language classes, improving job opportunities for newcomers with Francophone employers.
- In Guelph-Wellington, LIP members from various sectors worked together towards the
 development of a mentorship program for newcomers. The collaborative nature of this
 project was obvious throughout the development process: LIP members decided jointly
 on the organization best placed to run the program, and the program structure now
 includes an Advisory Committee, of which the LIP is a member.
- The North Bay Newcomer Network contributed to the development of HR North, an online tool facilitating matches between pre-screened job seekers and small and medium-sized enterprises in Northeastern Ontario. The project also included research on labour market needs, employer engagement sessions, and a retention guide for businesses.
- The Smiths Falls LIP played a key role in supporting the conception of a mentoring program for newcomer youth by the local chapter of Big Brothers/Big Sisters. The pilot project showed promising results, and was recently formalized as a regular program.
- In Grand Erie, an Employment Guide for Newcomers was jointly prepared by Employment Ontario organizations and community partners, offering newcomers with information on finding employment and links to local resources and organizations.
- In Simcoe County, the LIP brought together all organizations funded by the federal and provincial governments to provide settlement services and language training. The group collectively contributed to a local settlement services brochure for newcomers, which includes information on programs and maps to service location.

Building Welcoming Communities

By meaningfully engaging non-settlement organizations in conversations about integration needs and how to address them, LIPs create interest and capacity for these partners to change their practices in order to better serve and include newcomers. In fact, LIPs have reported an incredibly high number of examples of their action in this area, and of the impact observed in their communities.

- The Hamilton LIP led significant changes in the housing sector: the City committed 900,000\$ towards building multiple bedroom social housing units to accommodate larger newcomer families, and guided the LIP's Housing Working Group in the development of a Housing Guide resource which is offered to newcomers in multiple languages. The Housing Help Centre has also targeted their work to better serve their newcomer clients, and now offers workshops, targeted online information, resources and a language line to serve clients in multiple languages.
- Two innovative partnerships were instigated in Quinte: first, collaboration between settlement agencies and a transportation company led to a change in bus scheduling and routing to facilitate access of 'out of town' ESL students to language training. Second, the settlement, interpretation, and health care services signed a contract to make face-to-face interpretative services available to health care providers interacting with newcomer patients with language difficulties.
- Library programs have been introduced in Huron County in partnership with the Centres
 for Employment and Learning, who offer ESL programming. This led to the creation of a
 newcomer settlement collection, a free resource for newcomers available in all libraries.
- The London Police Service has partnered with other members of the London & Middlesex LIP to engage newcomers in learning about the justice system and build relationships with ethnocultural communities: one result was the production of a Newcomer Outreach DVD along with lessons plans included in ESL training.
- In Chatham-Kent, LIP members have focused some of their efforts on adapting services
 to ensure they are accessible to temporary foreign workers: the health center identified
 migrant workers as a vulnerable population and provided them access to health care,
 while the library provided library cards to 15 migrant workers.
- The Peterborough Welcome Pass (PWP) was designed to give newcomers an
 introduction to cultural, artistic, and recreation amenities of the region. In addition to
 offering new opportunities for newcomers to connect with their community, the PWP
 has been a very effective tool to build partnerships with organizations that have
 traditionally not been involved in the work of immigrant integration.
- In Thunder Bay and across the territory covered by the Northwestern Ontario Immigration Partnership, local partner organizations and businesses are now displaying signs that read "welcome" in a variety of languages, and offer settlement and language services brochures to newcomers with the contact information of the local agency.

These and similar initiatives have helped address structural challenges that limit immigrants' access to services, and build lasting capacities so that public and private organizations can better understand and respond to the particular needs of newcomers. In hospitals, colleges and universities, libraries or community centres, LIP partners have created diversity and accessibility councils, support groups to welcome and guide newcomers, and new activities and programs specifically targeting newcomers.

A similar process is observed among **employers and businesses**. LIPs are reporting enhanced engagement of employer councils or chambers of commerce, which are developing resources to support economic integration: for example, newcomer or employer toolkits as well as

platforms facilitating matching between immigrant job seekers and local businesses have been created in many communities over the past year.

- In Renfrew & Lanark, the LIP's employer outreach events has brought several employers to re-examine their human resources practices: they are starting to seek talent outside of the typical avenues, review their interview practices to eliminate cultural biases, and foster more inclusive workplaces to retain newcomer workers.
- Large steel mills in Sault Ste. Marie have adapted services by which newcomer employees are provided with accommodations, transportation and networking opportunities.

"Through promotion and increased dissemination of information about settlement services, population and labour market trends in our region, the LIP has raised the profile of settlement and immigration in the City and region significantly. Businesses that had previously not put a formal process or effort together to attract or serve newcomers have been challenged to increase their work in those areas."

- Extract from the Thunder Bay Immigration Committee Annual Report

The ongoing relationship-building efforts of the LIPs with local decision-makers have also influenced the **policies**, **structures and activities of municipal and regional administrations**. Municipalities participating on LIPs have gained in-depth knowledge of newcomers' needs, immigration trends and settlement challenges and successes. In 25 cases (out of 34 LIPs reporting on this), the municipal [or regional] governments have formally committed to support the LIP's community strategy or action plan, and to contribute to its implementation. This has been concretized in a number of ways:

- In Durham, the regional municipality introduced new tools and activities, including a new multi-faith tour and a cultural competency training. A diversity calendar was also added to the corporate calendar, and a diversity strategy is being developed.
- The Kingston Immigration Partnership reports significant change in the engagement of the city in immigration issues since the creation of the LIP in 2009. Recently, the work of the LIP has led the city to create a welcome gift for newcomers to the community, which helps introduce them to municipal services like transit, recreation and cultural activities.
- In Ottawa, the LIP has worked closely with the City to establish clear priorities for the attraction and integration of immigration. This work resulted in the launch of the first ever Municipal Immigration Strategy and the creation of a new internal structure, the City of Ottawa Immigration Network, which coordinates cross-departmental planning and implementation of the new municipal immigration strategy.

In many cases, city councils have appropriated this work and collaborated with the LIP to set municipal priorities and adopt concrete measures to improve the social and economic integration of immigrants. In a few communities, the LIPs even highlighted their role in the creation of immigration or diversity portfolios (and associated new positions) within the municipal structure or the City Council.

Through public awareness events, community forums and networking activities, LIPs have also contributed to improving **attitudes in the population** and fostering more welcoming host communities.

- In Peel, the LIP's Host Receptivity Working Group created a Diversity and Inclusion Charter to concretely engage community members in becoming more receptive to newcomers and reducing inequalities. Through its endorsement by individuals and organizations (including the region's MPP, local mayors, the United Way of Peel Region and the Art Gallery of Mississauga), the Charter helps build a greater understanding and acceptance of diversity, and promotes a local culture that recognizes and celebrates the contributions of all Peel residents.
- The work of the Five Eastern Counties LIP to increase public awareness and engagement around settlement and integration has raised the profile of immigration in the counties of Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott and Russell. As a result of these efforts, communities that had traditionally struggled to overcome prejudice towards newcomers have increasingly engaged in a positive dialogue and initiated a process of change.

Across the board, LIPs have reported progress in communities' attitudes towards newcomers, with better understanding of immigrants' realities and of their contributions, more positive media coverage, and overall more appreciation of diversity in local communities.

Informing Community Planning

Gathering the latest and most locally-relevant data on newcomers needs, LIPs are invaluable sources of knowledge and have been used by an increasing number of organizations to support program planning or inform funding decisions. Through their community plans or direct involvement with organizations, LIPs contribute to bringing the immigrant lens to the forefront of discussions on priorities in a wide range of sectors, and ensure that funders are well aware of needs when establishing guidelines and making decisions.

The new York Region Community Investment Strategy, which guides the not-for-profit Region's funding of aligned agencies, was with the **Immigration** Settlement Strategy developed by the LIP. As a result, initiatives targeting newcomers have been included as a priority for funding.

"CIC funding for the Local Immigration Partnership has allowed municipalities to support newcomer engagement and settlement support initiatives in a concerted manner. Through LIPs, municipalities are instituting innovative practices and contributing to successful immigrant outcomes and economic development opportunities in their communities that achieve national, provincial and municipal policy goals. This funding has served as a catalyst for York Region to mobilize partnerships and resources to support the successful integration of newcomers in our community."

- Extract from the York Region LIP

- Recommendations made by the Ottawa LIP to the Champlain Local Health Integration
 Network have led to the prioritization of investments in immigrant health in the region,
 resulting in the establishment of innovative programming to build the capacity of health
 services to address immigrants' needs. Similarly, the Ontario Trillium Foundation used
 the LIP's Ottawa Immigration Strategy as a reference to evaluate community proposals
 working on addressing the needs of newcomers.
- The findings of the St.Thomas-Elgin LIP Settlement Strategy were referred to several times by the regional Workforce Planning and Development Board as part of efforts to establish common priorities related to the employment market.

The Local Immigration Partnerships, introduced in 2008, demonstrate the impact of collective action on building more welcoming and inclusive communities for newcomers to Canada. A relatively small initiative, LIPs present an impressive set of accomplishments, with striking results in areas such as building capacity of new actors for action, coordinating services to enhance accessibility, and leveraging new resources to support settlement and integration. The LIPs are a flexible approach to local engagement which has found its application in a variety of contexts, building on pre-existing structures and adapted to serve different visions and goals. As new LIPs are created across the country, we will be in a better position to understand, demonstrate and strengthen their role in building our knowledge of the local barriers to integration as they relate both to settlement and public services and our capacity to partner more broadly and efficiently to address them.

Annex

LIPs funded by CIC in 2012-13

Ontario: LIPs outside of Toronto

Lead organization
Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Regional Municipality of Durham
Eastern Ontario Training Board
Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie
City of Greater Sudbury
Corporation of the City of Guelph
Regional Municipality of Halton
City of Hamilton
County of Huron
Kingston Community Health Centres
United Way of Leeds & Grenville
Corporation of the City of London
Regional Municipality of Niagara
North Bay & District Multicultural Center
Thunder Bay Multicultural Association
Catholic Centre for Immigrants
Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
New Canadians Centre
Quinte United Immigrant Services
Algonquin College
County of Lambton
Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie
County of Simcoe
Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls

St.Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership	YWCA
Thunder Bay Immigration Committee	Thunder Bay Multicultural Association
Timmins Local Immigration Partnership	Timmins Economic Development Corporation
Waterloo Region Immigration Partnership Council	Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership	Corporation of the City of Windsor
York Region Local Immigration Partnership/Community Partnership Council	Regional Municipality of York

Ontario: LIPs in Toronto

Name of LIP	Lead organization
Toronto City-Wide Local Immigration Partnership	City of Toronto
Toronto North Local Immigration Partnership	JVS Toronto
Toronto West Local Immigration Partnership	JobStart
Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership	St. Stephen's Community House
Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership	Catholic Crosscultural Services

Alberta

Name of LIP	Lead organization
Calgary Local Immigration Partnership	United Way of Calgary and Area

Pilot projects

Name of LIP	Lead organization
Halifax Local Immigration Partnership – Phase 1	Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services
St. John's Local Immigration Partnership - Needs Assessment	Association for New Canadians