Grey Bruce LIP Immigrant Survey 2023

Survey Findings
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COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP INSTITUTE

GREY BRUCE
LOCAL IMMIGRATION
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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership Council Members, the Community Research Ethics Office, and the residents of Grey Bruce who took the time to complete the Immigrant Survey 2023.

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Introduction

The Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership (GBLIP) is one of the many Local Immigration partnerships sponsored by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). This federal initiative addresses the growing need for systematic community planning around immigrant attraction and retention (GBLIP, n.d.). Launched in 2020, the GBLIP works at the local level to foster a community that is welcoming and inclusive to support newcomers in becoming fully engaged in the social, economic, political, and cultural life of Grey and Bruce Counties. They strive to build stronger communities through awareness, outreach, inclusion, and equity to ensure immigrants and newcomers become welcome neighbours throughout Grey and Bruce Counties. They work in collaboration with service-based organizations to ensure that new residents thrive and enhance the vibrant, diverse, and colourful landscapes they now call home.

In 2023, the GBLIP partnered with the Research Shop, part of the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI) at the University of Guelph, to conduct their Immigrant Survey 2023. The Immigrant Survey is a collaborative project involving the following 12 Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) across Canada (GWLIP, 2023):

- Waterloo Region, ON
- Cape Breton, NS
- St. Thomas Elgin, ON
- Grey Bruce Counties, ON
- Huron County, ON
- Hamilton, ON
- London Middlesex, ON
- Niagara, ON
- Bow Valley, AB
- North Shore Vancouver Island, BC
- Guelph Wellington, ON

Each LIP conducted a similar survey in their own region to better understand their community, the needs of newcomers, and the impact of their collective work. The primary objectives of the Grey Bruce Immigrant Survey 2023 were to:

- Undertake the first of its kind survey of immigrants in the Grey Bruce region;
- Analyze the data collected to understand the varied experiences of diverse groups;
- And pull out research findings that will inform how service providers, government at multiple levels, businesses and the community at large can foster a more welcoming and inclusive space for immigrants and newcomers.

The data collected from the Grey Bruce survey is presented in this report.

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Background

Grey and Bruce Counties

While technically two separate counties, Grey and Bruce Counties are linked by geography. They are located approximately two hours north of Toronto, directly adjacent to one another. Grey County spans from the northern edge of Wellington County to Georgian Bay. It has a population of 100,905, of which 8.6% are immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2023). It is the fourth largest county in Ontario and is made up of the following nine local municipalities:

- City of Owen Sound
- Municipality of Grey Highlands
- Municipality of Meaford
- Municipality of West Grey
- Town of Hanover
- Town of the Blue Mountain
- Township of Chatsworth
- Township of Georgian Blufsfs
- Township of Southgate (Grey County, n.d.)

Bruce County spans from the northern edge of Huron County to the tip of the Bruce peninsula on Lake Huron. It has a population of 73,396, of which 7.9% are immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2023), and is made up of the following eight local municipalities:

- Town of Saugeen Shores
- Municipality of Kincardine
- Municipality of Brockton
- Town of South Bruce Peninsula
- Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
- Township of Huron-Kinloss
- Municipality of South Bruce
- Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula (Bruce County, n.d.).

As of the 2021 census, the top five most populated locations in Grey Bruce are Owen Sound, Saugeen Shores, West Grey, Kincardine, and Meaford (Statistics Canada, 2023, as cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2023). The average age of Grey Bruce residents is 45.5 (44.7 for men, 46.5 for women) (Statistics Canada, 2023, as cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2023).

Immigration in Canada

According to the 2021 census, 23% of individuals living in Canada are immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2022). Over 1.3 million new immigrants settled in Canada between 2016 and 2021, and newcomers are primarily from Asian countries, including the Middle East, though recently Canada has been welcoming more newcomers from African countries (GWLIP, 2023; Statistics Canada, 2023; Statistics Canada, 2022). Ontario's population is made up of an even greater percentage of immigrants; 30% of its population are immigrants, and over 500,000 new

immigrants settled in Ontario between 2016 and 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2022). Over half of Canadian immigrants were admitted under the economic category, followed by the family category, refugees, then 'other' (Statistics Canada, 2023).
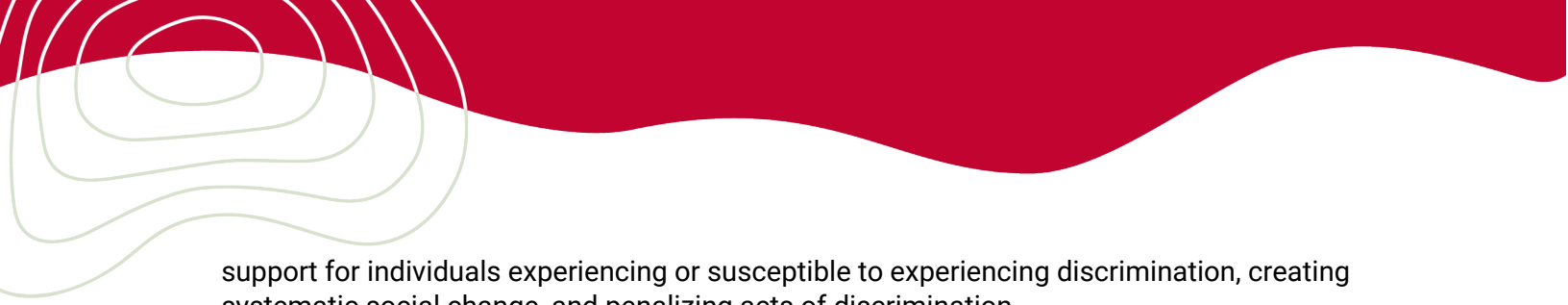
Immigration in Grey Bruce

The total number of immigrants as a proportion of the overall population has recently increased in Grey Bruce, although the total number of immigrants is still lower than provincial or national immigration averages (Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2017). In 2016, 7.9% of the population of Grey Bruce were or had been immigrants or non-permanent residents; immigrants made up 8.0% of the Grey County population and 7.7% of the Bruce County population (Statistics Canada, 2017, as cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2017). In 2021, this had increased slightly to a total immigrant population of 8.3% in Grey Bruce; 8.6% in Grey County and 7.9% in Bruce County (Statistics Canada, 2023). The total population in Grey Bruce increased by 7.6% from 2016 to 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2023). The number of immigrants and non-permanent residents increased by 12.4%, demonstrating that the overall percentage of immigrants is increasing in Grey Bruce.

Despite its lower than average numbers, immigration in Grey Bruce still follows general national and local trends. Census data from 2016 shows that most Grey Bruce residents who are or have ever been landed immigrants live in Owen Sound, followed by Saugeen Shores, Kincardine, and Meaford, which are among the top five most populated municipalities in the region (Statistics Canada, 2017, as cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2017). In both 2016 and 2021, most immigrants in Grey Bruce were admitted under the economic category, followed by the family category, refugees, and then 'other' (Statistics Canada, 2017, as cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2023). Additionally, most immigrants to Bruce and Grey Counties were born in Europe, primarily in the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands, followed by Asia and the Americas. (Statistics Canada, 2017, as cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2023). However, trends have shifted over time, and newcomers (immigrants landing between 2016 and 2021) have primarily come from Asia, followed by the Americas and Europe (Statisics Canada, 2023).

Experiences of immigrants in Grey Bruce

There is limited information on the experiences of immigrants in Grey Bruce, however, a 2022 study by the Research Shop exploring experiences of discrimination in Grey and Bruce Counties found that discrimination was prevalent throughout the region (Khan et al., 2023). Though the scope of this interview-based project was narrow, the majority of participants described that they did not feel fully connected to their community, mainly due to incidents that made them feel excluded or discriminated against. All participants reported experiencing discrimination in some form, mainly based on their race, with experiences ranging from microaggressions to racism.

When asked about their coping strategies and support, many participants described the importance of discussing their experiences with others and shared that it was often helpful to speak with peers who shared a similar identity or had similar experiences. Participants also shared that they believed that education, awareness, and increasing diversity could help to reduce discrimination in the future. Specific recommendations for the future included increasing education and awareness, increasing representation and community dialogue, increasing

support for individuals experiencing or susceptible to experiencing discrimination, creating systematic social change, and penalizing acts of discrimination.

Methods and data analysis

This project collected quantitative and qualitative data using an anonymous survey. The survey was designed collaboratively by all 12 LIPs participating in the Immigrant Survey 2023, then customized by the GBLIP based on their local context. This project was reviewed and approved by the Community Research Ethics Office. Ethical research protocols were followed in the design and administration of the survey, and information about the project and participant consent was included at the beginning of each survey.

Data collection

Data collection took place from November 2023 to December 2023 and the survey gathered responses from 120 respondents. The survey was open to immigrants over the age of 16, but no one under the age of 20 responded. 'Immigrants' were defined broadly to include anyone born outside Canada and now living, working, or studying in Canada. The survey was primarily shared online via the GBLIP's social media and Partnership Council. The GBLIP also used print media to inform Grey Bruce residents that the survey was available and to invite participation in the online survey.
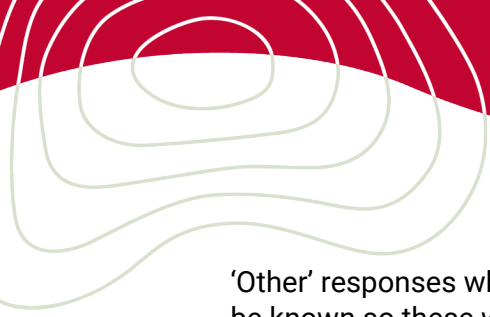
The survey was conducted online and was hosted on Qualtrics, software used by the University of Guelph. It was available in English only, however, participants were encouraged to contact the GBLIP for translation and interpretation support. Only one question was mandatory, to confirm the immigrant status of the respondent and ensure that no one born in Canada completed the survey. There was also a $10 gift card incentive available to the first 100 respondents; in order to preserve anonymity, respondents were given the option to complete a separate survey with their contact information to be eligible to receive a gift card.

Data analysis

All respondent data was collected anonymously. Project data was stored in Qualtrics and Microsoft Teams, both secure password-protected platforms that are administered by the University of Guelph. The data was cleaned by all members of the research team based on a number of criteria listed in Limitations below.

Quantitative data obtained from the surveys was analyzed using descriptive statistics in Microsoft Excel. Open-ended survey responses were coded in Excel, and two researchers conducted thematic analysis to determine key themes. Data was initially coded by one researcher, then reviewed by the other researcher for accuracy.

Two new variables were created in order to better understand the impacts of different identity factors. These independent variables were deemed to be potential contributors to differences in experiences between respondents that were worth exploring. The first variable was created by coding respondents' ethnic identity as either racialized or non-racialized. All 'White' responses were coded as non-racialized and all other responses were coded as racialized. There were two

'Other' responses where whether the repondents' ethnic identity was racialized or not could not be known so these were excluded from this coded variable. The second variable was created by coding respondents' reported length of time residing in Grey Bruce as five or less years and six or more years.

In this report, all percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. This may result in some percentages totalling 99% or 101%. Detailed tables of all findings (including the number of respondents per question) can be found in Appendix A.

Limitations

This project was limited by a high number of responses from suspected non-human participants (bots). This issue is becoming more prevalent among online surveys, especially for those that are advertised widely online with a public access link (including on social media). Despite utilizing all of the bot-deterrent features available in Qualtrics, this survey was inundated with suspected non-human responses and the data set had to be carefully reviewed a number of times by multiple members of the resesarch team to ensure that the responses included were valid. As a result, data cleaning was more in-depth and challenging than anticipated. 215 responses were excluded based on the following criteria:

- Unusually quick response time (e.g. under 90 seconds to complete a 40-question survey)
- A 'clump' of responses with matching survey beginning and end times
- Failing the screening question
- Unusual answers (e.g. the amount of time in the community was listed as greater than the amount of time in Canada)

While the research team is confident in how data was cleaned, it may have resulted in some non-valid responses being included and some valid human responses being excluded from the analysis. It also resulted in a lower than hoped for response rate; 120 responses were included in the analysis instead of the projected 200.

Additionally, as noted earlier, the survey and its promotional materials were only available in English. While translation support was available via the GBLIP, it is likely that English-speaking immigrants are more strongly represented among respondents. It is also possible that older adults are underrepresented, as the survey was primarily advertised online and through social media. While efforts were made to ensure that the data gathered was as representative as possible, the results of this survey may not be representative of all immigrant groups in Grey Bruce. The survey sample was also not randomized, as respondents chose whether to participate.

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Results

Demographics

Immigration status

The survey asked all respondents to specify their immigration status. This was the only mandatory question in the survey in order to verify the eligibility of respondents; any respondents who selected that they were born in Canada were automatically taken to the end of the survey and prevented from completing any additional questions.

The most common group was economic-category immigrants, who made up 37% of respondents. The next most prominent group was family-category immigrants, who made up 31% of respondents. This was followed by international students (7%), and immigrants in Canada on a temporary work visa (6%). A full list of response options is available in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Responses to Q1 'Which of the following best describes you?' with regard to immigration status.

Response options	% of respondents
I immigrated to Canada as an economic-category immigrant	37%
I immigrated to Canada as a family-category immigrant	31%
I am currently in Canada as an international student	7%
I am currently in Canada on a temporary work visa	6%
I immigrated to Canada as a government-assisted refugee	3%
I immigrated to Canada as a refugee claimant and am now a permanent resident or citizen	3%
I am currently in Canada as a refugee claimant	3%
I am currently in Canada on a CUAET (Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel) visa	3%
Unknown or I prefer not to answer	5%
Other	4%
I was born in Canada	0%

Time living in Canada

56% of survey respondents had lived in Canada for between one and 10 years; 38% of respondents had been living in Canada for one to five years, and 18% had been living in Canada for six to 10 years. A significant proportion of respondents (41%) had been living in Canada for greater than 10 years. Only 3% of respondents reported having lived in Canada for less than one year, and one respondent reported that they come to Canada every season.

Figure 1. Responses to Q2 'How long have you been living in Canada?'
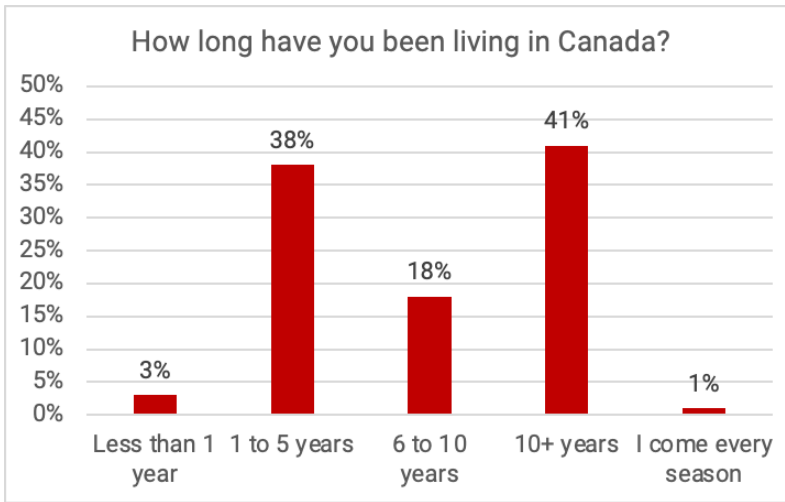
Age, gender and identity

Age

Survey respondents ranged in age from 20-65+. Most were between the ages of 25 and 44; 39% of respondents were aged 25-34 and 27% of respondents were aged 35-44. Additionally, 10% of respondents were aged 45-54, 10% were aged 55-64, and 7% were 65 or older. 3% preferred not to disclose their age. No survey respondents were aged 16-19.

Figure 2. Responses to Q27 'What is your age?'
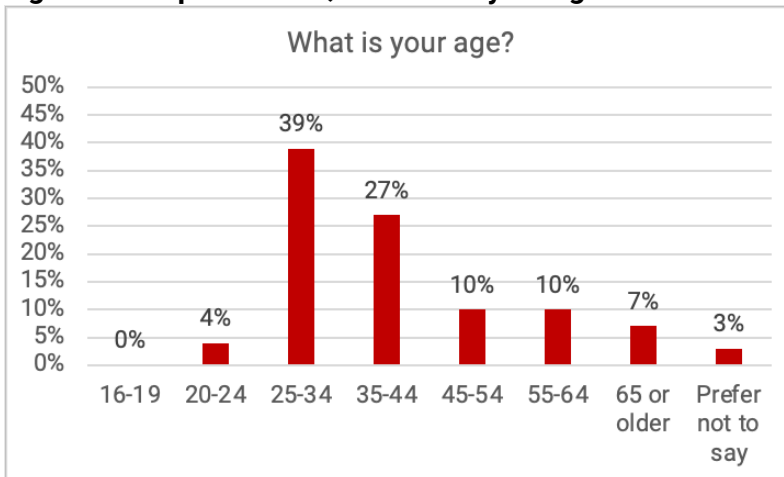
Gender

The majority (57%) of survey respondents were women. 35% were men, 3% were non-binary, and 5% preferred not to say. No respondents were transgender.

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Figure 3. Responses to Q30 'How would you describe your gender identity?'

How would you describe your gender identity?

- 3%
- 5%
- 35%
- 57%

■ Woman ■ Man ■ Non-binary ■ Prefer not to answer
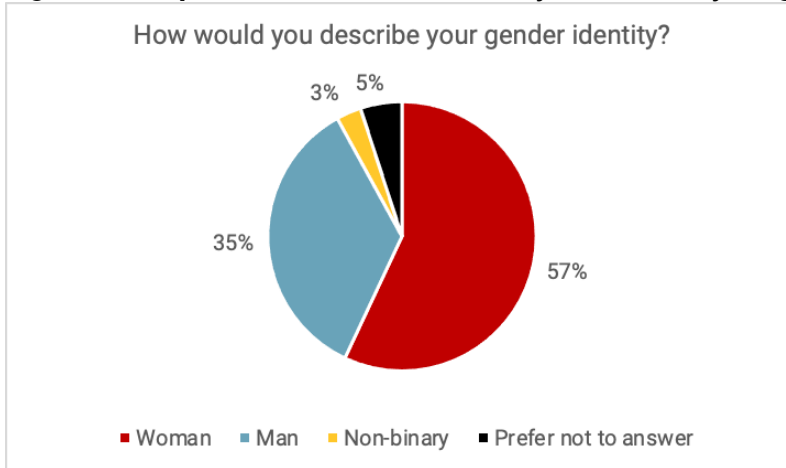
Ethnicity

The most represented ethnic groups among survey respondents were: South Asian (25%), Chinese (21%), white (17%), and Black (14%). Some respondents also described themselves as Latin American (4%), mixed ethnicity (3%), Southeast Asian (3%), Filipino (2%), Korean (1%). 3% of respondents selected 'Other,' and wrote in their own identities, which included British, Greek, and Ukrainian. 6% of respondents preferred not to answer the question.

Table 2. Responses to Q28 'Which would best describe you?'

Response option	% of respondents
South Asian	25%
Chinese	21%
White	17%
Black	14%
Latin American	4%
Mixed ethnicity	3%
Southeast Asian	3%
Filipino	2%
Korean	1%
Other	3%
Prefer not to answer	6%

LGBTQ+ identity

Only 3% of respondents identified as members of the LGBTQ+ community. 92% of respondents did not identify as such and 4% preferred not to answer this question.

Disability status

7% of respondents reported living with a physcial disability, mental disabiity, or chronic illness. 87% said they did not have these disabilities and 4% preferred not to answer this question.

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Faith communities

Respondents belonged to a range of faith communities. 35% were Christian, followed by 18% who were Hindu. A small number of respondents reported being Buddhist (2%), Jewish (1%), and Sikh (1%), and 'Other' (3%). 29% reported that they were not members of a faith community, and 3% preferred not to answer this question.

Figure 4. Responses to Q33 'If you are a member of a faith community please share which one.'
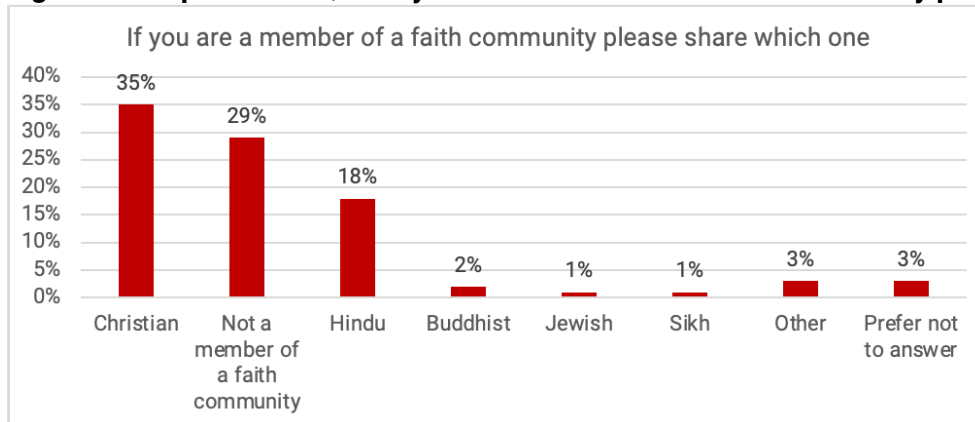
Language

First language

The most commonly spoken first language by respondents was English, representing 35% of survey respondents. This was followed by Mandarin, spoken by 10% of respondents, Gujarati (8%), Hindi (7%), Indonesian (6%), Punjabi/Panjabi (5%), and Ukrainian (5%).

Figure 5. Responses to Q4 'What is your first language?'
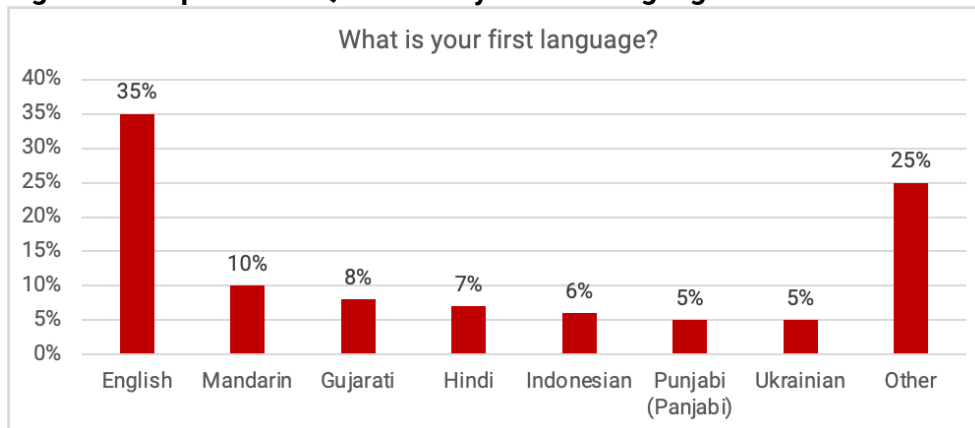
25% of respondents reported their first language as 'Other' (languages with three or less respondents were grouped into 'Other'). These languages include: Spanish, German, French, Arabic, Dutch, Cantonese, Malaysian, Tagalog, Creole, Bosnian, Afrikaans, Greek, Portugese, Tamil, Telugu, Yoruba, Japanese, and Java.

English proficiency

Survey respondents also reported on their English proficiency. 99% of respondents could speak and understand English fairly to very well; 72% reported that they could speak and understand

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English very well, 18% reported well, and 9% reported fairly well. No respondents reported speaking and understanding English poorly, and only one individual did not speak or understand English at all.

Number of languages spoken
When asked about the number of languages they could speak well, most respondents (43%) reported that they could speak two languages well. This was followed by 24% who could speak one langauage well, and 23% who could speak three languages well. 8% could speak four languages, and 3% reported being able to speak five or more languages well.

Figure 6. Responses to Q5 'How many languages can you speak well?'
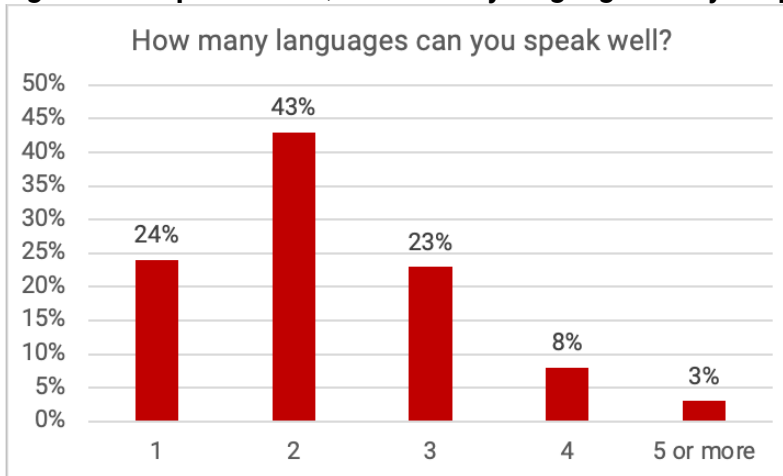
Housing, education, income & employment

Housing

Place of residence
Survey respondents lived across Grey and Bruce Counties. Most (36%) lived in the City of Owen Sound, followed by 16% in the Town of Saugeen Shores, 7% in the Municipality of Grey Highlands, and 7% in the Municipality of West Grey. A full list of response options is available in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Responses to Q3 'Where do you live within Grey and Bruce Counties?'

Response options	% of respondents
City of Owen Sound	36%
Town of Saugeen Shores	16%
Municipality of Grey Highlands	7%
Municipality of West Grey	7%
Municipality of Kincardine	5%
Municipality of Brockton	4%
Municipality of Meaford	4%
Municipality of South Bruce	4%

Response options	% of respondents
Township of Chatsworth	4%
Township of Southgate	4%
Town of South Bruce Peninsula	3%
Township of Georgian Bluffs	3%
Town of Hanover	2%
Township of Huron-Kinloss	2%
Municipality of Northern Bruce-Peninsula	1%
Town of the Blue Mountains	1%
Other	0%

Suitability of housing

When asked if their housing suited their needs (e.g., regarding enough space, being in good condition), 85% of respondents said 'Yes' and 15% said 'No.' Respondents who answered 'No' to this question were also invited to provide an open-ended response as to why their housing did not suit their needs. Though few respondents chose to do so, the most common reasons were that housing was too small or too crowded and that rent was too high.

The research team further broke down these findings by the length of time respondents had been in the community. While the majority of respondents reported their housing to be suitable, those who were newer to the community were more likely to report that their housing did not suit their needs. 97% of respondents who had been in Grey Bruce for six or more years responded that their housing suited their needs. Alternatively, only 75% of respondents who had been in Grey Bruce for five or less years reported that their housing suited their needs.

Affordability of housing

When asked if their housing was affordable, 64% of survey respondents indicated 'Yes,' their housing was affordable, and 36% indicated 'No', their housing was not affordable. Respondents who answered 'No' to this question were also invited to provide an open-ended response as to why they felt their housing was not affordable. Though few respondents chose to do so, the most common reasons provided were that they were unable to find affordable housing in the region, that rent and mortgage rates were too high, especially compared to their earning, and high property taxes for the services available in the region. Some respondents also highlighted that, when they first began renting or paying their mortgage it was affordable, but they were now unable to move due to rising costs.

When examined by length of time in the community, those who had been in the community for a longer period of time were more likely to report that their housing was affordable. 71% of respondents who had been in the community for six or more years reported that their housing was affordable, compared to 59% of respondents who had been in the community for five or fewer years.

Education

Respondents were also asked about the highest level of education they had completed. Many respondents had completed some form of post-secondary education; 38% had Bachelor's

degrees, 25% had Master's degrees, 15% had College diplomas, and 8% had PhDs. A further 7% of respondents had completed high school, 3% had completed trade or technical school, 1% had formal education, and 3% preferred not to answer.

Figure 7. Responses to Q29 'What is the highest level of education you have completed?
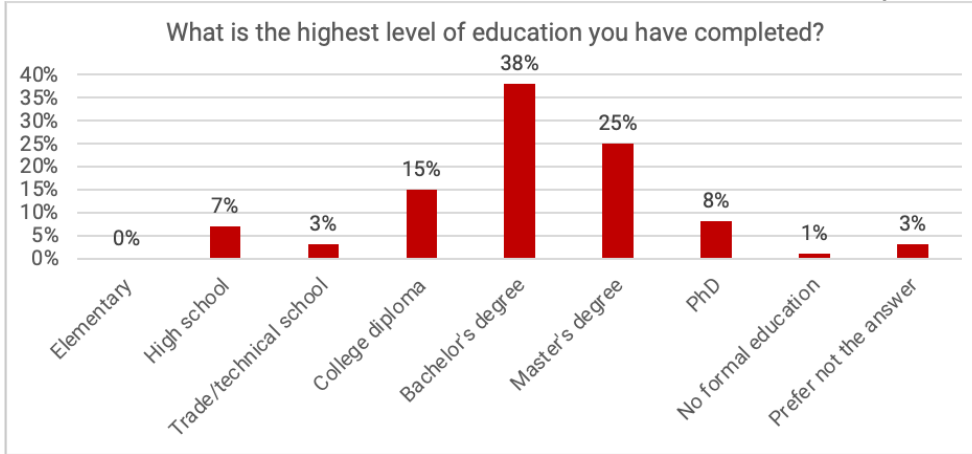
Employment

Employment status

77% of respondents reported being a part of the paid workforce; 52% were employed full time, 15% were engaged in part time or casual work, and 10% were self-employed. A further 18% of respondents were not in the paid workforce (e.g. they were students, retired, caring for children, not seeking work, etc.), 3% of respondents were unemployed but looking for work, and 1% selected 'Other.'

Figure 8. Responses to Q34 'What is your employment status?'
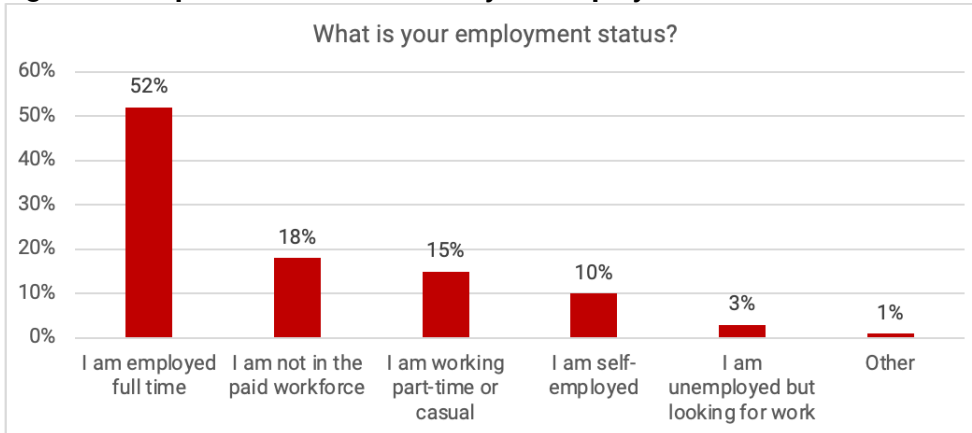
There were slight gender differences in employment status – overall, men were more slightly more likely to be employed than women. 62% of men reported working full time, compared to 50% of women. Further, 19% of men, 12% of women, and 67% of non-binary people (2 of 3) reported working part time or casually and 12% of women and 33% of non-binary people (1 of 3) reported that they were self-employed. 13% of men and 15% of women reported that they were not in the paid workforce, and 3% of men were unemployed.

There were also differences in employment status by respondents' length of time in the community. People who had lived in the community for six or more years were more likely to be working full time, with 60% reporting full-time work status compared to 47% of people who had been in the community for five or fewer years. Those newer to the community were more likely to be working part-time/casually, or to not be a part of the paid workforce. 25% of respondents who had been in the community for five or fewer years indicated that they worked part-time or casually, and 16% who were not in the paid work force, compared to 3% of respondents who had been in the community for six or more years who worked part-time or casually, and 11% who were not in the paid work force.

Suitability of job to level of education
Respondents were also asked whether their current job corresponded with their level of education. 54% answered 'Yes,' that they were currently in a job at the same level as their skills and experience. 23% answered 'No,' 18% were not currently employed, and 4% preferred not to answer this question. There were slight differences in responses to this question when compared by respondents' length of time in the community. 75% of respondents who had been in the community for six or more years reported being in a posiiton at the same level as their skills and experience, compared to 70% of respondents who had been in the community for five or fewer years.

Income
When asked if their household income was enough for their needs (and their family's needs), 43% of respondents said that it was. 29% reported that their income was not quite enough for their needs, 12% said that their income was definitiely not enough for their needs, and 7% were unsure. 9% of respondents preferred not to answer this question.

Figure 9. Responses to Q37 'Is your household income enough for the needs of you and your family?'
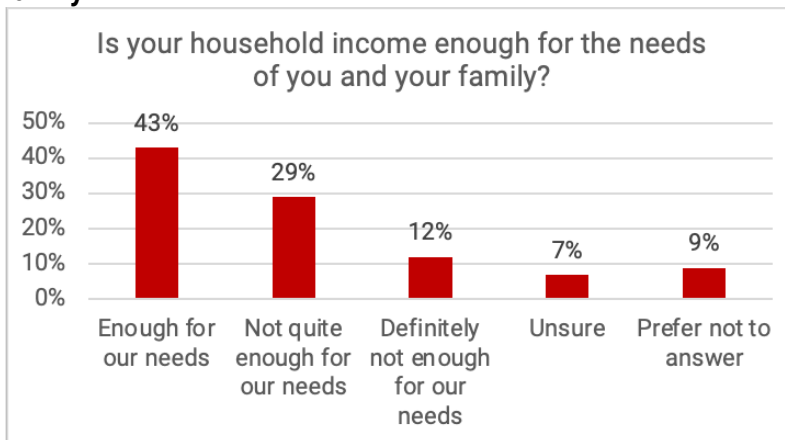
The research team further broke down these findings by the length of time respondents had been in the community. It is apparent that those who are newer to the community are struggling more with income compared to those who have been in the community longer, as 69% of people who had been in the community for six or more years reported their income being enough for their needs and 40% of people who had been in the community for five or fewer years reported their income was enough for their needs.

Access to services

Experience accessing community services

Respondents were asked to rate their experience accessing community services in the last 12 months in Grey or Bruce County. The top five most commonly accessed services were health care, dental care, recreation services, driver's licence, and housing.

Health care was accessed by 89% of respondents. 26% of those who accessed it reported an 'Excellent' or 'Very good' experience, 36% reported an 'Average' or 'Acceptable' experience, and 27% reported a 'Poor' experience. Dental care was accessed by 80% of respondents. 38% of those who accessed it reported an 'Excellent' or 'Very good' experience, 28% reported an 'Average' or 'Acceptable' experience, and 14% reported a 'Poor' experience. Recreation services were accessted by 75% of respondents. 33% of those who accessed it reported an 'Excellent' or 'Very good' experience, 28% reported an 'Average' or 'Acceptable' experience, and 14% reported a 'Poor' experience. Driver's license services were accessed by 70% of respondents. 49% of those who accessed it reported an 'Excellent' or 'Very good' experience, 23% reported an 'Average' or 'Acceptable' experience, and 8% reported a 'Poor' experience. Housing services were accessed by 70% of respondents. 16% of those who accessed it reported an 'Excellent' or 'Very good' experience, 29% reported an 'Average' or 'Acceptable' experience, and 24% reported a 'Poor' experience.

Many of the most frequently accessed services were also the most poorly rated. The top five most poorly rated services were health care (rated as 'Poor' by 27% of respondents), followed by housing (24%), childcare (15%), dental (14%), and recreation services (14%). A full breakdown of all services accessed and their ratings is available in Table 4 below (listed in survey order).

Table 4. Responses to Q7 'Please rate your experience accessing community services in the last 12 months in Grey or Bruce County.'

Community service	Excellent	Very good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Did not access
Health	13%	13%	23%	13%	27%	10%
Dental	14%	24%	15%	13%	14%	22%
Recreation services	16%	17%	14%	14%	14%	24%
Drivers' license	13%	26%	14%	9%	8%	29%
Housing	6%	10%	17%	12%	24%	30%
Education	12%	17%	16%	14%	7%	33%
Employment and/or skills training	9%	15%	11%	19%	6%	38%
Local municipal government/bylaw	6%	13%	19%	10%	9%	42%
Police	17%	8%	13%	9%	9%	43%
Childcare	6%	9%	11%	14%	15%	45%
Settlement/	10%	9%	12%	10%	10%	47%

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Community service	Excellent	Very good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Did not access
immigrant services						
Small business/ entrepreneurial suports	5%	11%	13%	8%	13%	48%
English language learning	12%	14%	4%	14%	6%	49%
Language interpretation/ translation	5%	11%	18%	7%	8%	51%
Ambulance	10%	11%	13%	7%	6%	52%
Mental health	5%	11%	12%	8%	9%	54%
Legal/courts	6%	11%	8%	8%	8%	58%
French language learning	2%	6%	10%	9%	9%	63%

Access to language interpretation

The majority (68%) of respondents who accessed a hospital, health clinic, or talked to a health professional in Grey Bruce reported that they did not need language interpretation. 22% of respondents needed language interpretation, accessing it in a variety of ways. 8% of respondents had language interpretation provided for them, 5% brought a family member or friend because they didn't know that language interpretation was available, 4% brought a family member or friend because interpretation was not available, and 1% brought a family member or friend because they prefer this instead of a professional interpreter. 4% of respondents wanted language interpretation but did not receive it, and 1% of respondents selected 'Other.' 8% of respondents reported that they did not go to a hospital, clinic, or health professional.

Table 5. Responses to Q8 'If you or a family member went to a hospital, health clinic or talked to a health professional in the past year, did the clinic provide in-person phone/video interpretation?'

Response options	% of respondents
I did not need language interpretation	68%
Language interpretation was provided for me	8%
I brought a family member or friend because I didn't know that interpretation was available	5%
I brought a family member or friend because the interpretation was not available	4%
I wanted language interpretation but did not receive it	4%
I brought a family member or friend because I prefer this instead of a professional interpreter	1%
Other	1%
I did not go to a hospital, clinic, or health professional	8%

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Community integration

Welcome from Grey Bruce community

When asked how welcoming the Grey Bruce community was toward immigrants, 40% of survey respondents reported that it was welcoming, scoring it between 7-10 on a scale from 0 (not at all welcoming) to 10 (very welcoming). 38% of respondents reported that it was moderately welcoming, scoring Grey Bruce between 4-6. 22% felt that Grey Bruce was not welcoming, scoring it from 0-3. The average of all responses was 5.87, indicating that respondents felt that Grey Bruce is moderately or averagely welcoming. A full list of response options is available in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Responses to Q10 'How welcoming is the Grey Bruce community toward immigrants?'

Response options	% of respondents
0 – Not at all welcoming	3%
1	2%
2	8%
3	9%
4	5%
5	15%
6	18%
7	9%
8	14%
9	6%
10 – Very welcoming	11%

Respondents who were newer to the community, or had been in the community for five or fewer years, reported Grey Bruce to be more welcoming, with a response average of 6.16, compared to respondents who had been in the community six or more years, who had a response average of 5.72.

Belonging

Sense of belonging

The majority (57%) of survey respondents felt a very strong (22%) or somewhat strong (35%) sense of belonging in Grey or Bruce County. Alternatively, 23% of respondents described their sense of belonging as somewhat weak, 14% as very weak, and 5% did not know or did not have an opinion.

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Figure 10. Responses to Q11 'How do you describe your sense of belonging in Grey Bruce?'
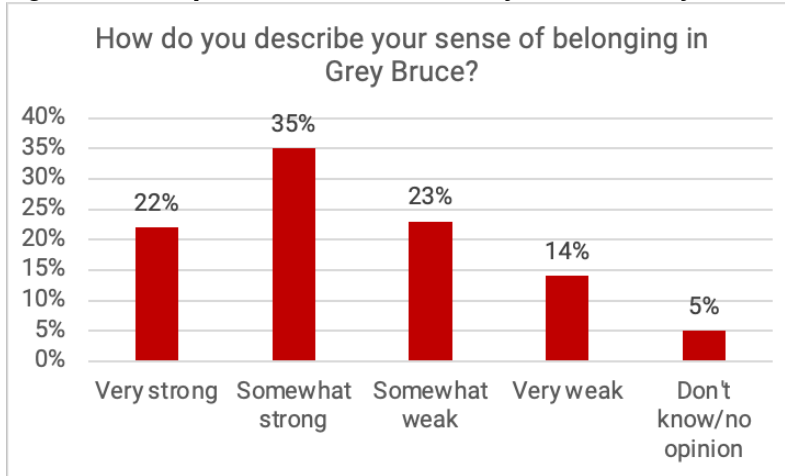
Overall, respondents who had been in the community for longer felt a stronger sense of belonging in Grey Bruce. 70% of respondents who had been in the community for six or more years reported their sense of belonging to be 'Very strong' (35%) or 'Somewhat strong' (35%), as compared to 57% of respondents who had been in the community for five or fewer years (19% 'Very strong,' 38% 'Somewhat strong'). Similarly, 44% of respondents who had been in the community for five or fewer years reported their sense of belonging as 'Somewhat weak' (27%) or 'Very weak' (17%), as compared to 30% of respondents who had been in the community for six or more years (15% 'Somewhat weak,' 15% 'Very weak').

Feeling at home
Many respondents reported that they felt at home in Grey Bruce fairly quickly. The majority of respondents reported feeling at home within two years; 29% of respondents reported feeling at home within one to two years, 19% reported feeling at home within less than a year, and 10% felt at home immediately upon arrival. 14% of respondents said that they felt at home within three to five years, and a further 8% felt at home within six to 10 years of arriving in Grey Bruce. Notably, 20% of respondents reported that, at the time of the survey, they still did not feel at home in Grey Bruce.

Figure 11. Responses to Q19 'How long did it take you to feel at home in this community?'
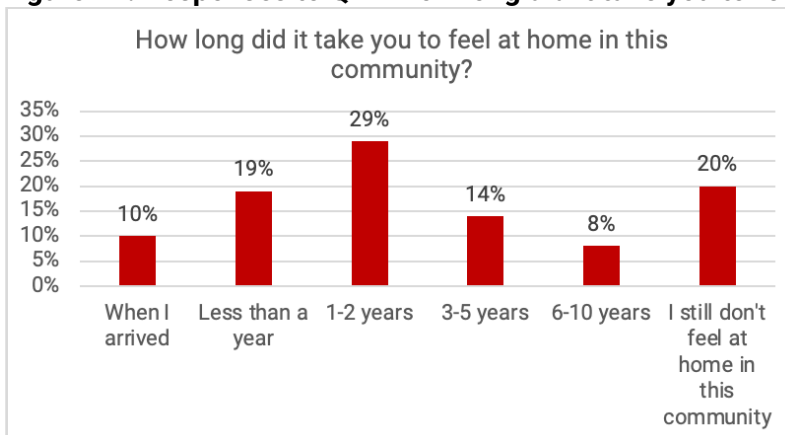
Reason for coming to Grey Bruce

Most respondents (37%) moved to Grey Bruce for a job. The second most common reason was because they had family or friends who lived in Grey Bruce (20%), followed by Grey Bruce being more afforable than other communities (11%). A smaller number of respondents reported moving to Grey Bruce due to its community supports (5%), it's healthy local economy (4%), its post secondary institutions (4%), cultural, faith or language groups in the community (3%). 9% of respondents reported that they had moved to Grey Bruce for 'Other' reasons, including their spouse's job, family nearby (but outside of Grey Bruce), and the family-friendly nature of the community. Additionally, 5% of respondents reported that they did not choose to move to Grey Bruce, the community was chosen for them.

Table 7. Responses to Q22 'Why did you come to Grey Bruce?'

Response options	% of respondents
For a job	37%
I had family or friends who lived in Grey Bruce	20%
Grey Bruce was more affordable than other communities	11%
Community services and supports in this community	5%
I didn't choose Grey Bruce - the community was chosen for me	5%
A healthy local economy	4%
Post-secondary institutions	4%
Cultural, faith or language groups in this community	3%
Other	9%

Years in the community

When asked how long they had been in Grey Bruce, 59% of respondents reported having lived in Grey Bruce for five years or less. At the time of the survey, 10% of respondents had lived in Grey Bruce for less than one year, 23% for one to two years, and 26% for three to five years. Additionally, 20% of respondents had lived in Grey Bruce for six to 10 years, 17% for 11 to 12 years, and 3% for 21+ years.

Figure 12. Responses to Q18 'How long have you been in the community?'

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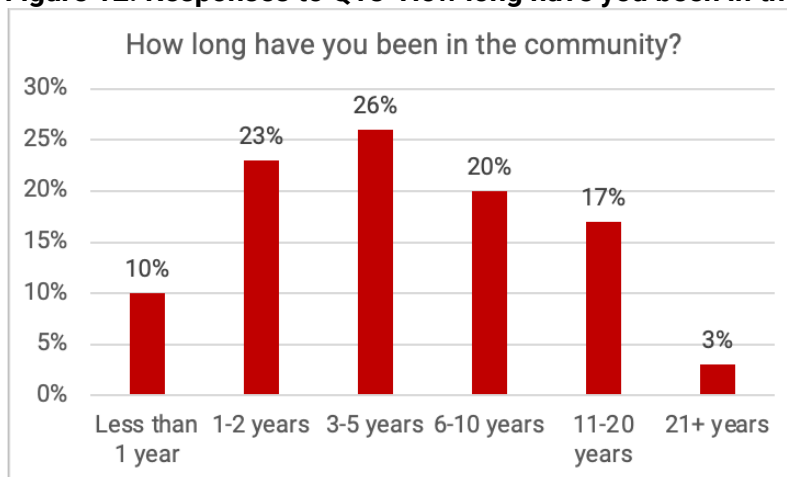
Likelihood of staying in Grey Bruce

Responses on the likelihood of staying in Grey Bruce varied. Most respondents (43%) answered that they planned on staying permanently, followed by 23% who might stay permanently, and 20% who were not sure how likely they were to stay in Grey Bruce. Additionally, 13% said that they did not plan on staying.

Figure 13. Responses to Q23 'How likely are you to stay in Grey Bruce?'
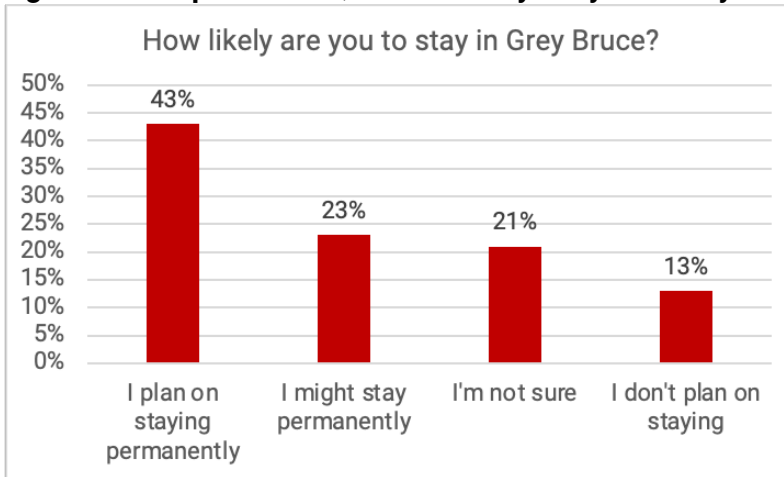
Safety

Survey respondents were also asked how safe they feel in Grey Bruce. The majority (74%) of respondents felt reasonably safe; 28% felt extremely safe and 46% felt moderately safe. This was followed by 19% who felt slightly safe and only 6% who felt not at all safe.

Settlement experience

The majority (57%) of respondents reported having an 'Excellent' (20%) or 'Good' (37%) experience of settling in Grey Bruce. 32% of respondents reported having had a 'Neutral' experience, and only 11% reported having had a 'Not very good' experience.

Life satisfaction

When asked how they felt about their life as a whole at the time of the survey, the majority (58%) of survey respondents reported that they were satisfied, scoring 7-10 on a scale from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). 24% of respondents reported that they were moderately satisfied, scoring their overall life satisfaction from 4-6. 17% were dissatisfied, scoring their overall life satisfaction from 0-3. The average of all responses was 6.54, indicating moderate or slightly above average satisfaction with life among survey respondents. A full list of response options is available in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Responses to Q9 'How do you feel about your life as a whole right now?'

Response options	% of respondents
0 – Very Dissatisfied	1%
1	3%
2	3%
3	10%

Response options	% of respondents
4	4%
5	8%
6	12%
7	16%
8	17%
9	15%
10 – Very Satisfied	10%

A more detailed exploration of these responses revealed that those who had been in the community longer on average had a higher life satisfaction.

Community contributions

Thriving and prosperous community

When asked 'What are some of the ways you help create a thriving and prosperous community for everyone,' the majority of respondents (72%) reported being a good neighbour, and helping their neighbours when they needed it. 42% of respondents reported contributing with their skills and experience to the local economy through their job, and 39% said that they speak up for fairness and treat people with kindness in their community. This was closely followed by 32% of respondents who reported that they volunteer with community organizations, groups, or faith communities, and 30% said that they contribute to improving the natural environment (recycling, picking up garbage, planting trees, etc.). A full list of response options is available in Table 9 below. Note that respondents could select more than one response, so percentages do not total 100.

Table 9. Responses to Q24 'What are some of the ways you help create a thriving and prosperous community for everyone?'

Response options	% of respondents
I help my neighbours when they need it	72%
I contribute with my skills and experience to the local economy through my job	42%
I speak up for fairness and treat people with kindness in my community	39%
I volunteer with community organizations, groups, or faith communities	32%
I contribute to improving the natural environment (recycling, picking up garbage, planting trees, etc.)	30%
I continue to build my skills and strengthen so I can contribute to this community (learning English, further education, building professional skills, etc.)	27%
I donate to local charities	26%
I vote in local/municipal, provincial or national elections in Canada	23%
I help newcomers to Canada make their home in our community	22%

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Response options	% of respondents
I volunteer with youth sports (coaching, driving youth, etc.)	18%
I provide unpaid help for family members (children, grandparents, etc.)	16%
I tutor or help youth learn in this community	11%
I am a business owner, and my business contributes to our community's economy	11%
I am on a board of directors or other committee	8%
Other	4%

Respondents were given the option to expand on 'Other' ways they help to create a thriving and prosperous community for everyone; 4% of respondents selected this response option and some left open-ended comments. One respondent noted that they finance newcomers coming to Canada. Another shared that they set up a group for immigrants to connect. Further, one respondent said that they would contribute to Canada as needed, but have a strong desire to return to their country of origin, and another noted that they support their family.

Examples of community contributions

Survey respondents were invited to share a story about their community contributions that they were particularly proud of in an open-ended question. The most common themes that emerged in this section were helping others/volunteering, supporting community services, supporting education initiatives, and supporting newcomers.

Helping others/volunteering
The most prominent theme identified was pride in helping others in a variety of settings. Some respondents specifically referenced volunteer positions; one noted "I volunteered at my local church – this is a great opportunity to connect with local people and make friends." Another respondent shared that they "...volunteer in long term care and Salvation Army in exercise program." Other respondents spoke more about informal opportunities to help others. As one respondent shared, "I have helped my neighbours maintain their lawn as they are seniors 75+ and have helped them in going in and out of town for medical needs."

Supporting community services
The next most common theme identified by respondents as a point of pride was their support of community services; both in a hands-on capacity by delivering programs and more indirectly by voicing support. One respondent shared that they "Develop and provide woodland walking trails to local clubs and organizations." Another said "I spoke up in favour of the new library in front of the town council when they were looking to rebuild."

Contributing to education initiatives
Another key theme was contributing to education initiatives on a range of topics, ranging from financial literacy to English language learning. One respondent shared that they teach "...ESL to newcomers in local ESL charity school." Another shared that they "...facilitate online and in person interactive workshops on how we can make Grey and Bruce counties more welcoming."

Supporting newcomers
Respondents also specifically referenced supporting newcomers through many of the initiatives refenced above, as well as more generally. One respondent stated that they "...always encourage new settlers in our community..very lovely neighbourhood, friendly and helpful people."

Other themes
Other less frequently referenced points of pride included fostering connection and friendship and receiving acknowledgement. Two respondents also spoke of negative experiences. One noted that they had no stories to share about their community contributions, adding that "[Grey Bruce] is helpless community and people are rude at times!"

Isolation

Respondents were also asked to what degree they had felt isolated or alone in Grey Bruce over the previous year. The vast majority of respondents had felt isolated or alone to some extent. 17% reported feeling 'Not at all' isolated or alone, compared to 87% who reported feeling 'A little bit' to 'A great deal' isolated or alone.

Figure 14. Responses to Q12 'How much have you felt isolated or alone in Grey Bruce over the last 12 months?'
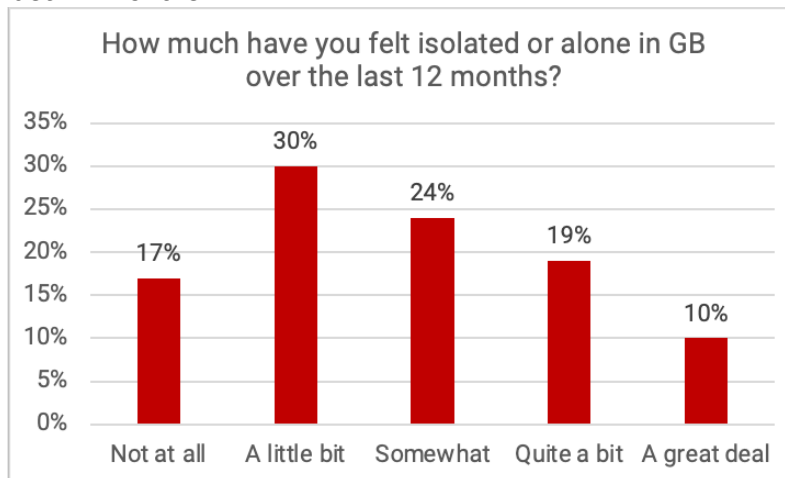
Discrimination

Experience of discrimination
When asked if they have had experiences of discrimination of unfair treament in the past 12 months 43% of respondents said 'Yes' and 57% said 'No.'

As racism is a common cause of discrimination, the research team further explored experiences of discrimination by racialized identity. A greater proportion of respondents with racialized identities had experienced discrimination compared to white respondents; 45% of respondents with racialized identities reported that they had experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others in Grey Bruce in the last 12 months as compared to 27% of white respondents.

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The research team also analysed experiences of discrimination by gender. Results show that a greater proportion of women and non-binary respondents reported experiencing discrimination as compared to men. 42% of women, 66% of non-binary people, and 34% of men reported experiencing discrimination in the past 12 months. The very small sample size of non-binary respondents should be noted.

Reasons for discrimination

Respondents who reported having experienced discrimination in Grey Bruce County in the past 12 months were invited to answer a follow-up question to better understand the reasons they were discriminated against. 63% of respondents experienced discrimination due to their race or skin colour, followed by 45% who felt that they had experienced discrimination due to their ethnicity or culture. 35% experienced discrimination due to their accent, 25% due to immigration status, and 18% due to their religion. A full list of response options is available in Table 10 below. Note that respondents could select more than one response, so percentages do not total 100.

Table 10. Responses to Q15 'If you have experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others, what were the reasons?'

Response options	% of respondents
Race or skin colour	63%
Ethnicity or culture	45%
Accent	35%
Immigration status	25%
Religion	18%
Physical appearance	15%
Language ability	10%
Sexual orientation	8%
Gender	8%
Disability (either a disability that people can see or one that is invisible)	5%
Income	5%
Age	3%

Locations of discrimination

Respondents who reported having experienced discrimination in Grey Bruce County in the past 12 months were also asked where and in what types of situations they experienced it. 40% of respondents reported experiencing discrimination in a store, bank or restaurant, closely followed by 33% who experienced it when applying for a job or promotion. 31% experienced discrimination when interacting with their neighbours, 26% while at community or public events, and 24% at their jobs. A full list of response options is available in Table 11 below. Note that respondents could select more than one response, so percentages do not total 100.

Table 11. Responses to Q16 'If you did experience discrimination, in what types of situations did you experience it?'

Response options	% of respondents
In a store, bank or restaurant	40%
When applying for a job or a promotion	33%
When interacting with my neighbours	31%
At community/public events	26%
At my job – for example from supervisors, co-workers or clients	24%
When interacting with the police	19%
When accessing other community services	19%
While using public areas, such as parks or sidewalks	17%
When looking for housing	14%
While using libraries, community/recreational centres, arenas	10%
While using buses, trains or taxis	5%
At school or university	5%
When seeing a doctor or in other healthcare settings	5%
When crossing the border into Canada	2%
When interacting with the courts	0%
Other	5%

Key challenges

The most common challenges that respondents reported facing were finding healthcare (42%), making friends (41%), finding relevant programming in local community centres, arts and culture spaces, libraries, etc. (32%), cost of living or money problems (32%), and transportation (32%). A full list of response options is available in Table 12 below. Note that respondents could select more than one response, so percentages do not total 100.

Table 12. Responses to Q20 'What are the biggest challenges you or your family have experienced in the last year in Grey Bruce?'

Response options	% of respondents
Finding healthcare	42%
Making friends	41%
Finding relevant programming in local community centres, arts and culture spaces, libraries, etc.	32%
Cost of living or money problems	32%
Transportation	32%
Discrimination	23%
Finding affordable housing	23%

Response options	% of respondents
Finding work	17%
Finding childcare	16%
Receiving public or social services (e.g. settlement services, government services, etc.)	16%
Finding mental health care	16%
Making sure your children are safe and happy at school and in the community	15%
Learning where and how to do things	14%
Starting a new business	12%
Getting information in a language you understand	4%
Learning English	2%
Other	4%

Respondents were given the option to expand on 'Other' challenges they and their families had faced. 4% of respondents selected this response option and some left open-ended comments. They expressed challenges related to the city-centric nature of available supports, limited cultural events outside of large cities like Toronto, and difficulty remaining positive when family and friends were impacted by conflict in their home counties. One respondent also reiterated experiencing challenges related to finding affordable housing.

Helpful changes

Changes to help immigrants reach full potential

When asked what changes would help immigrants to reach their full potential in Grey Bruce, many respondents (53%) reported that more affordable housing would be helpful; this was the strongest recommendation by respondents to this section. Other notable suggestions included specific actions that could be taken, including actions to increase the social connections of immigrants (47%), actions to increase the welcoming and acceptance of immigrants (40%), and actions to reduce discrimination towards immigrants (37%).

Employment and education were also top responses in this section; 39% of respondents felt that educating employers on the value and ways of hiring, retraining, and promoting immigrants could help immigrants to ready their full potential in Grey Bruce, and 34% supported providing better programs for immigrants to find work. Additionally, 34% of respondents recommended giving immigrants a greater voice or involvement in community leadership and planning. A full list of response options is available in Table 13 below. Note that respondents could select multiple responses, so percentages do not total 100.

Table 13. Responses to Q21 'What changes would help immigrants to reach their full potential in Grey Bruce?'

Response options	% of respondents
More affordable housing	53%
Actions to improve the social connections of immigrants	47%

Response options	% of respondents
Actions to increase the welcoming and acceptance of immigrants	40%
Educate employers on the value and ways of hiring, retraining, and promoting immigrants	39%
Actions to reduce discrimination towards immigrants	37%
Greater voice or involvement in community leadership and planning	34%
Better programs for immigrants to find work	34%
More effort by community services to better serve immigrants	27%
Mentorship or peer support program for new immigrants to connect with those who have settled into the region	26%
More immigrant programming in local community centres, arts and culture spaces, libraries, etc.	26%
A central place for both employers to find immigrant workers and for workers to find employment	25%
Service agencies working togethers	24%
One place to get all settlement, immigration and services	24%
More opportunities to help improve English skills	18%
Computer access and training	15%
Availability of interpretation and translation	12%
English learning opportunities in workplaces	11%
Other	18%
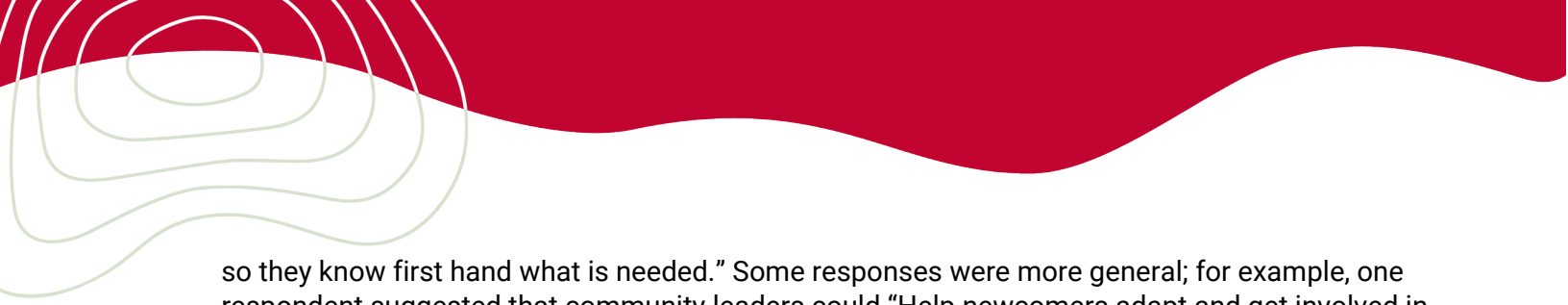
Respondents were given the option to expand on 'Other' changes that could help immigrants reach their full potential in Grey Bruce. 18% of respondents selected this response option and some left open-ended comments. In these comments, they advocated for better public transportation services, more accessible healthcare or family doctors, greater support or funding for small businesses, greater support for rural homeowners, better/more inclusive recreational activities, to bring down the cost of living, advocacy for new immigrants, financial literacy programming, and suggested that Canada intervene in foreign conflict.

How to improve welcoming, integration and wellbeing
Survey respondents were invited to share what they felt was the most important thing community leaders should do to improve the welcoming, integration, and well-being of immigrants in Grey Bruce. This open-ended question received a number of responses, out of which the research team uncovered a range of key themes.

Connection, friendship and community involvement
The most prominent theme was the importance of connection, friendship, and community involvement. Many respondents specifically used the term "connection" when describing how community leaders could support immigrants in Grey Bruce. One respondent suggested that "Community leaders can help immigrants by being understanding of different cultures, offering language assistance, and making spaces where everyone feels included and valued for their diversity." Another wrote that "They should aim to include in their circles immigrants/newcomers

so they know first hand what is needed." Some responses were more general; for example, one respondent suggested that community leaders could "Help newcomers adapt and get involved in the community."

Building cultural competence
The next most common suggestion was related to building cultural competence in the broader community. This included supporting immigrants' cultural celebrations and recognizing non-Christian holidays, and providing "...cultural education and training." Some respondents also suggested that community leaders work to change the perceptions of the community around immigrants. For example, one respondent suggested to "Change 'us and them' mentality." Another recommended changing "...the negative perceptions the community has towards immigrants – we are humans wanting to be Canadians because we love the country and believe in Canada like long time Canadians."

Supporting/expanding community services and efforts
Another recommendation that emerged was a call to support and/or expand community services and efforts. One respondent suggested that community leaders "Support the already existing Grey County programs," while another called for "More programs in the community." Other respondents provided more specific recommendations that they felt would be helpful, including one who encouraged leader to "Make statements that Grey Bruce welcome newcomers, AND execute more integration efforts. On the individual level, I feel that I am welcomed, but on community level I don't feel much welcome."
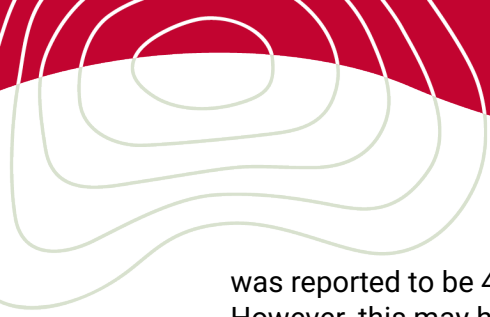
Addressing racism and discrimination
Respondents also called for community leaders to address racism and discrimination. As one respondent put it, community leaders should "Teach rural Canadians tolerance and how to be not racist." Another drew on their own experiences and shared that "Discrimination and back handed comments regarding immigrants needs to be addressed. I am white so often people make comments about immigrants to me without realizing that I am one." As with many responses to this question, recommendations ranged from general to more specific. One respondent suggested that community leaders could "Develop a strong anti-racist policy, a place for people who experience racism to go safely and to talk with somone they can trust and more understanding and leadership from the City Mayor, Councillors and Senior Staff."

Other themes
Other less frequently referenced recommendations included improving affordability and living conditions (with particular emphasis on affordable housing and available transportation), increasing jobs and opportunities for immigrants, working to hear and understand immigrants and learning from their experiences, encouraging fairness, and supporting immigrants generally.

Discussion

The data collected through this survey largely follows existing demographic trends in population and immigration. Grey Bruce immigrants tend to reside in the counties' most populous regions, and the majority of immigrants in Grey Bruce are economic category, followed by family-class immigrants, which is in line with national trends (Statistics Canada, 2023). The Grey Bruce immigrant population may be younger, on average, compared to Grey Bruce as a whole, as 66% of respondents were between the ages of 25-44, and the average age of Grey Bruce residents

was reported to be 45.5 (Statistics Canada, 2023, as cited in Grey Bruce Health Unit, 2023). However, this may have been because the survey was predominantly advertised online and through social media, which may have led to the underrepresentation of older adults. Survey respondents included a range of newer and less recent immigrants; approximately 60% reported living in the community for five or fewer years and many reported that they had been in the community for over a decade. The substantial number of newly-arrived immigrants is largely consistent with census data that demonstrates that the immigrant population has increased in Grey Bruce by 12.4% from 2016 to 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2023).

This study also suggests that the Grey Bruce immigrant population is made up of a diverse mix of ethnicities. Although it is challenging to make direct comparisons, as the Canadian census tracks the birth place of immigrants vs. their ethnicity, many Immigrant Survey 2023 respondents described themselves as South Asian and Chinese, which is in line with the significant proportion of Cana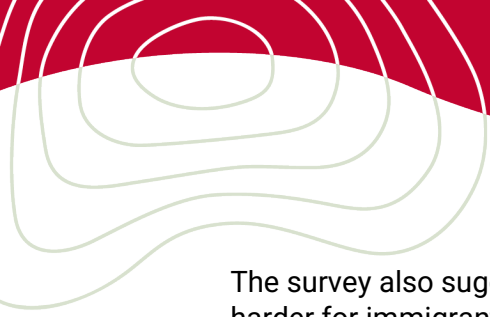dian newcomers and immigrants who are from Asia (Statistics Canada, 2023). There were also substantial proportions of white as well as Black immigrants who responded to this survey. Survey respondents had strong English proficiency, and 77% were multilingual. Many immigrants in Grey Bruce reported that they were part of faith communities, with most identifying with Christianity and Hinduism. About a third of respondents were not part of any faith communities. Many survey respondents reported a lack of social connection and understanding from other Grey Bruce residents; since Christianity is the most common religion in the province (Statistics Canada, 2023b), this could be a potential area to expand community programming and socialization among immigrants and non-immigrants. The majority of respondents were also post-secondary educated.

Survey responses reflect both satisfaction with residence in Grey Bruce and substantial challenges facing immigrants. Many immigrants reported positive feelings and satisfaction with life in Grey Bruce. For instance, most respondents reported positive settling experiences, a good sense of belonging to the community, sufficient housing and income, and overall life satisfaction. However, a notable proportion of respondents also seemed to be struggling in Grey Bruce. When prompted to indicate the biggest challenges in their lives, the top answers reported by respondents were finding healthcare, making friends, finding appropriate recreation, cost of living, transportation, and discrimination.

This survey also found that those who were newer to the community were more likely to report experiencing economic challenges. For example, those who had been in the community for five or fewer years were more likely to report that their income was not enough for their needs than those who had been in the community for six or more years. Newer residents to Grey Bruce were less likely to report holding a full time position compared to respondents who had been in the community for six or more years, and many respondents also noted facing racism in the workplace generally and when it came to hiring and promotion decisions. Newer immigrants were also less likely to report having affordable or suitable housing. When provided the opportunity to explain their responses, challenges with unaffordable housing in terms of both rentals and ownership were a major theme. These results are in line with the current economic climate in Ontario and Canada. The Consumer Price Index, a score calculated by a weighted average of consumer goods and services such as food, shelter, personal care, etc., increased about 16% from 2019 to 2023, and has experienced a 24% increase since 2015 (Statistics Canada, 2024). Those who moved to the community more recently would have have had to face an increasing cost of living, thus making it harder to stabilize in the community.

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The survey also suggests that these issues may be compounded by discrimination, making it harder for immigrants to make a comfortable income. These issues may lend to newer residents' overall weaker sense of belonging to the Grey Bruce community compared to those who had been in the community longer. As noted above, almost half of survey respondents reported experiencing discrimination in the past 12 months. The top reasons provided for the discrimination against them were race, ethnicity or culture, and accent. The research team's additional analyses corroborates this finding, as respondents with racialized identities were more likely to report experiencing discrimination than white respondents. This demonstrates that racism is an ongoing issue for immigrants in Grey Bruce, which is supported by the 2022 interviews conducted in the same region by Khan et al.

Survey results indicate that immigrants' satisfaction with available services in Grey Bruce varied. Respondents were prompted to rate their experiences with a number of services. It is notable that no one service got overwhelming positive ratings; the majority illustrated a mix of positive and negative experiences. Housing and health care were the two services that respondents had the most negative experiences with. Other services like dental care, entrepreneurial support, recreation, and childcare also received a notable amount of 'Poor' ratings. Respondents could also indicate if they had not accessed a service. The top three least accessed services were French language learning, legal/courts, and mental health. A service such as French language learning is likely accessed less frequently as it is uncommon in Ontario to speak French, and survey results show that some immigrants were accessing English langauge learning. On the other hand, mental health care is a service many immigrants in Grey Bruce could benefit from, especially given the significant reports of discrimination and reports of only moderate life satisfaction. The high 'Did not access' responses for mental health could be for various reasons, such as lack of mental health services, lack of accessible mental health services, lack of culturally appropriate mental health services, or lack of motivation to seek mental health support perhaps due to stigma or unawareness of available services. Relatedly, a lack of appropriate (welcoming, culturally relevant) recreation activities were noted by respondents throughout the survey.

When asked to share what changes could be made to help immigrants in Grey Bruce, the top responses were affordable housing, improved social connection, a more welcoming community, reduced discrimination, employment assistance, and allowing immigrants to have a stronger voice in the community. These responses align with the themes identified throughout the survey results. Based on the experiences of respondents to this survey, to help their immigrant population go from moderate life satisfaction to thriving, Grey Bruce can take action to improve community affordability, reduce racism, facilitate social connection through appropriate recreation, and improve access to essential services.

Conclusions

This study provides a much more detailed picture of the experiences of immigrants in Grey Bruce than was previously available from Statistics Canada data and other research. The results demonstrate that immigrants in Grey Bruce have had a wide variety of experiences, ranging from overwhelmingly positive to extremely challenging. Generally, the demographics of immigrants in Grey Bruce follow existing trends, despite a lower (but increasing) proportion of immigrants in the population. Immigrants in Grey Bruce expressed both satisfaction and frustration with

services available and the overall community, with those newer to the community more likely to experience challenges and discrimination than long-time residents. It is our hope that this research can provide baseline data to be used in future studies, especially to better inform how service providers, government, businesses, and the community at large can foster a more welcoming and inclusive space for immigrants and newcomers. An avenue for future research may be to explore the barriers that prevent immigrants from accessing services, as well as some of the factors that lead to overwhelming 'Poor' ratings, particularly around housing, health care and mental health and wellbeing.

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Appendix A: Detailed results

Table A1. Responses to Q1 'Which of the following best describes you?' with regard to immigration status.

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
I immigrated to Canada as an economic-category immigrant	44	37%
I immigrated to Canada as a family-category immigrant	37	31%
I am currently in Canada as an international student	8	7%
I am currently in Canada on a temporary work visa	7	6%
I immigrated to Canada as a government-assisted refugee	4	3%
I immigrated to Canada as a refugee claimant and am now a permanent resident or citizen	3	3%
I am currently in Canada as a refugee claimant	3	3%
I am currently in Canada on a CUAET (Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel) visa	3	3%
Unknown or I prefer not to answer	6	5%
Other	5	4%
I was born in Canada	0	0%

Total respondents: 120

Table A2. Responses to Q2 'How long have you been living in Canada?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Less than 1 year	3	3%
1 to 5 years	44	38%
6 to 10 years	21	18%
10+ years	47	41%
I come every season	1	1%

Total respondents: 116

Table A3. Responses to Q3 'Where do you live within Grey and Bruce Counties?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
City of Owen Sound	39	36%
Town of Saugeen Shores	17	16%
Municipality of Grey Highlands	7	7%
Municipality of West Grey	7	7%
Municipality of Kincardine	5	5%
Municipality of Brockton	4	4%
Municipality of Meaford	4	4%

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Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Municipality of South Bruce	4	4%
Township of Chatsworth	4	4%
Township of Southgate	4	4%
Town of South Bruce Peninsula	3	3%
Township of Georgian Bluffs	3	3%
Town of Hanover	2	2%
Township of Huron-Kinloss	2	2%
Municipality of Northern Bruce-Peninsula	1	1%
Town of the Blue Mountains	1	1%
Other	0	0%

Total respondents: 107

Table A4. Responses to Q4 'What is your first language?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
English	36	35%
Mandarin	10	10%
Gujarati	8	8%
Hindi	7	7%
Indonesian	6	6%
Punjabi (Panjabi)	5	5%
Ukrainian	5	5%
Other	25	25%

Total respondents: 102

Table A5. Responses to Q5 'How many languages can you speak well?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
1	24	24%
2	45	43%
3	24	23%
4	8	8%
5 or more	3	3%

Total respondents: 105

Table A6. Responses to Q6 'How well can you speak and understand English?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Very well	76	72%
Well	19	18%
Fairly well	9	9%

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Poorly	0	0%
Not at all	1	1%

Total respondents: 105

Table A7. Responses to Q7 'Please rate your experience accessing community services in the last 12 months in Grey Bruce.'

Community services	Excellent	Very good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Did not access	Total respondents
Health	13 (13%)	13 (13%)	22 (23%)	13 (13%)	26 (27%)	10 (10%)	97
Dental	13 (14%)	23 (24%)	14 (15%)	12 (13%)	13 (14%)	21 (22%)	96
Recreation services	15 (16%)	16 (17%)	14 (15%)	13 (14%)	13 (14%)	23 (24%)	94
Drivers' license	13 (13%)	25 (26%)	14 (14%)	9 (9%)	8 (8%)	28 (29%)	97
Housing	6 (6%)	10 (10%)	17 (17%)	12 (12%)	24 (24%)	29 (30%)	98
Education	12 (12%)	17 (17%)	16 (16%)	14 (14%)	7 (7%)	32 (33%)	98
Employment and/or skills training	9 (9%)	15 (15%)	11 (11%)	19 (20%)	6 (6%)	37 (38%)	97
Local municipal government/ bylaw	6 (6%)	13 (13%)	18 (19%)	10 (10%)	9 (9%)	41 (42%)	97
Police	17 (17%)	8 (8%)	13 (13%)	9 (9%)	9 (9%)	42 (43%)	98
Childcare	6 (6%)	9 (9%)	10 (11%)	13 (14%)	14 (15%)	43 (45%)	95
Settlement/ immigrant services	10 (10%)	9 (9%)	12 (12%)	10 (10%)	10 (10%)	46 (47%)	97
Small business/ entrepreneurial suports	5 (5%)	11 (11%)	13 (13%)	8 (8%)	13 (13%)	47 (48%)	97
English language learning	12 (12%)	14 (14%)	4 (4%)	14 (14%)	6 (6%)	48 (49%)	98
Language interpretation/ translation	5 (5%)	11 (11%)	17 (18%)	7 (7%)	8 (8%)	49 (51%)	97
Ambulance	10 (10%)	11 (11%)	13 (13%)	7 (7%)	6 (6%)	51 (52%)	98

Community services	Excellent	Very good	Average	Acceptable	Poor	Did not access	Total respondents
Mental health	5 (5%)	11 (11%)	12 (12%)	8 (8%)	9 (9%)	52 (54%)	97
Legal/courts	6 (6%)	11 (11%)	8 (8%)	8 (8%)	8 (8%)	56 (58%)	97
French language learning	2 (2%)	6 (6%)	10 (10%)	9 (9%)	9 (9%)	61 (63%)	97

Table A8. Responses to Q8 'If you or a family member went to a hospital, health clinic or talked to a health professional in the past year, did the clinic provide iterpretation?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Language interpretation was provided for me	8	8%
I wanted language interpretation but did not receive it	4	4%
I brought a family member or friend because the interpretation was not available	4	4%
I brought a family member or friend because I prefer this instead of a professional interpreter	1	1%
I brought a family member or friend because I didn't know that interpretation was available	5	5%
I did not need language interpretation	66	68%
I did not go to a hospital, clinic, or health professional	8	8%
Other	1	1%

Total respondents: 97

Table A9. Responses to Q9 'How do you feel about your life as a whole right now?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
0 – Very dissatisfied	1	1%
1	3	3%
2	3	3%
3	9	10%
4	4	4%
5	7	8%
6	11	12%
7	15	16%
8	16	17%
9	14	15%
10 – Very Satisfied	9	10%

Total respondents: 92

Table A10. Breakdown of Q9 responses by length of time in the community.

Length of time in the community	Average	Standard deviation	# of respondents
5 or less years in the community	6.37	2.46	49
6 or more years in the community	7.27	2.38	33

Table A11. Responses to Q10 'How welcoming is the Grey Bruce community toward immigrants?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
0 – Not at all welcoming	3	3%
1	2	2%
2	7	8%
3	8	9%
4	5	5%
5	14	15%
6	17	18%
7	8	9%
8	13	14%
9	6	6%
10 – Very welcoming	10	11%

Total respondents: 93

Table A12. Responses to Q11 'How do you describe your sense of belonging in Grey or Bruce County?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Very strong	22	22%
Somewhat strong	34	35%
Somewhat weak	23	23%
Very weak	14	14%
Don't know/no opinion	5	5%

Total respondents: 98

Table A13. Breakdown of Q11 respondents by length of time in the community.

Length of time in Grey Bruce	Weak sense of belonging - %	Somewhat weak sense of belonging - %	Somewhat strong sense of belonging - %	Very strong sense of belonging - %
5 or less years in the community	17%	27%	38%	19%
6 or more years in the community	15%	15%	35%	35%

Table A14. Responses to Q12 'How much have you felt isolated or alone in Grey Bruce over the last 12 months?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Not at all	17	17%
A little bit	28	30%
Somewhat	22	24%
Quite a bit	18	19%
A great deal	9	10%

Total respondents: 93

Table A15. Responses to Q13 'How safe do you feel in Grey Bruce?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Extremely	27	28%
Moderately	44	46%
Slightly	18	19%
Not at all safe	6	6%

Total respondents: 95

Table A16. Responses to Q14 'In the last 12 months, have you experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others in Grey or Bruce County?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Yes	40	43%
No	54	57%

Total respondents: 94

Table A17. Breakdown of Q14 respondents by racialized identity.

Identity	Yes - #	Yes - %	No - #	No - %
White	4	27%	11	73%
Racialized identity	33	45%	40	55%

Table A18. Breakdown of Q14 respondents by gender.

Gender	Yes - #	Yes - %	No - #	No - %
Woman	22	42%	30	58%
Man	11	34%	21	66%
Non-binary	2	67%	1	33%

Table A19. Responses to Q15 'If you have experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others, what were the reasons?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Race or skin colour	25	63%

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Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Ethnicity or culture	18	45%
Accent	14	35%
Immigration status	10	25%
Religion	7	18%
Physical appearance	6	15%
Language ability	4	10%
Sexual orientation	3	8%
Gender	3	8%
Disability (either a disability that people can see or one that is invisible)	2	5%
Income	2	5%
Age	1	3%
Other	0	0%

Number of respondents: 40

Table A20. Responses to Q16 'If you did experience discrimination, in what types of situations did you experience it?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
In a store, bank or restaurant	17	40%
When applying for a job or a promotion	14	33%
When interacting with my neighbours	13	31%
At community/public events	11	26%
At my job – for example from supervisors, co-workers or clients	10	24%
When interacting with the police	8	19%
When accessing other community services	8	19%
While using public areas, such as parks or sidewalks	7	17%
When looking for housing	6	14%
While using libraries, community/recreational centres, arenas	4	10%
While using buses, trains or taxis	2	5%
At school or university	2	5%
When seeing a doctor or in other healthcare settings	2	5%
When crossing the border into Canada	1	2%
When interacting with the courts	0	0%
Other	2	5%

Number of respondents: 42

Table A21. Responses to Q17 'How would you describe your experience of settling in Grey Bruce?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Excellent	19	20%
Good	34	37%
Neutral	30	32%
Not very good	10	11%

Total respondents: 93

Table A22. Responses to Q18 'How long have you been in the community?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Less than 1 year	9	10%
1-2 years	20	23%
3-5 years	23	26%
6-10 years	18	20%
11-20 years	15	17%
21+ years	3	3%

Total respondents: 88

Table A23. Responses to Q19 'How long did it take you to feel at home in this community?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
When I arrived	9	10%
Less than a year	18	19%
1-2 years	27	29%
3-5 years	13	14%
6-10 years	7	8%
I still don't feel at home in this community	19	20%

Total respondents: 93

Table A24. Responses to Q20 'What are the biggest challenges you or your family have experienced in the last year in Grey Bruce?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Finding healthcare	39	42%
Making friends	38	41%
Finding relevant programming in local community centres, arts and culture spaces, libraries, etc.	29	32%
Cost of living or money problems	29	32%
Transportation	29	32%
Discrimination	21	23%
Finding affordable housing	21	23%
Finding work	19	17%

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Finding childcare	16	16%
Receiving public or social services (e.g. settlement services, government services, etc.)	15	16%
Finding mental health care	15	16%
Making sure your children are safe and happy at school and in the community	14	15%
Learning where and how to do things	13	14%
Starting a new business	11	12%
Getting information in a language you understand	4	4%
Learning English	2	2%
Other	4	4%

Total respondents: 92

Table A25. Responses to Q21 'What changes would help immigrants to reach their full potential in Grey Bruce?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
More affordable housing	49	53%
Actions to improve the social connections of immigrants	44	47%
Actions to increase the welcoming and acceptance of immigrants	37	40%
Educate employers on the value and ways of hiring, retraining, and promoting immigrants	36	39%
Actions to reduce discrimination towards immigrants	34	37%
Greater voice or involvement in community leadership and planning	32	34%
Better programs for immigrants to find work	32	34%
More effort by community services to better serve immigrants	25	27%
Mentorship or peer support program for new immigrants to connect with those who have settled into the region	24	26%
More immigrant programming in local community centres, arts and culture spaces, libraries, etc.	24	26%
A central place for both employers to find immigrant workers and for workers to find employment	23	25%
Service agencies working togethers	22	24%
One place to get all settlement, immigration and services	22	24%
More opportunities to help improve English skills	17	18%

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Computer access and training	14	15%
Availability of interpretation and translation	11	12%
English learning opportunities in workplaces	10	11%
Other	17	18%

Total respondents: 93

Table A26. Responses to Q22 'Why did you come to Grey Bruce?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
For a job	34	37%
I had family or friends who lived in Grey Bruce	18	20%
Grey Bruce was more affordable than other communities	10	11%
Community services and supports in this community	5	5%
I didn't choose Grey Bruce - the community was chosen for me	5	5%
A healthy local economy	4	4%
Post-secondary institutions	4	4%
Cultural, faith or language groups in this community	3	3%
Other	8	9%

Total respondents: 92

Table A27. Responses to Q23 'How likely are you to stay in Grey Bruce?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
I plan on staying permanently	40	43%
I might stay permanently	21	23%
I'm not sure	19	21%
I don't plan on staying	12	13%
Not applicable	0	0%

Total respondents: 92

Table A28. Responses to Q24 'What are some of the ways you help create a thriving and prosperous community for everyone?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
I help my neighbours when they need it	66	72%
I contribute with my skills and experience to the local economy through my job	39	42%
I speak up for fairness and treat people with kindness in my community	36	39%
I volunteer with community organizations, groups, or faith communities	29	32%

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
I contribute to improving the natural environment (recycling, picking up garbage, planting trees, etc.)	28	30%
I continue to build my skills and strengthen so I can contribute to this community (learning English, further education, building professional skills, etc.)	25	27%
I donate to local charities	24	26%
I vote in local/municipal, provincial or national elections in Canada	21	23%
I help newcomers to Canada make their home in our community	20	22%
I volunteer with youth sports (coaching, driving youth, etc.)	17	18%
I provide unpaid help for family members (children, grandparents, etc.)	15	16%
I tutor or help youth learn in this community	10	11%
I am a business owner, and my business contributes to our community's economy	10	11%
I am on a board of directors or other committee	7	8%
Other (please specify):	4	4%

Total respondents: 92

Table A29. Key themes identified from responses to Q25 'If you would like to share a story about your community contributions that you are particularly proud of, please share it here.'

Themes	# of respondents	% of respondents
Helping others/volunteering	9	38%
Supporting community services	7	29%
Supporting education initiatives	5	21%
Supporting newcomers	5	21%
Positive experience	4	17%
Providing expertise	4	17%
Connection/friendship	3	13%
Negative experience	2	8%
Acknowledgement	2	8%

Total respondents: 24

Table A30. Key themes identified from responses to Q26 'What is the most important thing community leaders should do to improve the welcoming, integration and well-being of immigrants in Grey Bruce?'

Themes	# of respondents	% of respondents
Connection/friendship/community involvement	17	35%
Building cultural competence	12	24%

Themes	# of respondents	% of respondents
Supporting/expanding community services/efforts	11	22%
Addressing racism and discrimination	8	16%
Living conditions (transportation, housing)	7	14%
Jobs/opportunities	6	12%
Wanting to be heard/understood	5	10%
Learning from immigrants' experiences	3	6%
Fairness	3	6%
Supporting immigrants	2	4%
Politics	1	2%

Total respondents: 49

Table A31. Responses to Q27 'What is your age?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
16-19	0	0%
20-24	4	4%
25-34	36	39%
35-44	25	27%
45-54	9	10%
55-64	9	10%
65 or older	6	7%
Prefer not to answer	3	3%

Total respondents: 92

Table A32. Responses to Q28 'Which would best describe you?'

Response option	# of respondents	% of respondents
South Asian	22	25%
Chinese	19	21%
White	15	17%
Black	12	14%
Latin American	4	4%
Mixed ethnicity	3	3%
Southeast Asian	3	3%
Filipino	2	2%
Korean	1	1%
Other	3	3%
Prefer not to answer	5	6%

Total respondents: 89

Table A33. Responses to Q29 'What is the highest level of education you have completed?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Elementary	0	0%
High school	6	7%
Trade/technical school	3	3%
College diploma	14	15%
Bachelor's degree	35	38%
Master's degree	23	25%
PhD	7	8%
No formal education	1	1%
Prefer not to answer	3	3%

Total respondents: 92

Table A34. Responses to Q30 'How would you describe your gender identity?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Woman	52	57%
Man	32	35%
Non-binary	3	3%
Transgender	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	5	5%
Prefer to self-describe	0	0%

Total respondents: 92

Table A35. Responses to Q31 'Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community? (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning)'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Yes	3	3%
No	84	92%
Prefer not to answer	4	4%

Total respondents: 91

Table A36. Responses to Q32 'Are you living with a disability (physical or mental) or a chronic illness that limits your activity?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Yes	6	7%
No	80	87%
Prefer not to answer	4	4%

Total respondents: 92

Table A37. Responses to Q33 'If you are a member of a faith community, please share which one.'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Christian	32	35%
I am not a member of a faith community	26	29%
Hindu	16	18%
Buddhist	2	2%
Jewish	1	1%
Sikh	1	1%
Other	3	3%
Prefer not to answer	3	3%

Total respondents: 91

Table A38. Responses to Q34 'What is your employment status?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
I am employed full time	48	52%
I am not in the paid workforce (student, retired, caring for children, not seeking work, etc.)	17	18%
I am working part-time or casual	14	15%
I am self-employed	9	10%
I am unemployed but looking for work	3	3%
Other	1	1%
Prefer not to answer	0	0%

Total respondents: 92

Table A39. Breakdown of Q34 respondents by gender.

Gender	Employed full time - %	Not in paid workforce - %	Working part-time or casual - %	Self-employed - %	Unemployed but looking for work - %	Other - %
Woman	50%	15%	12%	12%	0%	12%
Man	62%	13%	19%	0%	3%	3%
Non-binary	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%	0%

Table A40. Breakdown of Q34 respondents by length of time in the community.

Length of time in Grey Bruce	Employed full time - %	Not in paid workforce - %	Working part-time or casual - %	Self-employed - %	Unemployed but looking for work - %	Other - %
5 or less years in community	47%	16%	25%	6%	0%	6%
6 or more years in community	60%	11%	3%	11%	1%	11%

Table A41. Responses to Q35 'Does your housing suit your needs?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Yes	77	85%
No	14	15%

Total respondents: 91

Table A42. Breakdown of Q35 respondents by length of time in the community.

Length of time in Grey Bruce	Housing suits their needs - #	Housing suits their needs - %	Housing does not suit their needs - #	Housing does not suit their needs - %
5 or less years in community	38	75%	13	25%
6 or more years in community	33	97%	1	3%

Table A43. Responses to Q36 'Is your housing affordable?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Yes	59	64%
No	33	36%

Total respondents: 92

Table A44. Breakdown of Q36 respondents by length of time in the community.

Length of time in Grey Bruce	Housing is affordable - #	Housing is affordable - %	Housing is not affordable - #	Housing is not affordable - %
5 or less years in community	30	59%	21	41%
6 or more years in community	35	71%	10	29%

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Table A45. Responses to Q37 'Is your household income enough for the needs of you and your family?'

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Our income is enough for our needs	40	43%
Our income is not quite enough for our needs	27	29%
Our income is definitely not enough for our needs	11	12%
Unsure	6	7%
Prefer not to answer	8	9%

Total respondents: 92

Table A46. Breakdown of Q37 respondents by length of time in the community.

Length of time in Grey Bruce	Our income is definitely not enough for our needs - #	Our income is definitely not enough for our needs - %	Our income is not quite enough for our needs - #	Our income is not quite enough for our needs - %	Our income is enough for our needs - #	Our income is enough for our needs - %
5 or less years in the community	8	19%	18	42%	17	40%
6 or more years in the community	2	6%	8	25%	22	69%

Table A47. Responses to Q38 'Are you in a job at the same level as your skills and experience?

Response options	# of respondents	% of respondents
Yes	50	54%
No	21	23%
I'm not currently employed	17	18%
Prefer not to answer	4	4%

Total respondents: 92

Table A48. Breakdown of Q38 respondents by length of time in the community.

Length of time in Grey Bruce	Job is suitable - #	Job is suitable - %	Job is not suitable - #	Job is not suitable - %
5 or less years in community	30	70%	13	30%
6 or more years in community	18	75%	6	25%