



Immigration
Partnership
Saskatoon

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2018 Newcomer Needs Assessment

insightrix®

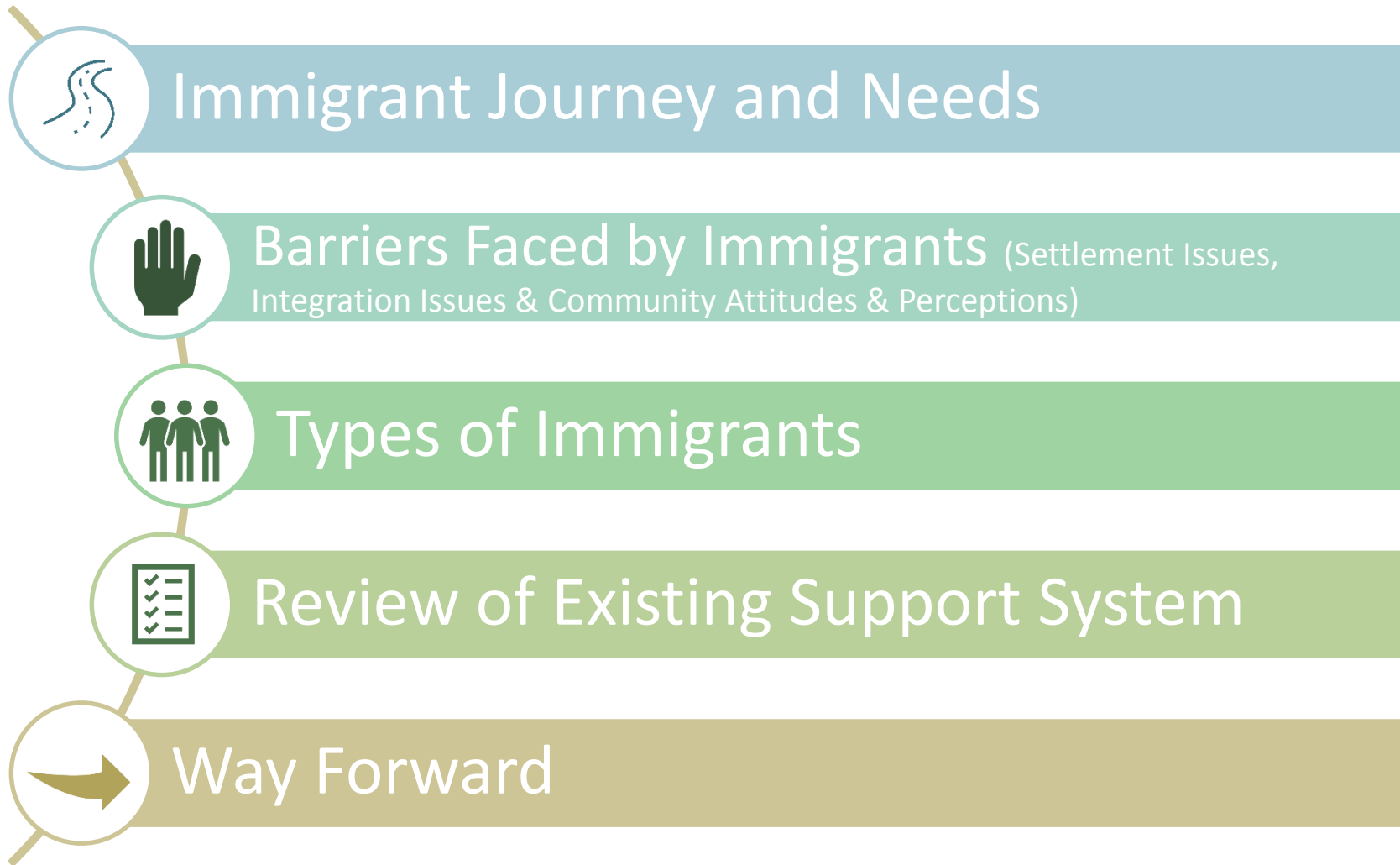
Report compiled by:

Insightrix Research Inc., P: 306-657-5640
Saskatoon, SK S7K 5Y3 E: info@insightrix.com



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Background and Methodology

Background

- ✓ Saskatoon has seen an increase in immigrants from around the world over the past years. According to Statistics Canada, between 2011 and 2016 ,18,585 recent immigrants landed in Saskatoon while 16,195 in Regina.
- ✓ There is a need to ensure that these recent immigrants are welcomed, fully integrated and retained in the community. With this in mind, local organizations, agencies, and government bodies have expressed an interest in developing a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) for Saskatoon.

The Local Immigration Partnerships is an initiative designed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to develop a community-based approach to facilitate the integration of newcomers into Canada. LIP is aimed to bring stakeholders who are not typically apart of the settlement process for immigrants and refugees to successfully welcome and integrate newcomers through a unique multi-level governance structure involving municipal, provincial and federal partners. The LIP model serves as a complement to existing activities in the community and is seen as a platform to systematize initiatives and support the bridging between present settlement service provider organizations (SPOs) and mainstream organizations in the community.

The City of Saskatoon contracted Insightrix in February 2018 to conduct a newcomer needs assessment. The objective of this research is to raise awareness of immigrant needs with sectoral stakeholders and the wider community. The specific objectives are to understand:

- Services newcomers are accessing and where they are accessing them
- Satisfaction of newcomers with the services they have used and reasons for their satisfaction levels
- Services that are needed by immigrants but are lacking in Saskatoon
- The main barriers newcomers encounter when integrating mainly when it comes to employment, housing, education, and health care

Methodology

Focus Group

Ethnocultural Associations and Faith Based Organization:

A focus group was conducted on March 1, 2018 with stakeholders representing ethno-cultural associations and faith based organizations in Saskatoon. Nine (9) individuals participated in this group and they represented the following communities/associations:

- Muslim Association
- Hindu Society of Saskatoon
- Forest Grove Community Church
- Saskatoon Sri Lankan Association
- Oronmo Community (Ethiopian)
- Chinese
- Ghanaian

In-Depth interviews

Newcomers to Saskatoon

- 11 in-depth interviews were also conducted with immigrants who have immigrated to Canada in the past three years. The interviews were conducted face to face on March 8th and March 9th 2018 at a City of Saskatoon location.
- Two (2) in-depth interviews were conducted with student newcomers between the ages of 18-24.
- Four (4) in-depth interviews were conducted with newcomers who were recommended from Settlement Provider Organizations (SPO), namely the:
 - Global Gathering Place
 - International Women of Saskatoon
 - Saskatoon Open Door Society
 - Saskatchewan Intercultural Association
- Five (5) in-depth interviews were conducted with newcomers who have not accessed services of Settlement Provider Organizations (SPOs)

Glossary

IELTS – International English Language Testing System

SPO – Service Provider Organization

SINP – Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program

Scope of the Study

This study aims to qualitatively explore the awareness, perceptions and attitudes of immigrants, Faith and ethno-cultural leaders in Saskatoon on immigration matters. The views expressed in the report represent a reflection of this particular group based on the sample of selected participants. This report is not intended to be a comprehensive review on the existing immigrant-related services available in Saskatoon. Rather this report explores immigrant needs and puts special emphasis to the 'Voice of Immigrants.'



Immigrant Journey and Needs

Welcome to Saskatoon!

Saskatoon is seen as a welcoming place for newcomers because of the ...



Friendly Community

Friendly citizens

"We met one lady on the bus that works at the airport. We exchanged information and we became friends and she offered us lots of help and we would ask her about the parking restriction, and she invited us to her home to introduce us to her family."

Female, 35-44 years old

Diversity

"People understand different cultures and ethnic groups."

Ethnocultural Leaders



Small and Convenient

Kind citizens

"People are so kind. A lot of people say: 'Welcome, what do you need?', 'If you need something let me know.'"

Female, 35-44 years old

Organized city

"Saskatoon is a well-organized city and its not crowded. I never felt like an outsider."

Male, 55-70 years old

Helpful citizens

"When I ask anyone about anything, they helped me. When my car was stuck in the snow, they helped me."

Male, 35-44 years old

Family oriented

"A good place to raise a family."

Ethnocultural Leaders



Diversity in the Community

Best city

"Before coming here, I imagined large buildings and like New York or something. But the reality was different, when we arrived at the airport, I didn't like it at first the buildings were small and there was lots of snow everywhere and it was so cold! I didn't know anyone yet, but then after 1 year after studying at school and meeting a lot of people, I see Saskatoon as the best city, it is cozy and the people are very kind."

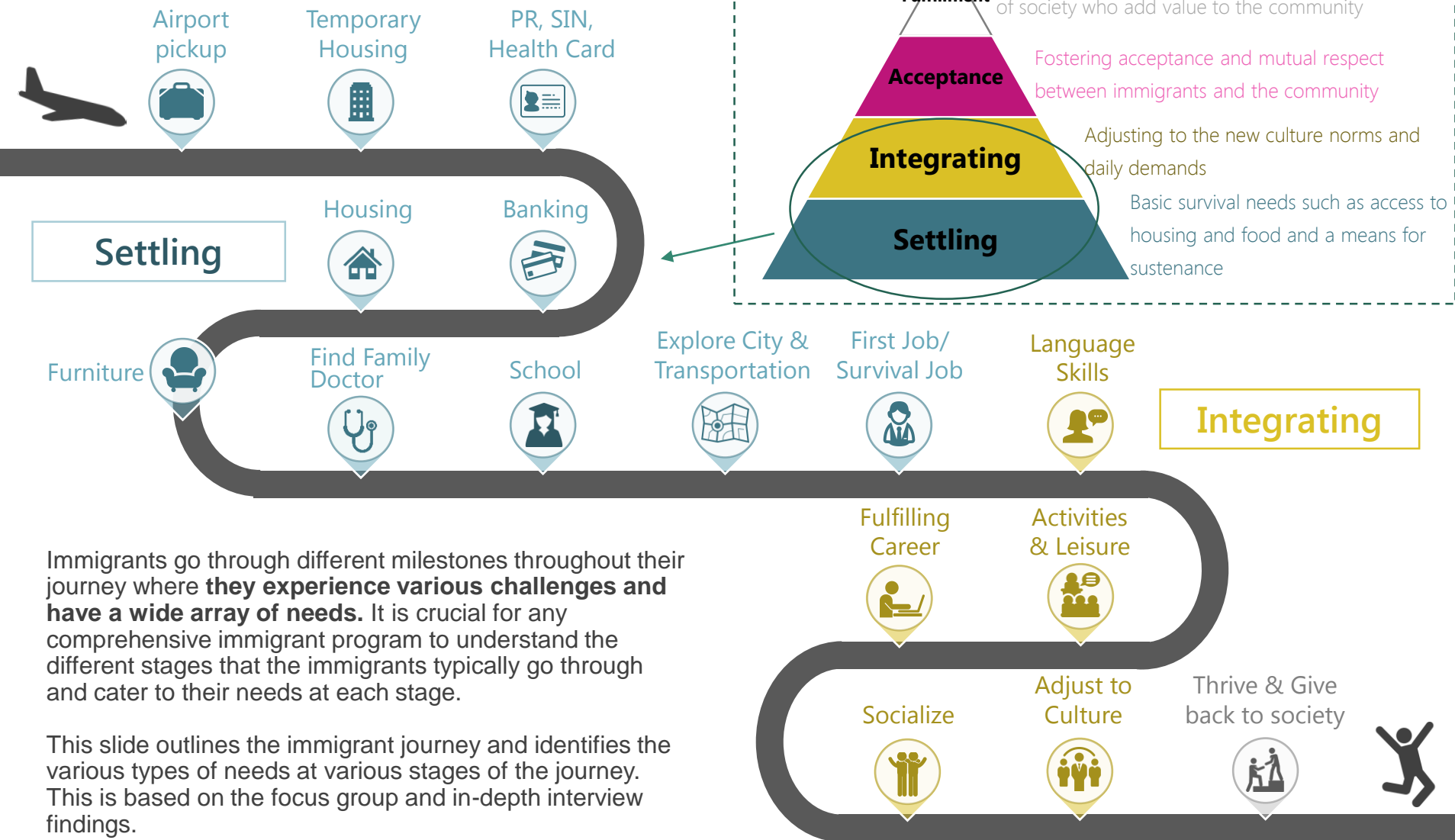
Female, 18-24 years old

Community interaction

"More community interaction than being in a concrete jungle and every man for himself. Convenient - easy to drive around."

Ethnocultural Leaders

An Immigrant's Journey & Needs





Barriers Faced by Immigrants

Main Barriers

Immigrants identified the following main barriers at various stages of their journey:



Settlement Issues

First job/
survival job

Housing

Transportation

Banking and finance

Healthcare

School for children



Integration Issues

Language skills

Finding fulfilling
work/career

Culture shock

Socializing



Community Attitudes and perceptions

Cultural sensitivity

Awareness of abilities of
immigrants among local
population

Employer perception of
immigrants

Immigrant relations to
First Nations and other
immigrants

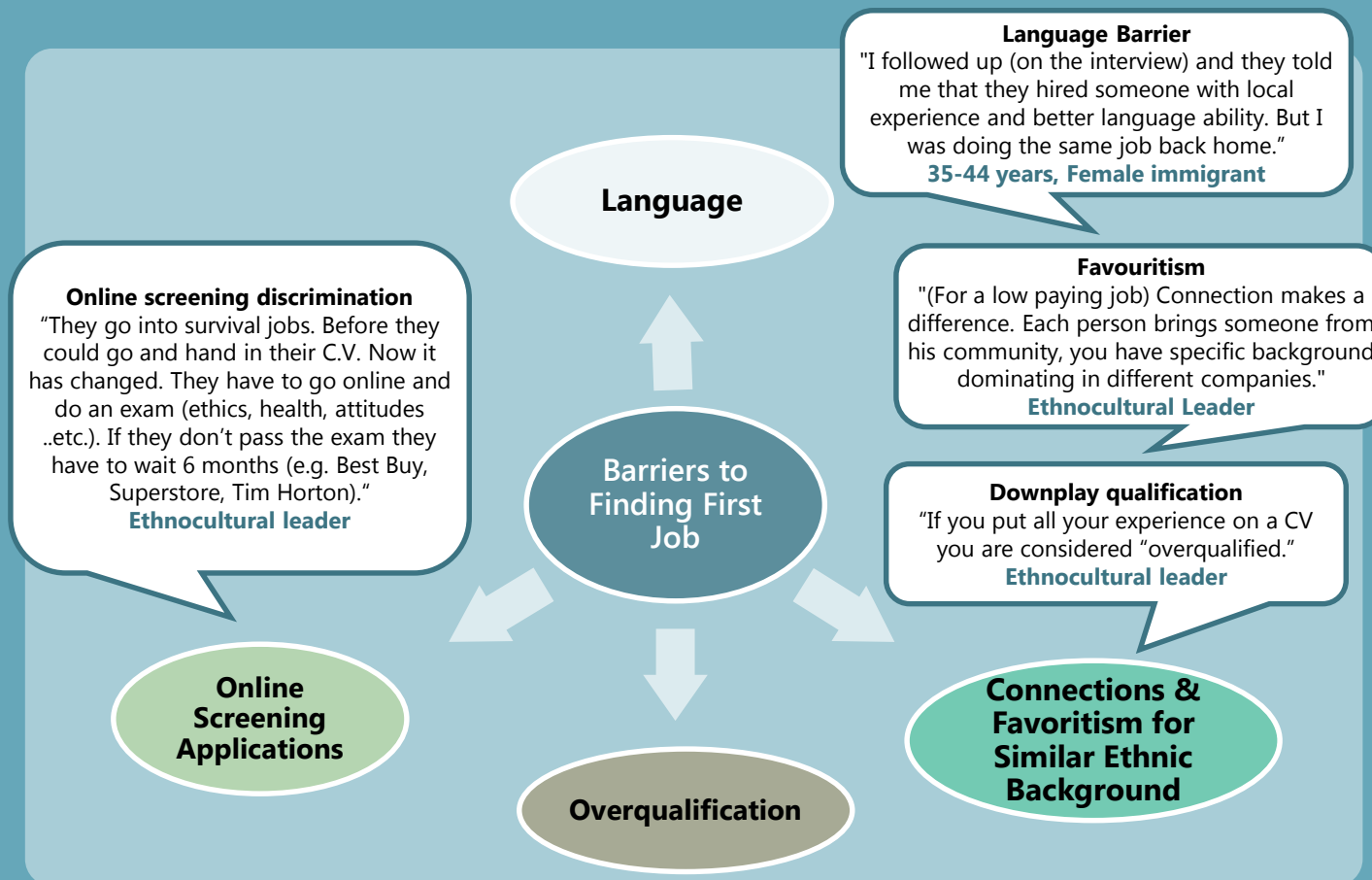


Taking a detailed look at barriers faced
during the settlement phase....



Settlement Issues: Finding The First Job

To sustain their livelihood, immigrants typically need to find a "survival job". For regulated professions, this is usually outside of their field of expertise because they may require recognition of their credential in the Canadian system which takes time. For non-regulated professions, the main barrier to finding employment in their own professional field is 'lack of Canadian experience' without which employers are not willing to hire new immigrants. Those with a language barrier often have the hardest time landing the first survival job.



Suggestions from immigrants

- Educating immigrants about important work-related topics that employers expect them to have knowledge about before being hired (ethics, Health & Safety...etc.).
- Forming partnerships with employers in various industries to give immigrants professional experience in their relevant field so they get the 'Canadian Experience' for which employers are seeking.
- For survival jobs, take actions to prevent possible discrimination against hiring immigrants. For certain survival jobs, limit the favoritism of hiring managers towards individuals of similar ethnic backgrounds.



Settlement Issues: Housing

Finding housing is critical and an immediate need for immigrants. Here are the challenges immigrants face while finding a house:





Settlement Issues: Housing

Awareness of Housing Norms

"Few months ago a family moved in with 2 over-age (Adult) kids . They were told they can't stay in the same apartment as their parents, so they had to rent two places. Now, these kids have their own apartments but are technically living at their parent's place."

Ethno-cultural Leader

Furniture and Moving

"I asked 'Where can we buy a dinning table?' and then the person from the newcomer center says look on Kijiji... Now how do we bring the table home? The movers we found charge \$150 for one hour to move the table!"

35 -44 years, Female Immigrant

Awareness of Mortgage System

"Newcomers need knowledge on how to build good credit so they can eventually buy a house in the long run."

55 -70 years, Male Immigrant

"We are afraid to let our kids play outside on their own because of the area we live in."

35 -44 years, Male Immigrant

Suggestions from immigrants and community leaders

Provide information & assistance for transient housing in initial few weeks after landing



Housing options for immigrants with less stringent entry requirements



Orientations, pamphlets and webpages about housing in Saskatoon



Raising awareness about housing and financing options for low-income families



Provide list of furniture stores, consignment stores & websites, and list of trusted movers



Encourage development of affordable temporary housing for immigrants



Ensure housing in safe neighbourhoods for refugees families especially those with kids



Settlement Issues: Transportation

When it comes to transportation, there are two main challenges immigrants face. The first is the difficulty in understanding local **public transit** which sometimes is a result of a language barrier. The second issue is obtaining a **driver's license** that is recognized in Canada and hence be qualified to drive.



Public Transport

Taxis are **expensive**

Relying on buses in **winter** is hard.

Getting lost if they have **no access to GPS**
(among low income immigrants)

A lot of immigrants are forced to rely on public transport because **getting a car right away is a challenge**

For some immigrants, the transportation system can be **overwhelming**

Bus Routes

"One time I got on the wrong bus and I had to walk for an hour to return to the bus station."
18-24 years, Female, Immigrant

Mobility in the city

"We don't have a car and its difficult to move around."
Male, 18-24 years old

Understanding transportation system

"You feel lost like you are in a jungle."
18-24 yrs., male, Immigrant



Driving

Costly process for getting license

Difficulty adjusting to **new driving rules**

Narrow window (3 months) to obtain local license before **international license expires**

Not finding **affordable driving lessons**

Difficulty **driving in winter** conditions

Passing driving test

"People are unable to pass the test and driving without a license."
Ethnocultural leaders

Driving Rules

"At first it was hard to follow the driving rules but it's easier now."
male, 35-44 years old

Taking 6+6 courses

"A lot of my friends failed many times and had to take 6+6 Courses."
Female, 35-44 years old



Settlement Issues: Transportation- Suggestions



Readily Available Detailed Road Maps

"A map to find all the minor roads should be available. This would make it easier for persons who don't have data on their cell phones."



SGI Handbook Translations

"My English was not good enough to understand everything in the SGI book."

Driving interpreters

"Provide an interpreter during driving test."



Subsidized Driving Training

"Provide government funded driving training programs for new immigrants that tackle key issues such as traffic rules and staying safe in extreme weather conditions."

How to improve public transportation and obtaining a driver's license for newcomers



International Driving License Period

"Extend the period an immigrant can drive using the international driving license."

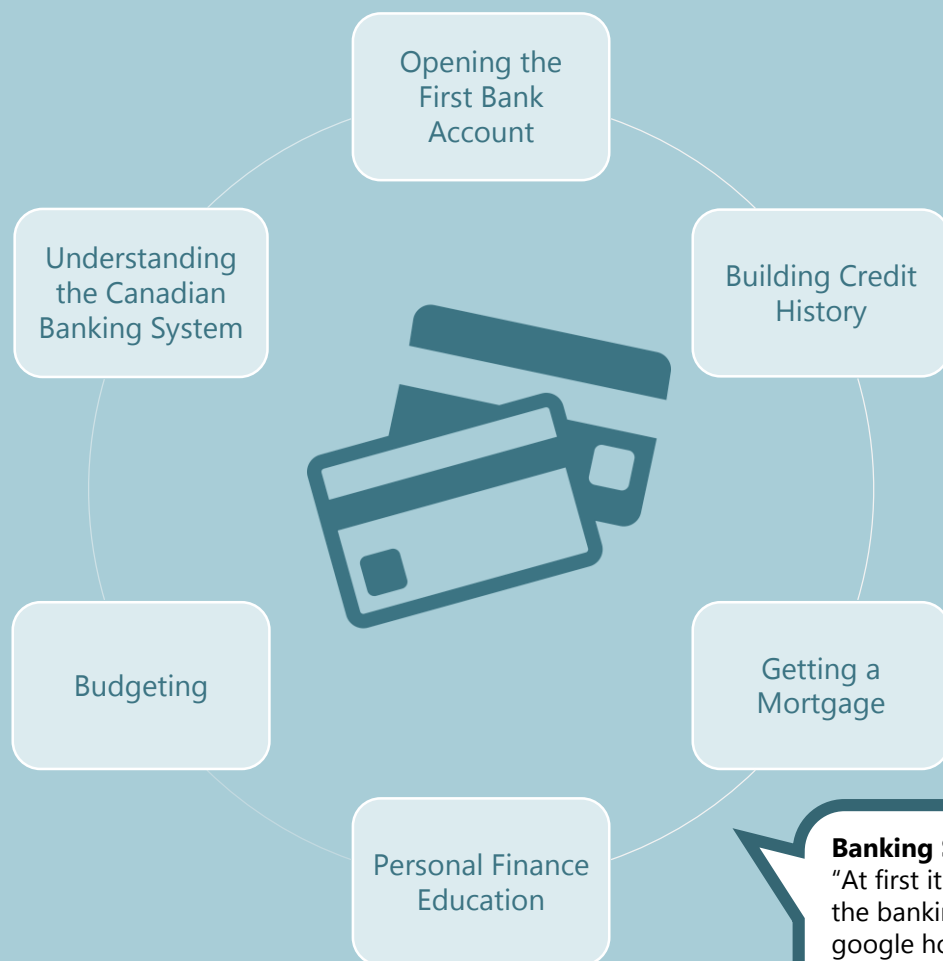


Increase Transportation System Awareness

"Increase awareness of immigrants about how to take advantage of the transportation system."



Settlement Issues: Banking & Finances



Most immigrants require an introduction to the **Canadian banking system**. They often come from cash-based economies and have **low awareness** of credit history, credit cards and the different types of banking accounts.

Furthermore, in order to thrive they need education on **budgeting** and how to manage **personal financing**.

Immigrants sometimes face challenges and limits on the kind of services that banks are willing to offer them (such as taking out a **loan** or getting a **mortgage**) and may require specialized programs.

Banking System

"At first it was difficult to use the banking system. We had to google how to use credit cards."

35- 44 years, Male, Immigrant

Financial Education

"Provide adequate knowledge about finances such as credit cards and advise them (newcomers) about the basic needs like how to spend, especially in the first 6 -12 months. Also, provide knowledge on how to build good credit so they can eventually buy a house in the long run."

55-70 years, Male, Immigrant



Settlement Issues: Healthcare



Obtaining a Health Card

Some immigrants complained of delays (around 3 months)

"Finding a family doctor is challenging. It took me two years to find a family doctor."
35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant

Finding a Family Doctor

It is difficult to find a family doctor due waiting lists

"For the health card, when we applied, it took very long to arrive. Three months for my card and my husband's card took 5 months."
35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant

Understanding of Canadian Healthcare System

Immigrants may struggle to understand the system which may be very different from the one back home.

Awareness of Available Healthcare Options

Some immigrants may not be aware of walk-in clinics and pharmacy consultations

"Going to a doctor, procedure to make appointment process is different in our country (China)."
35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant

Communication Barriers

The language barrier may get in the way of receiving proper health treatment



Settlement Issues: Children & Schools

Awareness of Canadian School System

- Parents need more information about the different types of school systems in Saskatoon.
- Quality and reputation of schools is another area immigrants feel there is a knowledge gap.

Adjusting to Difference in Schooling Style

Signing children up for extra-schooling to maintain homeland language and match education style from home country.

Making Friends & Fitting In

Some immigrant children may struggle to fit in due the language barrier and cultural difference.

Taking Part in Activities

Some immigrants may not be aware of leisure activities in the city or they may not be able to afford signing up their kids.

Language Barrier

Affects child's academic progress and ability to socialize.

Types of Schools

"I didn't know the difference between public and private education. I had to choose the school closest to the apartment I was renting." **35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant**

Teaching Style

"Here they don't have homework after school so, I still take her (my daughter) to Chinese school so she doesn't forget the language. I was thinking of improving her math by solving math problems with her after school." **35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant**

Suggestions

- **Orientation sessions for parents introducing them to the schooling system.**
- **Ensure easy access to a support system for children who struggle to fit in at school.**
- **Encourage acceptance and sensitivity of school children towards newcomers.**



Settlement Issues: Adult High School Students (18 – 24 years)



Fitting in at School

- For adult high school students 18+, there is often an issue fitting in with teenaged children in high school.



Language Barrier

- Intensive and fast language training is needed to help adult students absorb class content and socialize.



Activities and Leisure

- Further awareness and opportunities for activities are need for the 18 -24 year age groups. Sometimes they cannot be part of a team due to being to old.



Access to Support System at School

- Students reported a satisfactory level of support at school. For example having a counsellor on campus and regular visits from SPOs such as Open Door Society.

Extra Schooling requirement

I have already completed high school but needed to go back to high school here because I didn't have the scores from school in Africa so can't go into university" **21 years, male, Immigrant (Highschool student- Refugee)**

Fitting in at School

"At first, I had a hard time making friends at school because most of the kids were Canadian and I hardly spoke any English. And if I tried talking to someone they would laugh at me and when they see that I don't understand them they would avoid talking to me in the future." **18 years, Female, Immigrant (Highschool student)**

Activities

"There needs to be programs to keep people busy like sports or activities to keep them entertained. I can't play on the soccer team at school, because of my age."

21 years, male, Immigrant (Highschool student- Refugee)

Fitting in with younger kids

"I feel bad going to school with younger kids. I feel like I don't belong due to the age difference."

21 years, male, Immigrant (Highschool student- Refugee)

Language Barrier

"I wasn't able to follow in some classes because the teachers were talking too fast, but now I am in EAL (English as an Additional Language) class and have been satisfied with the classes so far."

21 years, male, Immigrant (Highschool student- Refugee)



Taking a detailed look at barriers faced
during the integration phase...



Integration Issues: Language Skills



Language skills are the **key to newcomer integration** and affects all aspects of their life such as running daily errands, employment and socializing.

Immigrants with language issues mainly need to have access to **intensive English tutoring** that would allow them to function in daily life and achieve their career goals in the shortest possible time.

But a few immigrants pointed out that the root cause for the language barrier was mainly the way immigrants were selected through programs like SINP. In certain cases, the SINP scoring system allows immigrants to come into the country with an IELTS exam score of 4 or 5. This creates a huge barrier for the immigrant to integrate in the society and be professionally successful.

English training is available to immigrants in Saskatoon. However, suggestions for improvement of existing English language training program include:

Availability

- Less waiting time

Efficiency

- Intensive
- Immersive
- Engaging
- Fast

Relevance

- Make the training to be more professionally relevant which will help immigrants get jobs

Targeted

- Separating Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Students
- One -on-One

Beyond the Classroom

- Trips (to allow interaction with locals)
- Volunteer work

Feedback

- Measuring student satisfaction level and progress



Integration Issues: Language Skills- Verbatim

Long Waiting Times

"I waited for about 1 year to get into classes at Saskatchewan Polytechnic."

55-70 years, Male, Immigrant

Long Waiting Times

"I registered in July and couldn't take the class till last week (February) during this time I joined some drop-in English classes (at Global Gathering). I did English assessment then Saskatchewan intercultural Association (SAI) they refer you to Saskatchewan Polytechnic, then you register and you have a wait list. "

35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant

Relevance

"Things they taught in class are not related to life. Talking only about grammar won't help in daily life."

35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant

Efficiency

"I spent a year and a half studying English (at school) but I didn't really learn anything, but when we got the teacher from LINC I progressed quickly."

18-45 years, Female, Immigrant

Practice Outside the Classroom

"I need to work not just for the money but to improve my English language."

35-44 years, male, Immigrant

Practice outside the Class-room

"I would like to speak with more people who speak English and less with persons who speak my language."

18-24 years, Male, Immigrant

Language Practice

"I signed up for coffee and conversation circle. It helps with conversation skills."

35 -44 years, Female, Immigrant

Feedback on Training Courses

"Feedback should be taken by the students and sent to whoever is funding the programs for evaluation."

55-70 years, Male, Immigrant



Integration Issues: Finding Fulfilling Work/Career

Newcomers often end up in a cycle where they are unable to find a job without the **"Canadian experience"** and cannot get the experience without first getting a relevant job.

There is a concern that some employers may use the lack of 'Canadian experience' as an excuse to **discriminate** against newcomers.

The **language barrier** greatly reduces the employability of some immigrants and prevents them from finding fulfilling work in their field.

Newcomers lack an adequate **professional network** that would allow them to access the 'hidden job market'.

Few respondents mentioned that they feel there is a **limited number of opportunities** available in Saskatoon due to the small size of the city.



Finding a Job in Related Field

"I applied for many banking positions but wasn't successful because I didn't have any Canadian experience. I was prepared and know that I might not be able to find a job in my field."

55-70 years, Male, Immigrant

Canadian Experience

"There is discrimination masked as 'Canadian Experience.'"

Ethnocultural Leader

Canadian Experience

"The biggest problem is to find a job. Employers need Canadian experience but I can't find the job to get the experience."

35-45 years, Male, Immigrant

Networking

"Create more opportunities for Business Networking. It is very important to connect with people since there is a 'hidden (job) market.'"

35-45 years, Female, Immigrant



Integration Issues:

Suggestions: Finding Satisfactory Employment/Career

SPO's and Employers collaboration

Broaden the partnership of SPOs with employers, to deliver more opportunities and extend beyond blue-collar/retail jobs. Provide volunteer and internship opportunities to help immigrants get the Canadian experience.

Encourage Immigrant Recruitment

Foster positive perceptions among employers about new immigrants being potential candidates for job openings.

Encourage employers to have intern/associate positions for new immigrants.



Job Bank for immigrants

Develop a job bank for immigrants to provide them with opportunities to find internships and employment.

Entrepreneurs

Provide special funding and counselling for immigrants who have promising business ideas.

Mentoring Programs

Establish a Mentorship program with other immigrants who are successful and can assist new immigrants.

Advice on career shift

Provide information on how to make a professional transition smoother. For example, help in changing careers if newcomers cannot find jobs in their respective field.



Integration Issues: Regulated Professions- Integrating into the Workforce



Immigrants in regulated professions are usually selected during the immigration process based on the demand for their skill. Yet, the **current support system is not sufficient** to help them integrate smoothly into the workforce.

The process to obtain credential recognition and licensure is both **lengthy and costly**.

Furthermore, those with **poor language skills** are less likely to be able to pass the necessary exams.

As a result, immigrants who worked in these regulated professions in their home country end up accepting **survival jobs** below their qualification level.

Some, even **give up entirely** on practicing the very profession they were selected for in their immigration program.

Suggestions



- ✓ Streamlining the process for recognizing credentials for regulated professions.
- ✓ Providing regulated professionals with access to transient work opportunities in a relevant field that they can start immediately until they acquire their credential recognition and licensure (e.g. Pharmacy assistant, admin job at a law firm).

Leaving their Profession

"I can't go through the process and paperwork to pass the exam to become an accountant here. The language makes it difficult."

Female, 35-44 years old

Long Process

"It is a very lengthy process to have your credentials and experience recognized."

Ethnocultural Leader



Integration Issues: Culture Shock

Daily life Demands

- How to dress for winter
- How to use credit cards
- How to access healthcare
- Daily struggles *e.g. What to do when the smoke alarm goes off*

Accepted Norms & Behavior

- Understand cultural nuances *e.g. What to wear when you have guests; Who pays when invited for dinner*
- Understanding cultural events (*Halloween, Easter...Etc.*)

Corporate Culture

- Values & Ethics
- Health and Safety Regulations
- Business Norms

Understanding Governance & Police systems

- Understanding basic laws and proper conduct
- How to stay safe and what to do in case of emergencies
- Acceptable conduct with children and family (Verbal/physical abuse.. Etc.)

Immigrants find themselves thrust into a new community with different norms and they take some time to adjust to daily life demands.

Suggestions:

- ✓ Increase awareness about orientation sessions offered by SPOs that aim to educate immigrants about daily life demands, police & governance and cultural matters.
- ✓ Provide continuous support and counselling to answer immigrants' questions regarding adapting to life and culture in Saskatoon, as they arise.

Daily Life

"Immigrants need more training about the daily aspects of life."

Ethno-cultural Leader

Laws & Accepted Behavior

"It's different here, people here would call the police for loud music or if someone is parking in their spot." **18 -24 years, Male, Immigrant**

Corporate Culture

"It is quite difficult for us to get information even though I joined programs to prepare to know the culture here, like interview skills." **35-44 years, Female, Immigrant**

Integration Issues: Socializing

Immigrants need to be properly integrated into the community to feel like they belong and hence ease the anxiety and homesickness.



Homesickness

Some respondents expressed experiencing isolation and missing their home country at first, but it usually does not last very long.



Socializing with Locals

There is a desire to connect with locals to learn the culture and practice the language. They 'locals' are perceived as friendly but not that easy to form connections with.



Language Barrier

Those who have poor language skills struggle to make friends among other communities.



Activities & Leisure

Immigrants who take part in leisure activities and volunteering are likely to integrate faster and make friends.
Few immigrants suggested more ethnic activities are needed (e.g. Cricket)



Ethnocultural Communities & Religious Institutions

These play a very crucial role in socializing new immigrants and help them network and meet new friends from similar backgrounds, which acts as a support system.

Homesickness

"If you don't have friends you will feel very homesick." **18 -24, Female, Immigrant**

Canadian Friends

"Having Arabic friends is good but having Canadian friends is even better as they can help you improve your English and teach you about Canadian life and culture."

35-44 years, Male, Immigrant

Language Barrier

"The first month was difficult because my daughter didn't know English but now she has made friends."

35-44 years, Male, Immigrant

Ethnic Activities

"Activities like cricket are common among South Asian communities and there is a large population here."

55-70 years, Male, Immigrant

Role of Religious Institutions

"It is easy to make friends from church and school." **18 -24, Male, Immigrant**

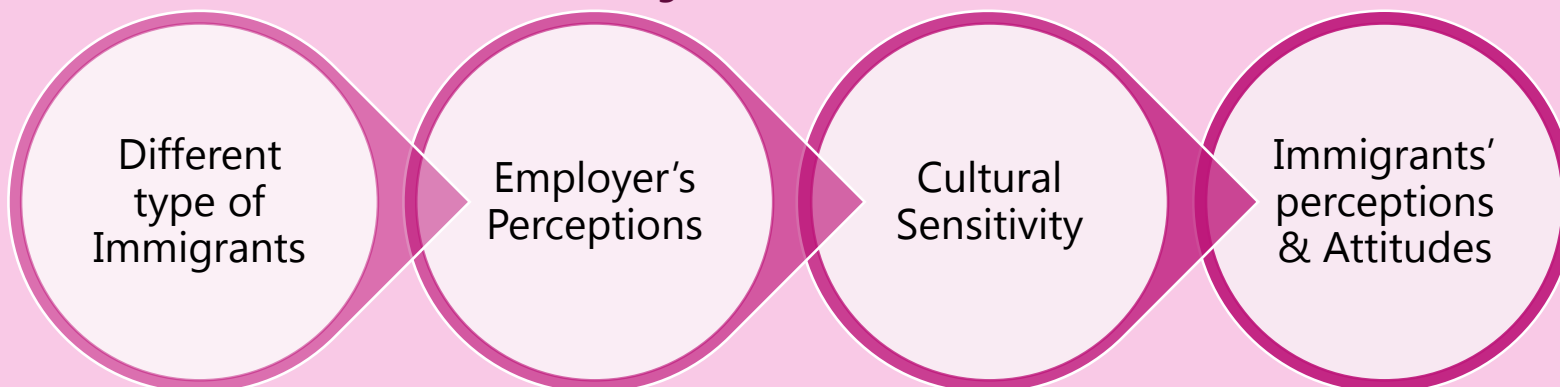


Barriers related to community Attitudes & Perceptions...



Community Attitudes and Perceptions:

The **general population of Saskatoon** require more awareness and education on **immigrant-related matters**. In addition, **there are misconception** about immigrants among employers and this needs to be addressed. **New immigrants** need coaching as well on the **community values and ethics** that foster tolerance and **intercultural understanding**.



- More public awareness is needed about the different types of immigrants (Refugee, Skilled workers...Etc.) and their capabilities and needs

- Dispelling Common misconceptions among employers who underestimate the potential of newcomers and their ability to perform and integrate at the workplace

- Encouraging the perception that diversity is valuable to the community and nurturing cooperation and tolerance among different backgrounds and culture

- It is also important to educate newcomers about the culture and values in their 'new country' of residence

Variety of Immigrants

"Not all immigrants have poor language skills and low education."

Ethnocultural Leader

Employer Perception of Immigrants

"It is something that needs to change in the culture of the organization they need to get educated about the value of immigrants."

Ethnocultural Leader

Immigrants relations to each other

"Some persons from Asian or European countries talk down to persons who work in positions like housekeeping. For example they yell: 'Clean my room now!'"

35-44 yrs., Immigrant



Community Attitudes and Perceptions: First Nation & Immigrants Interaction

Most immigrants are aware of the indigenous community. Some mentioned attending awareness sessions set up by SPOs. Few immigrants even mentioned that they had heard about the indigenous community even before arriving in Saskatoon.

However, further efforts need to be in place to foster greater intercultural understanding and dispel any misconceptions between immigrants and indigenous population.



"Some of them (indigenous persons) go to school with me and they are very nice to me and they always say 'Hi, How are you', but when I first came here I was afraid of them."

18-24 yrs., Female, Immigrant

"Many times I can confess I have felt scared, in the downtown, because there are people, that if I see these people in my country, I would think they would hurt me. But I am confused because I hear many things, and at the same time people say 'it is ok there is no problem.' But, I never experienced any problem and I walk at night on the way back from class but nothing ever happened to me."

35-44 yrs., Female, Immigrant

"I heard, in the west (of Saskatoon) there is low security because of First Nation people living there."

35-44 yrs., Male, Immigrant

"In Africa, we play drums. Sometimes it gets loud. When we were living in the east of the city, locals complained about the noise. When we moved to the west – we play drums in our front yard and the really friendly First Nations people join us."

18- 24 years, Male, Immigrant



Types of Immigrants

Types of Immigrants

There are different types of immigrants with varying needs to integrate into the society and varying degrees of access to services. For example, refugees tend to require maximum support and they have access to a wide variety of services. On the other extreme, economic immigrants tend to require less assistance and do not access much support services mainly because of lower awareness of SPOs and the services available to them.



Refugee



Family



Student



SINP



**Other Economic
Immigrants
(Express Entry/
Sponsored Employees)**

Strong
support
system



Limited
support
system



Refugee

Typical Profile:

low language skills, lower employability, low capability to search for information

Support System:

Extensive access to government funded programs through SPOs:

- One-on-one assistance
- Housing assignment,
- Monthly welfare
- Language classes
- Basic employability training
- Translation services

Need Gaps:

- ✓ Finding employment
- ✓ Upgrading education
- ✓ Integrating into society



Family

Typical Profile:

low language skills, lower employability, higher pre-arrival preparedness

Support System:

Access to a strong support system of family and friends which help with settling down and integrating. **This group tends to access basic services from SPOs (e.g. language classes, employment assistance and translation services). They are usually referred to SPOs by their family.**

Need Gap:

- ✓ Finding employment
- ✓ Upgrading/recognition of education & skills



Student

Typical Profile

- University students, accompanying children of immigrants, older students (grad students) with a family

Support System:

Extensive access to assistance in most aspects of life from educational organizations who offer counselling. **This group tends to view SPOs as service providers mainly for refugees due to lack of awareness**

Need Gap:

- ✓ More access to activities like soccer
- ✓ Making friends
- ✓ Financial assistance for students with families



SINP

Typical Profile

low to average language skill, average employability

Support System:

Directly referred to SPOs and receive some assistance mainly information sessions, language & basic employability training

Need Gap:

- ✓ One-on-one settlement assistance
- ✓ Finding employment
- ✓ Upgrading/recognition of skills
- ✓ Socializing & integrating



Other Economic Immigrants

Typical Profile

other express entry economic streams, sponsored employees. high language skills, high employability, resourceful, proactively searches for information

Support System:

Limited contact with SPOs due to lack of awareness

Need Gap:

- ✓ Awareness of available services
- ✓ Accessing settlement & integration information
- ✓ Finding employment that matches qualification and skillsets



Awareness and Perceptions of the Existing Support System among Immigrants

Immigrants' awareness of current support system

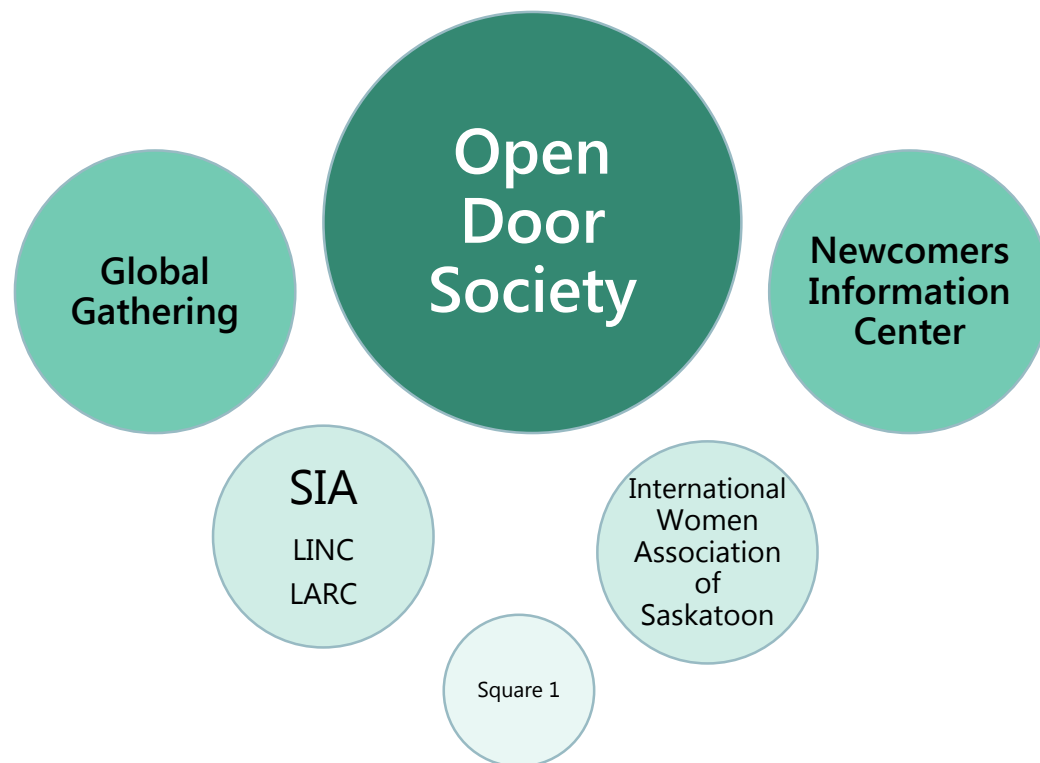
Open Door Society is the most commonly mentioned SPO followed by **Global Gathering** and **Newcomers Information Center**.

How do immigrants hear about SPOs?

- Immigrants hear about SPO services from family & friends in Saskatoon.
- A few immigrants also mention getting a pamphlet upon arrival at the airport, while others find out about them by searching online.
- SINP & refugees are directly referred to these services.

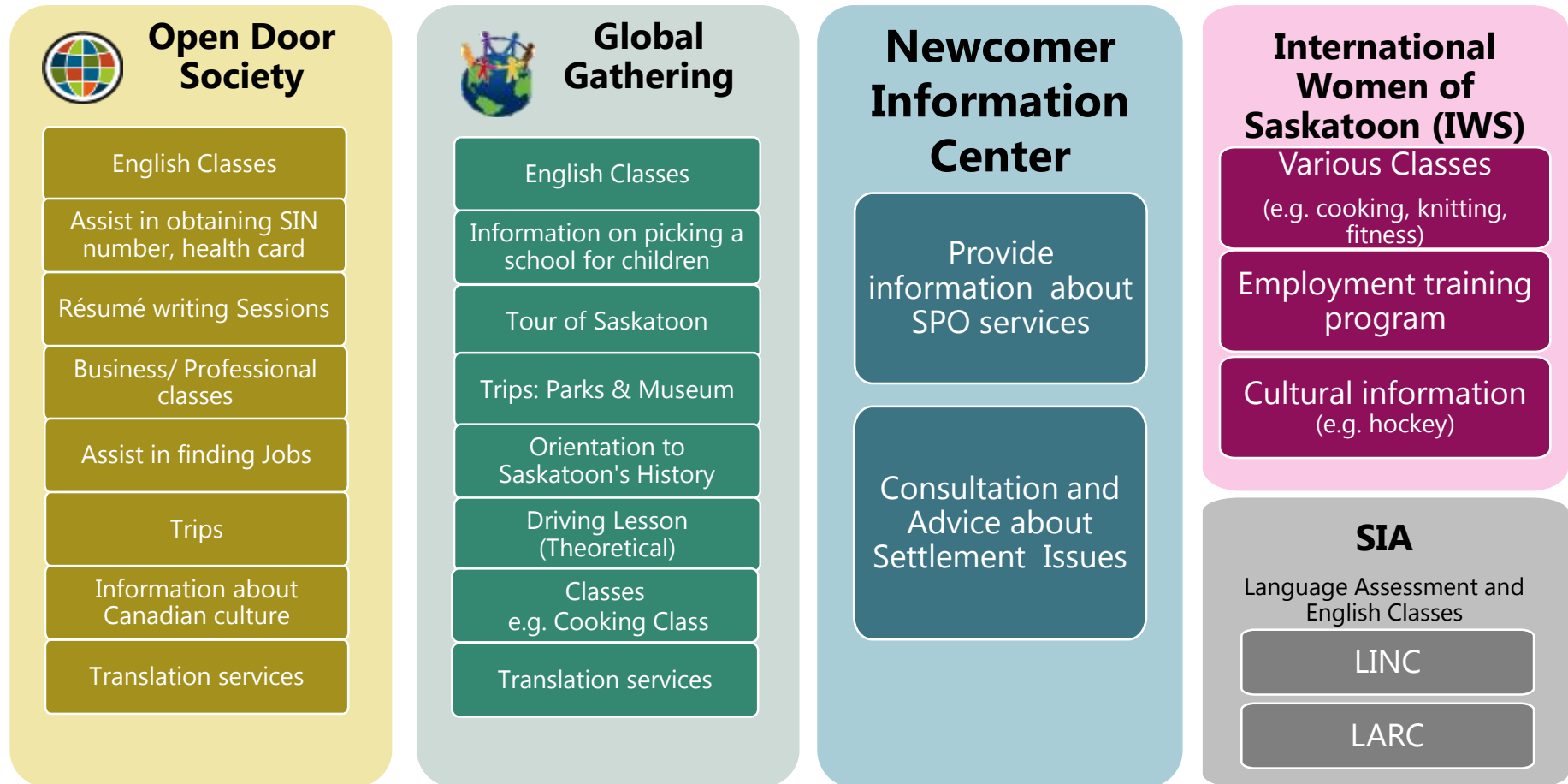
"I got the information about open door from the airport in Vancouver. I got a flyer regarding general information in Canada and it had information about Open Door Society." **35-44 yrs., female, Immigrant**

SPO Awareness



There is very **limited awareness** of the **kind of services** available to immigrants. Most respondents only mention one or two SPOs and they are only aware of a few services that they provide. The exception being refugees who get referred to a wide range of services. However, the majority of non-refugees rely on SPOs mainly for **language classes and employment services**. Furthermore, some respondents mention that the general perception is that SPOs provide services **only for refugees**.

Current Support System: Service Provider Organization (SPOs)



Many immigrants mentioned that they would like if a broader range of work opportunities are offered to them by the SPOs through the job placement program rather than limiting the jobs available to retail and other blue collared jobs.

Current Support System: Ethno-Cultural and Faith-Based Institutions

Role of ethno-cultural leaders and faith based institutions in helping new immigrants:



Referring newcomers to services (such as SPOs) and providing advice and support.



Connecting newcomers with a community of similar background and helping them build a support system.

Ethno-Cultural and Faith-Based institutions play an important role in the settlement and integration process of new immigrants.

Role of Religious Institutions

"There are 40 people in the waiting list (for English classes), we need more funding more reaching out, We would be glad to help; we can provide a place cheaply but we don't have the ability to teach."

Faith Leader

Role of Religious Institutions

"The first day, I feel like I don't know anything. After a while we found some Arabic friends who took us to the mosque. Volunteers from the mosque came to help us."

35-44 yrs., Male, Immigrant

What can SPOs improve in their current services?

More integration and co-operation among various SPOs.

Fostering more co-operation between SPOs & local businesses to provide a larger number of job placement opportunities in a variety of sectors.

Implementation of a feedback mechanism to measure satisfaction levels of newcomers with SPO services.

Optimize language programs to be more customized & tailored to occupational fields rather than basic grammar skills.

How can SPOs and Ethno-Cultural Leaders/Faith-Based Institutions Support each other?

Spread more awareness that SPOs are not just for refugees, which seems to be a common misconception among some immigrants.

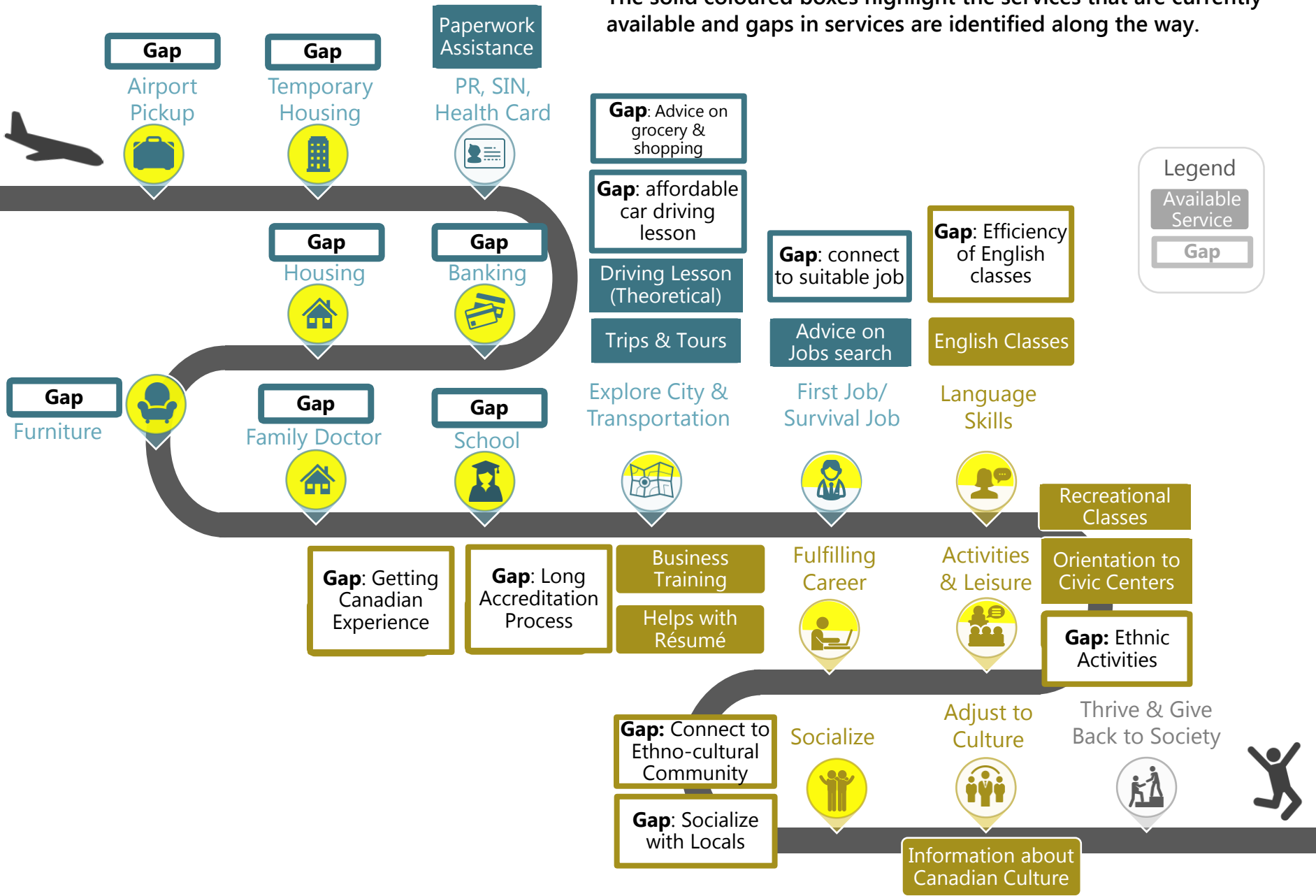
More cooperation between SPOs & Ethnocultural groups. This would help capitalize on the extensive network of well-established and thriving immigrants who can help newcomers.



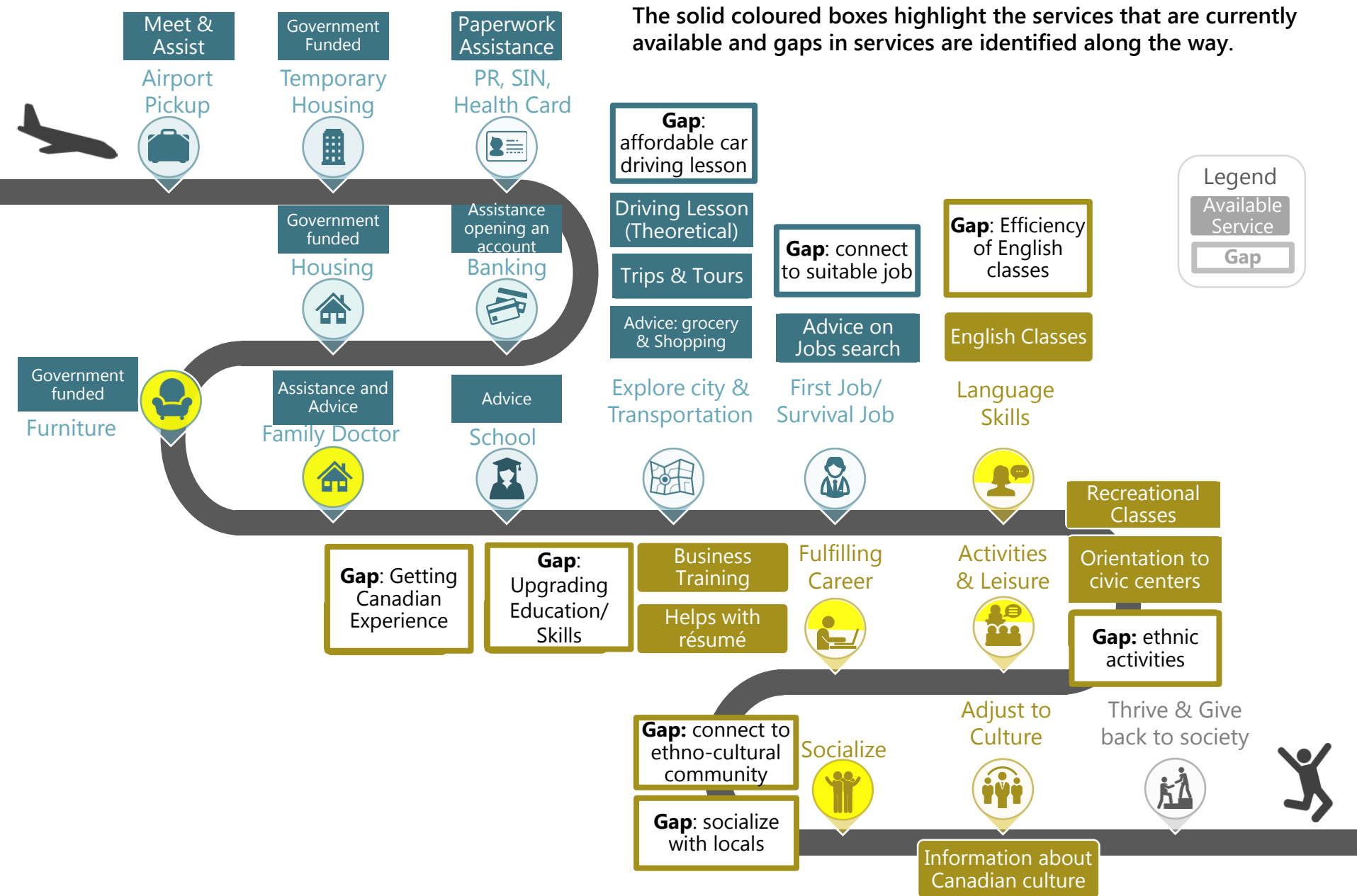
The next two slides will take a look at the immigrant journey (refugees and non-refugees) and identify gaps in existing support system along the journey...

Available Services & Gaps (for Non-Refugees)

The solid coloured boxes highlight the services that are currently available and gaps in services are identified along the way.



Available Services & Gaps (for Refugees)





Way forward

Recommendations- General

Raise Awareness of Various Services Provided by SPOs

- Increase awareness of the types of service available from the SPOs among different stakeholders including: new immigrants (specially non-refugees), Ethnocultural & Faith Leaders, and the general public.
- Address the **misconception** that SPOs are mainly for serving refugees.
- Create a **Newcomer Information Hub** that directs immigrants to SPOs and relevant community groups. This could be an actual place or a virtual gateway where immigrants can gain access to someone to guide them.
- Create an **Informative Website** with content relevant to immigrant needs. Another key is ensuring that this information is available in multiple languages. This can include pre-recorded sessions and PDFs that orient them on important topics.
- Provide immigrants with a detailed **information brochure** upon arrival (for example at the airport, at the Service Canada office, etc.)
- Increase the online and social media presence to reach immigrants even before arrival.

SPO Collaboration

- Encouraging more cooperation among SPOs.
- Fostering more partnerships between SPOs & local businesses to provide a larger number of job placements and opportunities in a variety of sectors.
- Feedback on SPO programs to measure satisfaction levels and achievement of goals.

Public Awareness Campaigns

- Increase public awareness about the different types of immigrants and their capabilities and needs (refugee, skilled workers, etc.).
- Encourage the perception that diversity is valuable to the community.
- Nurture cooperation and tolerance among different backgrounds and cultures.
- Educate immigrants about First Nations to foster greater intercultural understanding and dispel any misconceptions between the two groups.

Suggestions- Settlement

Pre-Arrival Preparation

- Reach out to more immigrants (specially non-refugees) to sign up for "**Pre-arrival**" sessions.
- Create a **forum or portal** where immigrants can interact and share experiences.
- English Classes** (possibly online)
- Help in arranging **meet & assist** services at the airport (specially for non-refugees).

Schooling

- Orientation sessions** for parents introducing them to the schooling system.
- Ensure easy access to a **support system for children** who struggle to fit in at school.
- Encourage **acceptance and sensitivity** of school children towards newcomers.
- For students 18+ who need to complete high school courses before qualifying for university, it is ideal to group them with students of their same age group.

Healthcare

- Orientation** to Canadian Healthcare system.
- Faster delivery of **health cards**.
- Assistance with **finding a family doctor**.
- Increased **awareness of available healthcare** options.
- Translation services** available to patients (non-refugees).

First Job

- Educating immigrants about important work-related topics that employers expect them to have knowledge about before being hired (**ethics, health & safety**, etc.)
- Take actions to **prevent possible discrimination** against hiring immigrants and limit the **favoritism** of hiring managers towards individuals of similar ethnic backgrounds.

Housing

- Information & assistance for **temporary housing** in initial few weeks after landing.
- Housing options for immigrants with **less stringent requirements**.
- Orientations, pamphlets and webpages about housing in Saskatoon.
- Raising awareness about housing and financing **options for low-income families**.
- Provide list of **furniture** stores, second hand stores & websites, and list of trusted movers.
- Encourage development of affordable temporary housing.

Transportation

- Driving interpreters
- SGI Handbook Translations
- Subsidized driving training
- Readily available detailed road maps
- Elongate international driving license validity period

Suggestions- Integration

Career

- Increased **collaboration between SPO's and Employers** to provide more job placement opportunities.
- Provide **volunteering & internship** opportunities to help immigrants gain Canadian experience.
- Create **networking opportunities** for immigrants to connect with local businesses.
- Incentivize **hiring a diverse workforce** and address misconceptions about immigrant's abilities to perform in the workplace.
- Discourage employers from hiring only those who have "**Canadian Experience**".
- Job Bank** for immigrants.
- Mentoring programs**, pairing successful immigrants with newcomers to provide them with advice.
- Provide counseling for **career shifts**.
- Provide **financial and consulting** support to new immigrants who aspire to be **entrepreneurs** and business owners.
- Providing **regulated professionals** with access to **transient work opportunities** in a relevant field, that they can do immediately until they acquire their credential recognition and licensure (e.g. Pharmacy assistant, admin job at a law firm).

Language Skills

- Immigrant's mainly need to have access to **customized, intensive and immersive English tutoring** that would allow them to function in daily life and achieve their career goals in the shortest possible time.
- Feedback from students measuring satisfaction level and progress.

Culture Shock

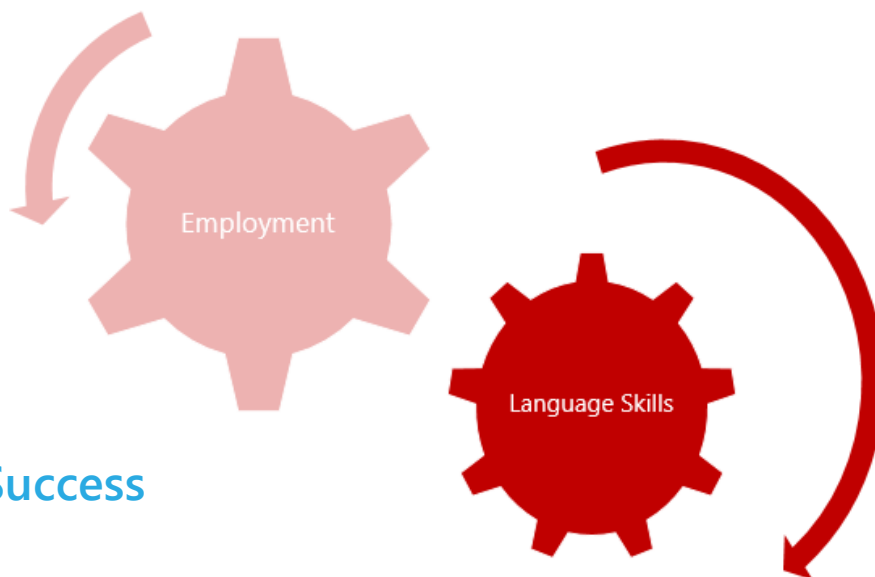
- Provide immigrants with sufficient **education** and **continuous advice** to help them understand cultural matters such as: unfamiliar daily life demand, accepted values, norms and behavior, corporate culture and governance and the police systems. There is also a need for **culturally competent mental health services** for newcomers.

Socializing

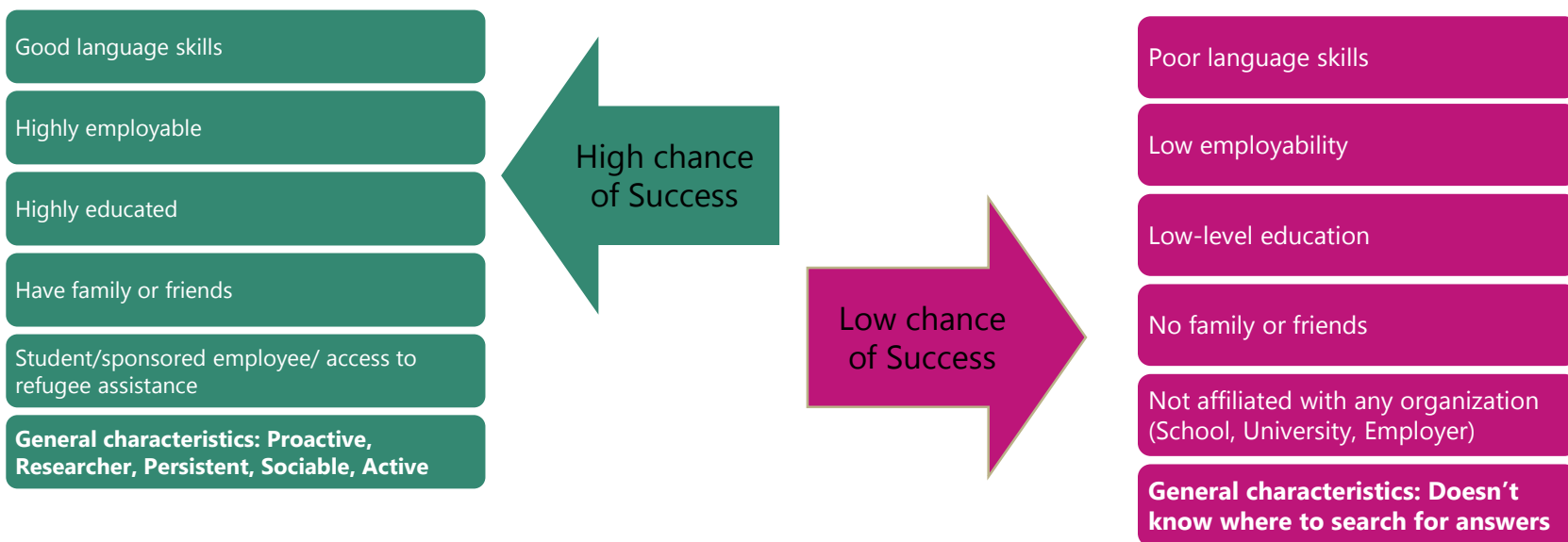
- Create opportunities to **socialize with locals** and connect with the ethnic community.
- Encourage immigrants who take part in community and **leisure activities**.
- Provide **volunteering opportunities** for immigrants.
- Encourage the development of cultural and recreational **activities from other cultures (like cricket, drumming etc.)**.
- Refer new immigrants to relevant **Ethnocultural Communities & Religious Institutions** who can help them network and act as a support system.

! Priority:

Most immigrants (regardless of their type) expressed that communicating in the local language and finding a job were the two most pressing needs they had and that they struggled to find adequate support to overcome them.



Immigrant Profile and Chance of Success



Summing Up



Immigration
Partnership
Saskatoon

- Settlement issues
- Integration issues
- Community Attitudes & perceptions



Awareness Campaigns



Train & Educate



Custom Programs



SPO Collaboration

Awareness of Immigrant support systems

- Newcomer Information hub: online or Face-to-Face guidance and referral to services
- Informative Website
- Pamphlet upon Landing

Orientation Programs to Facilitate Immigrant Settling

- Pre-Arrival Services
- Immigrants Job Bank
- Job Placement Services
- Affordable Housing with more Lenient Requirements

- Encouraging more co-operation and integration of efforts among SPOs.
- Fostering more cooperation between SPOs & local businesses to provide more opportunities .
- Increase cooperation between SPOs and Ethnocultural & Faith Leaders.
- Feedback on SPO programs to measure satisfaction levels and achievement of goals.

- Highlighting the Value of Immigrants in society
- Encourage Workplace Diversity
- Immigrant Awareness of First nation matters

Coaching and Training Programs to Assist with Integration

- Mentoring Programs
- Newcomer Networking Events or Job Fairs
- Program Addressing Workplace Discrimination
- Socializing with Locals
- Ethnic Activities