

Lambton County Settlement Strategy

2022-2025



Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that Lambton County is part of the ancestral land of the Chippewa, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples, referred to collectively as the Anishinaabeg. It is through the connection of the Anishinaabeg with the spirit of the land, water and air that we recognize their unique cultures, traditions, and values. Together as treaty people, we have a shared responsibility to act with respect for the environment that sustains all life, protecting the future for those generations to come.



A Message from our Warden

On behalf of Lambton County Council, I wish to acknowledge the work undertaken by the Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership Council over the past twelve years to create a more welcoming community for all newcomers, immigrants and refugees and the significant impact it has made in Lambton County.

Lambton County Council shares a commitment to the core values of diversity, equity, and respect and recognizes the potential of all Canadians. Council encourages the integration of new immigrants through involvement in social, cultural, economic, and political affairs and is in full support of this community settlement strategy to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities in Lambton, while improving settlement and integration outcomes.

This strategy is reflective of the input provided by local newcomers, the general public, and community stakeholders. Additionally, the strategy complements the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership's Resident Attraction Strategy and the Sarnia-Lambton Workforce Development Board's Community Workforce Plan. SL-LIP Council and supporting staff continue to foster existing and new partnerships throughout various sectors of the community as they move forward in implementation of the Settlement Strategy.



Kevin Marriott,
Lambton County Warden

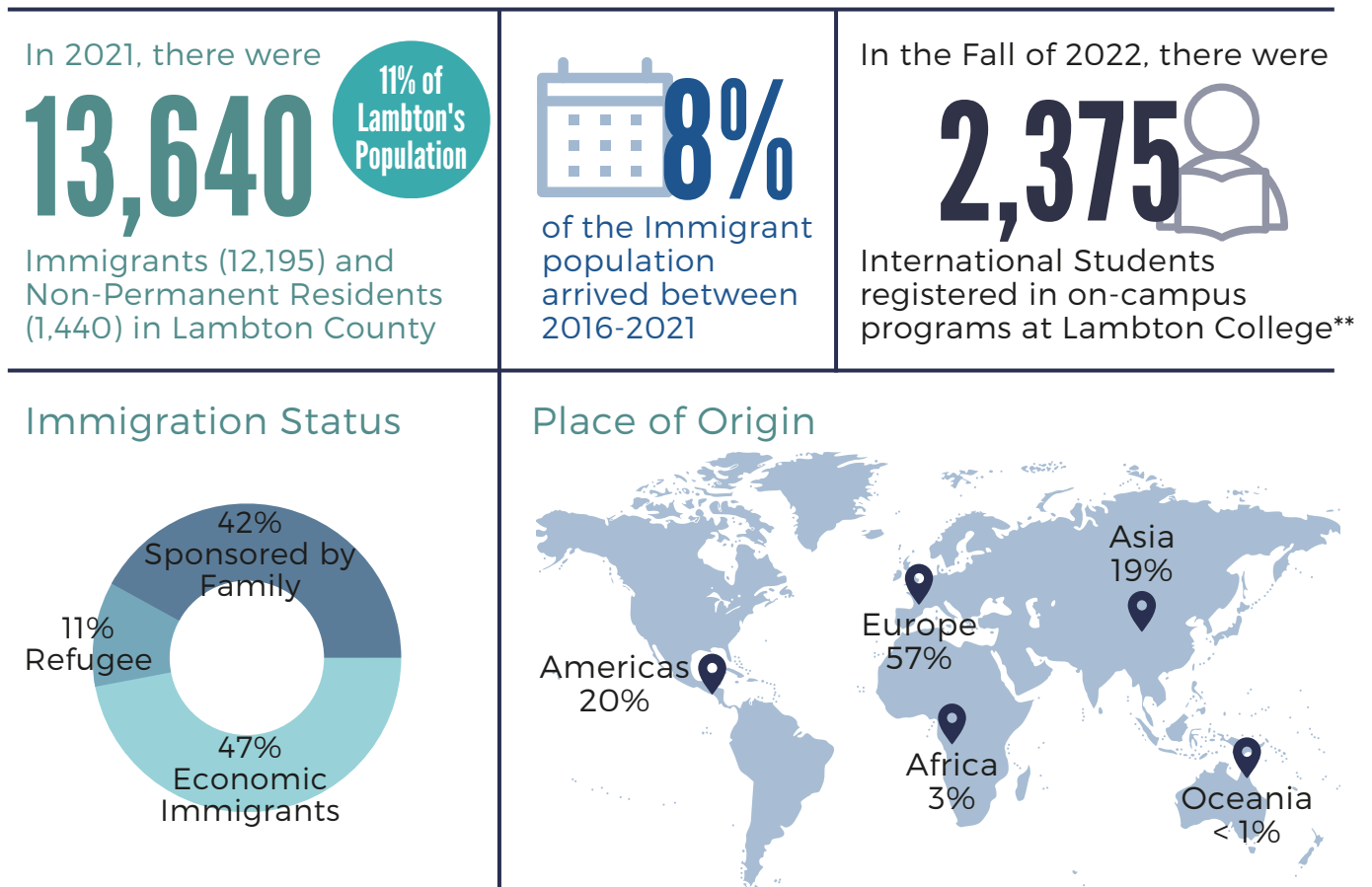


Community Profile

Building a Healthy, Strong Thriving Community

Similar to numerous communities across Canada, Lambton County is experiencing some demographic challenges; the population is continuing to age, birthrates are decreasing, and youth are emigrating in pursuit of education and employment opportunities. While immigration is often thought of as a viable solution to lagging population growth, Sarnia-Lambton is experiencing difficulty in attracting and retaining immigrants to the area.

Over the past twenty years, immigration has been slowly declining. However, the recent increase in the number of international students enrolled at Lambton College has begun to change the local landscape. As the community is changing, it is imperative to evaluate the local landscape, to ensure Sarnia-Lambton is creating a welcoming, diverse, and prosperous community and to identify initiatives that provide the opportunity for all members of our community to thrive and grow. According to IRCC Census Data, the following highlights immigrants, newcomers and refugees in Lambton County in 2021*:



*Statistics Canada. 2022. Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001.
 **Reported by Lambton College according to their Fall 2022 registration enrollment



Introduction

The Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership (SL-LIP) was established in 2009 and is a federally funded initiative through Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Housed with the County of Lambton, SL-LIP is a leader in immigrant research and knowledge sharing and is a community-wide, multi-sectoral partnership that works to increase collaboration between settlement agencies and assist the settlement and integration experiences of newcomers.

The SL-LIP is a community-wide, multi-sectoral partnership that works to increase collaboration between settlement agencies and smooth the settlement and integration experiences for newcomers. While we do not provide direct service to immigrants, refugees and temporary foreign workers, we serve to support those that do by ensuring comprehensive programming is available and increasing their awareness of, and access to, community supports.

The SL-LIP is passionate about our community. We want Lambton County to be a welcoming place that thrives economically, socially and culturally, now and for decades to come.

Mission Statement

The Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership supports a collective and comprehensive community effort to create positive settlement outcomes for immigrants and newcomers locally.



The Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership Council

The SL-LIP Council was established in 2010 as a multi-sector advisory group consisting of representatives from the settlement, healthcare, education, employment services, social services, economic development, and business sectors of the community.

The SL-LIP Council provides a centralized venue for thoughtful and creative discussions about immigrant and newcomer services and supports. It also oversees and facilitates the implementation of the LIP Settlement Strategy through the following areas of focus:

1. **Build and Increase Awareness:** Developing resources and materials, training, hosting community forums
2. **Community Engagement:** Engagement opportunities, consultations, sharing knowledge and resources, local campaigns and events.
3. **Collaboration:** Collaborate on initiatives, share resources, co-develop new initiatives and programs.
4. **Research:** Identify funding sources, research, collection of data.

Settlement Strategy for Lambton County

The Settlement Strategy is a coordinated and comprehensive plan that supports Lambton County in becoming a thriving and prosperous community that values diversity and innovation.

To date, the SL- LIP has taken the lead role in the development of the Settlement Strategy and through community engagement has:

- Determined the community's capacity to assist and support immigrants and newcomers;
- Identified challenges and barriers immigrants and newcomers face when settling in Lambton County; and
- Established strategies and actions to identify solutions to these challenges.

Over the next five years, the SL-LIP will facilitate the implementation of the Settlement Strategy, which is organized by four pillars:



EMPLOYMENT



**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**



**COORDINATION
OF SERVICES**



**RESEARCH AND
FACILITATION**

Each pillar aligns with a specific strategy and a designated working group, made up of stakeholders, who collaborate to implement innovative, meaningful, and impactful activities to achieve our goals.



The Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership supports a collective and comprehensive community effort to create positive settlement outcomes for immigrants and newcomers locally.





Canada's immigrant integration model is highly regarded, but it often falls short in providing immigrants with employment in line with their qualifications and expectations. Using a combination of surveys, focus groups and secondary research, newcomers identified finding employment as the greatest barrier in their settlement process and identified several barriers to labour market participation. To address these challenges, the following outcomes and strategies have been recommended to improve employment outcomes for newcomers and to provide support to employers.

Vision for Lambton County:

Immigrants are economically integrated into Lambton County's economy and Immigrants, international students and refugees have positive outcomes retaining meaningful employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Desired Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of pathways to hiring immigrants.
- Improved understanding of the benefits of hiring and retaining immigrants.
- Improved connection between employers and newcomer job seekers.

Strategies to Support Employment:

- Support community partners in promoting the benefits of hiring immigrants.
- Enhance coordination and promote connections amongst service providers and employers and immigrants.
- Work with local economic development/workforce boards to conduct research and data analysis and establish an understanding of current and emerging challenges in immigrant employment.
- Leverage community networks, tools and resources in employment related event promotion.
- Apply an outcomes-based measurement framework to demonstrate impact.
- Provide support to local new resident attraction and retention efforts through the SL-Settlement Strategy.





Engagement and inclusion constitutes an important element of successful immigrant and newcomer settlement. Increased engagement in activities, sports or recreation, food, music and arts events, by both immigrants and local populations, will increase the community's capacity to share culture and tradition.

Vision for Lambton County:

Lambton County is a welcoming and inclusive region that supports all newcomer residents to belong, make community connections, and actively participate in all that Lambton has to offer.

Desired Outcomes:

- Increased newcomer, immigrant and refugee participation within the community.
- Increase awareness of the specific needs of vulnerable immigrant and refugee populations.
- Increased awareness and accessibility of local programming and events.
- Increased participation in local recreation and sporting opportunities.
- Increased awareness of racial discrimination issues in Lambton County.
- Lambton County is viewed as a more culturally diverse and welcoming community.

Strategies to Support Community Engagement:

- Develop a public education strategy to reduce discrimination and racism.
- Develop a framework for being welcoming and inclusive that all municipalities across Lambton County can implement.
- Encourage and support opportunities for immigrants to connect across cultures, participate in events and activities and share their perspectives.
- Encourage and support the delivery of programs, services and activities to assist immigrants make connections with Indigenous peoples, residents and longer-term immigrants.
- Promote awareness of the positive effects of cultural diversity.



The largest challenge cited in service provision is access to accurate and comprehensive information of services. Despite Sarnia-Lambton’s admirable settlement programs and services, services are not being accessed to full capacity. Furthermore, while services and programs exist in the City of Sarnia, the rural communities of Lambton County lack available and accessible services and supports.

Vision for Lambton County:

Lambton County has a fully resourced and coordinated settlement service infrastructure where immigrants and settlement service providers have access to the services, supports and information they need to best support newcomers and immigrants.

Desired Outcomes:

- Increased communication and engagement between settlement and non-settlement organizations.
- Increase awareness of programs and supports.
- Increased understanding of barriers to effective services and learn about newcomer needs.
- Services are better coordinated at the community level
- Programming and service delivery by mainstream institutions is adapted to newcomer needs.

Strategies to Support Coordination of Services:

- Develop a comprehensive referral system, using online databases and tools, for community agencies whose service is relevant to the settlement and integration needs of newcomers to Lambton.
- Develop a virtual tool to connect local service providers and newcomers, immigrants and refugees to increase awareness and accessibility to services.
- Remove the barriers for local not for profit organizations to access interpretation and translation services.
- Develop a centralized information sharing network.



SL-LIP is a leader in immigrant research and knowledge sharing that works to increase collaboration between settlement agencies and smooth the settlement and integration experiences of newcomers. SL-LIP continues to develop and guide sustainable solutions for the integration and well-being of newcomers that will continue to lead Lambton County towards being a community in which all community members can prosper and grow.

Vision for Lambton County:

The Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership is comprised of diverse stakeholders that serve to address immigrant integration challenges within the community, enhance existing and create new community initiatives and provide ongoing support for community organizations through consultation, facilitation, research and evaluation.

Desired Outcomes:

- Strengthened connections between cultural or religious groups and supports and newcomers in the community.
- Secured funding through available grants to build the development of strategies within the community in response to emerging needs.

Strategies to Support Resource Development and Facilitation:

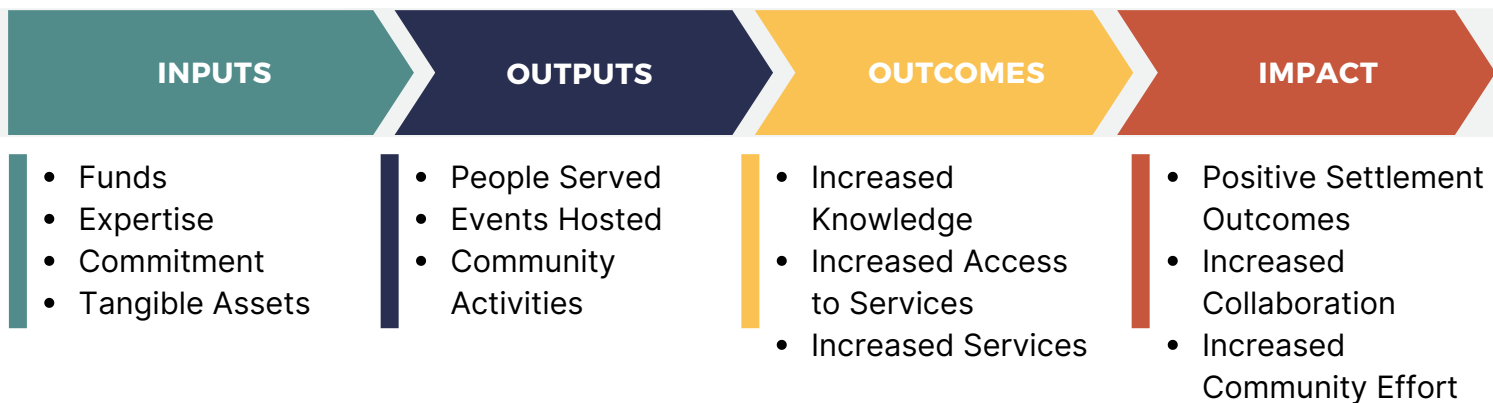
- Coordinate and sustain the operations of the SL-LIP.
- Secure and diversify LIP funding to ensure sustainability of the LIP and implementation of its activities.
- Increase public and stakeholder awareness and support of the SL-LIP.



Measurement and Evaluation

An outcomes-based measurement framework will be used to evaluate the work of the SL-LIP and its activities:

1. **Objectives:** Objectives will be outlined for each event or activity and will demonstrate a clear alignment with the overall strategy.
2. **Performance Indicators:** Performance indicators will be included and tailored to each event or activity and will demonstrate increased outcomes.
3. **Data Collection:** A description of data collection methodologies will be included for each activity and will involve methods.
4. **Evaluation Plan:** An evaluation plan will contain a detailed description of how the data will be used and how the SL -LIP will share the findings among the community. To measure the overall impact of the SL-LIP initiative, a common set of measures to track the progress, monitor performance and understand what is working through our efforts will be evaluated through the following components:



Next Steps

“Our research indicates that a diverse and welcoming community must continue to be cultivated so that it may grow and thrive.”

Strong and solid partnerships become the foundation upon which a prosperous community can stand. Facilitating and nurturing the development of these partnerships has been, from the beginning, the cornerstone of the LIP initiative and will continue to be so in the future. The LIP will work to sustain these partnerships locally, through the ongoing existence of the Partnership Council and collaboration with existing economic development strategies. It will also tap into the broader region so that the community can utilize all of its resources more effectively and efficiently. In the end, the Sarnia- Lambton Local Immigration Partnership Settlement Strategy will increase this community's capacity for positive change and will lead us towards a community in which all of its members can prosper and grow.

Far from being a standalone document, the Strategy is meant to provide a foundation for current and future community planning and economic development initiatives. Working together, these initiatives can strengthen the local economy by meeting local labour needs, bring entrepreneurial talent, and offset demographic decline to build a healthy, strong and thriving community.





The development of this Settlement Strategy could not have been completed without the participation of organizations from every corner of the community who took part in research and shared their time and thoughts with the Project Team over the past several years. Those contributors have made this initiative a true community effort and for that, we offer our sincerest thanks.

