

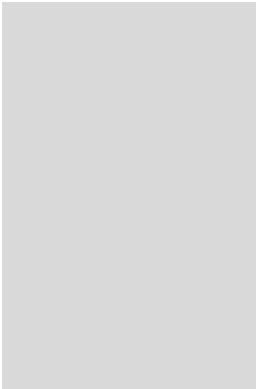


Newcomer Access to Information and Services in Scarborough



Needs Assessment Pilot Project

March 2020



Toronto East Quadrant
Local Immigration Partnership

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Newcomer Need Assessment Survey - Scarborough

Background

Federal and Provincial governments funds not-for-profit organizations to support newcomers in their settlement and integration process in Canada. These services help prepare newcomers for the Canadian labour market, improve language skills, physical and mental health & wellbeing, housing support, legal support, education and career advancement and other settlement needs. LIP member agencies report that often they don't get clients as expected in language classes, information sessions and other events. Though many organizations using different outreach strategies, there are many newcomers out there, who haven't heard of all the services or not using those services.

Access to Current and Relevant Information Action Group determined to conduct a needs assessment survey in Scarborough among newcomers to find out the reasons that some newcomers are not using settlement and other related services, and find ways to increase access to information and services. A working group was established to plan and execute the survey. The Action Group considered this a pilot project with a small target group.

Objective:

The objective of the Scarborough-wide needs assessment survey is to consult recent immigrants to identify information and service accessibilities, challenges in accessing services and gaps in services.

Target Population:

Newcomers to Scarborough who have arrived within 5 years in Canada. (PR, refugees, refugee claimants, international students, Work permit). The specific target group is newcomers who have accessed only one settlement service or none of the services. The research team also decided to ensure diversity during data collection. Therefore, the interviewers were requested to reach out to different age group, gender and country of origin.

Methodology:

The survey tool was developed by a small working group made of members from the Access to Current and Relevant Action Group. The working group decided to use a survey tool (questionnaire) in order to collect the data in structured way so that data analysis including correlation analysis would be possible.

The draft tool was reviewed by the Partnership Council and Action Group members and revised as per the suggestions made by both bodies. This survey tool later reviewed by the TCDSB Adult teaching staff for simplify the language used in the document. (See appendix 2)

A field test was conducted at the Centennial College with six International students and newcomer students in order to verify if respondents would be able to understand the language used in the survey. The field test was also used to estimate the average time needed to complete the survey.

Toronto Newcomer Council members were recruited to conduct the survey and the entire team was led by a TEQ LIP project officer. The volunteer team was trained by LIP staff to conduct the survey in October 2019. The team conducted the interviews from November 2019 to mid-January 2020 in Scarborough areas.

Non-probability sampling was used in this study and there were 120 surveys completed during the field data collection period. There were 29 surveys completed online and 91 surveys were completed in-person by interviewers.

New immigrants were found at shopping malls, Public Libraries, EarlyON centres and community colleges. While the interview was conducted in-person by the volunteer interviewers, the survey was also published online in order to reach out to more respondents.

Limitations of the study

It was really difficult to find out intended target audience during the survey for in-person interview, as the research team wanted to interview newcomers living in Canada less than five years and who haven't used more than two services.

When the interviewer approached the residents in public places, many of them declined to participate. Sometimes interviewer had to spend three hours to complete two interviews.

The survey was not translated into different languages due to resource and time limitation. Some participants might have responded to some questions better if they had the chance to have the survey in their first language.

Research Findings:

Demographic information of the participants

Age Group

- The majority of respondent (37%) are between 18 and 30 years of age.
- The second and third greatest number of respondents are 31 to 40 years of age (30%) and 41 to 50 years of age (23%), respectively
- From the remaining, 6% of respondents are between 51 and 60 years of age, and only 4% are over 60 years of age.
- The data indicates that 2/3 of the respondents are young adults, ages 18 to 40

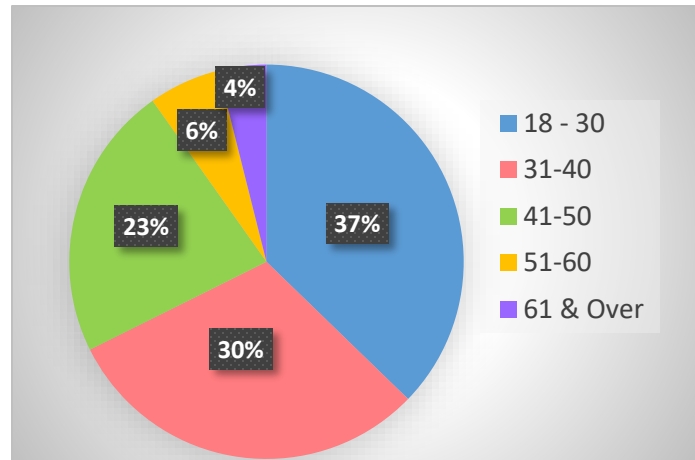


Image 01: Participants by age groups

Gender

- 35% of the participants self-identified as male and 65 percent as females while one respondent preferred not to say.
- The majority of respondents/ community service users self-identifying female (65%) and 34% are males and one percent of respondents preferred not to say.
- Among the participants, more female participated in 20 – 30 years, 31 – 40 years and 41 – 50 years age categories.
- Equal number of male and female participants participated in the study in other two age groups (51 – 60 years and over 60 years age categories).

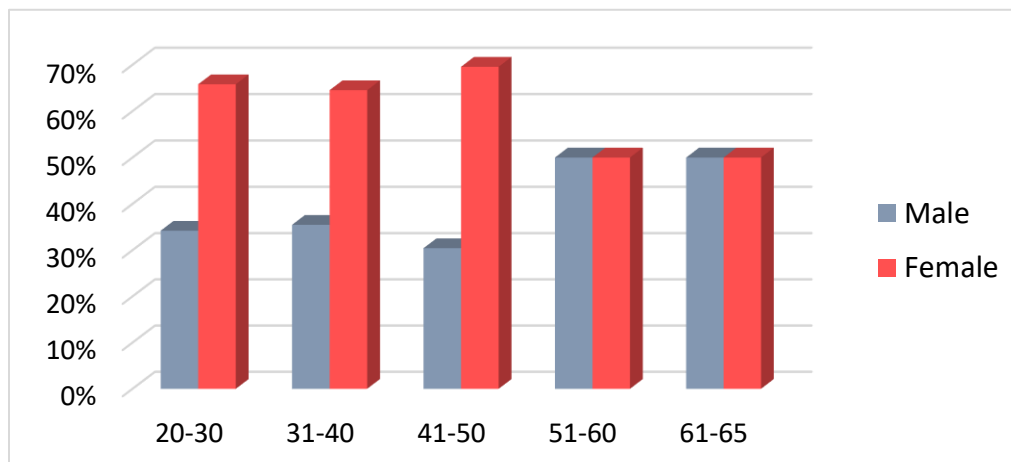


Image 02: Participants by gender and age category

Country of Origin

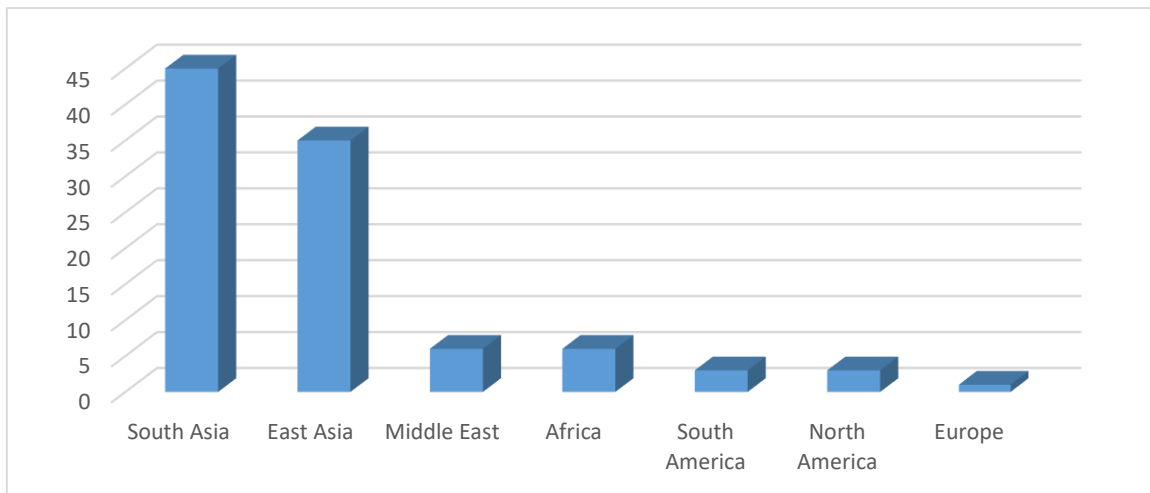


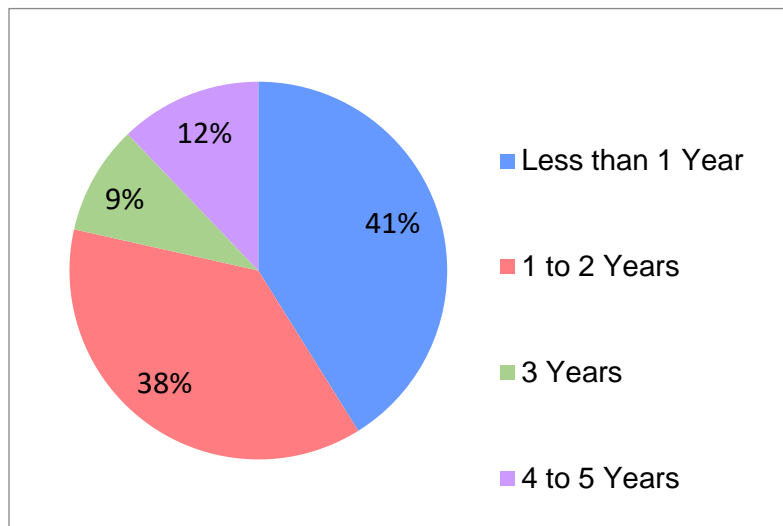
Image 03: Country of origin - category

- Respondents were asked to indicate their country of origin. Their responses were sorted by region due to the diversity of respondents.
- As shown on image 13, majority of the respondents are from South Asia (45%) and 35% are from East Asia
- 6% come from the Middle East region and Africa regions each.
- 3% come from North America, as well as from South America, and one percent of the respondents are from Europe.

Language spoken by respondents

- Among the respondents, top five languages are spoken by respondents are Mandarin (19%), Tamil (18%), Urdu (11%), Hindi (11%) and Sinhalese (9%).
- As seen in the list above, there is also a wide range of other languages spoken among the respondents.
- In total there are 26 different languages spoken by the respondents.
- The three popular languages spoken at home are Mandarin, Tamil and Hindi.
- Though 45% of the respondents have stated that they can speak English, only a total of 8% of respondents speak English at home, while the majority speak their native language at home.

Duration of living in Canada

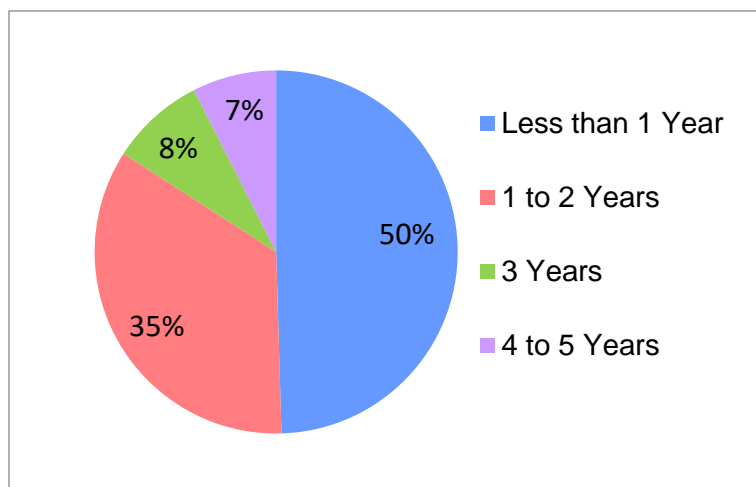


Among the respondents, 41% have been living in Canada for less than one year whereas another 38% have been living in Canada for one to two years. That is, nearly 80 percent of the respondents migrated to Canada within the last two years.

While 9 percent of the respondents have been living in Canada for 3 years, another 12 percent have been living here for 4 to five years.

Image 4: Number of years respondents living in Canada

Duration of living in Scarborough



In response to a question on how many years the respondents have lived in Scarborough, 50% of them have stated that they have been living in Scarborough less than one year where another 35% have been living in Scarborough one to two years.

While 8 percent of the respondents have been living in Canada for 3 years, another 7 percent have been living here for 4 to five years.

Image 5: Number of years respondents living in Scarborough

The differences in the numbers in both charts indicate that 9 percent of the respondents lived elsewhere in Canada and recently moved to Scarborough (less than one year).

Knowledge on community services in Scarborough and usage

- 13% of the respondents haven't heard about any of the services listed in the survey. All those 13 percent are newcomers living in Canada two years or less.

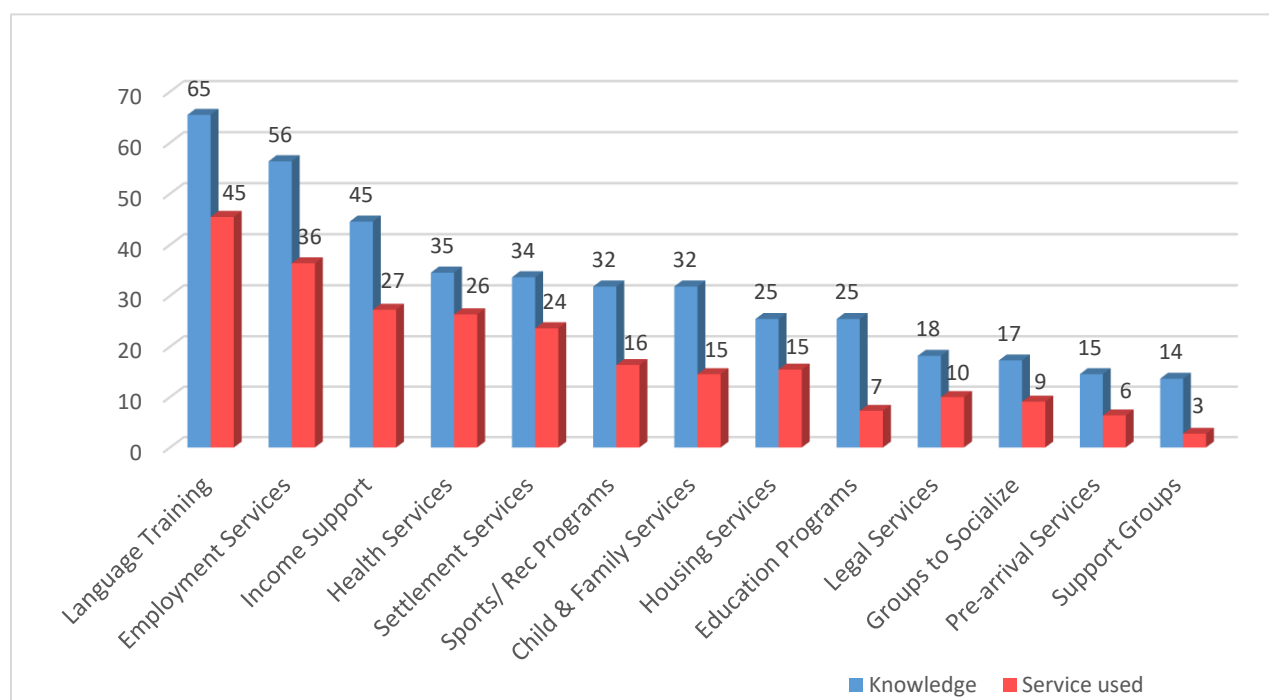


Image 6: Respondents in Canada less than 5 years who heard about the services and used (in %)

- Among the respondents 19% haven't used any of the services listed. In other words, 1/5th of the survey population hasn't used any of the services for newcomers in Scarborough.
- Of those 19% respondents, 75 percent of them are living two years or less than two years in Canada. Other 25 % are living in Canada mover 2 years.
- Language Training, Employment Services, and Income Support Services are the top three services that respondents have heard about and used by the respondents.
- Pre-arrival services is the second least service in this list. Only 15 % of the respondents have heard about, of which only 44% have used those services.
- A total of 28% of respondents have heard about education programs and only 28% of them have participated in education programs.
- There were a total of 35% of respondents have heard about child & family services, and 46% of them have used child & family services.
- Support groups/recreation groups is least heard-of and used service. There were only 14% of the respondents have heard about it and only 20% of them used recreation services. Most of the respondents haven't heard about recreation services and haven't used recreation services.

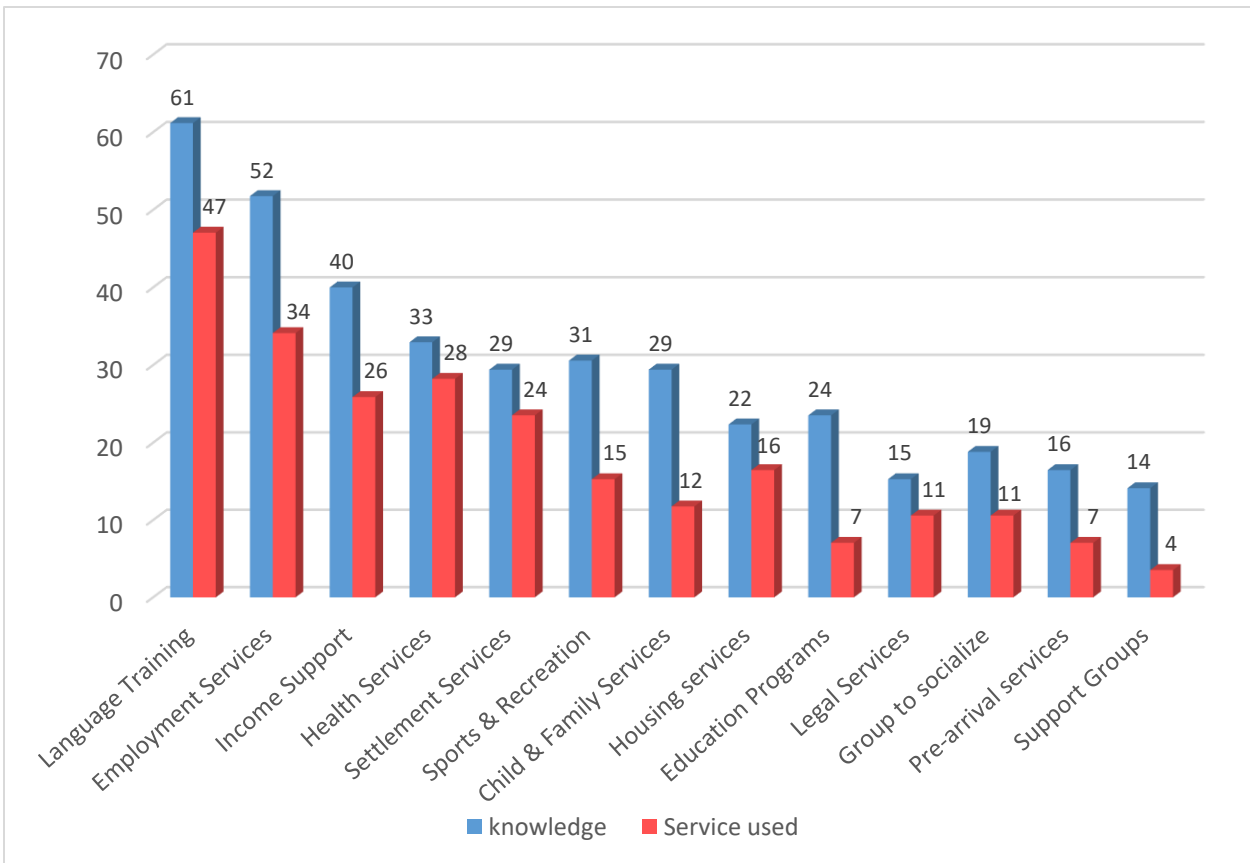


Image 7: Respondents in Canada 2 years or less who heard about the services and used (in %)

- Compared to entire respondents, knowledge of newcomer who have been living in Canada two years or less about all the services slightly lower than the knowledge of entire population. (Image 7)
- Similar to entire population, recent newcomers (living in Canada 2 years or less) also have more knowledge about language training, employment services and income support.

Other observations:

- There are number of respondents who have been using child & family services. Though they heard of other programs including language training, education upgrading, they haven't considered pursuing studies due to their commitments and priorities for other aspects of their life.
- Some other respondents have started language program soon after arrived in Canada. However, they stopped attending the classes to take care of their children.
- Most respondents were not aware of free community services including settlement services, employment services and health service related programs. They were familiar with very few services only namely, child and family services, social assistance and recreation programs for children.

Percentage of services used compared to knowledge of services

Image 8 shows the relationship between numbers of respondents who have heard about services and number of respondents really used the services in percentage.

Though Language services and Employment services are the most used services in numbers, Health and Settlement services the most used services as a percentage of services used against knowledge about the services.

Recreation services is the lowest used services among the services and education program is the second least used service as listed in the survey.

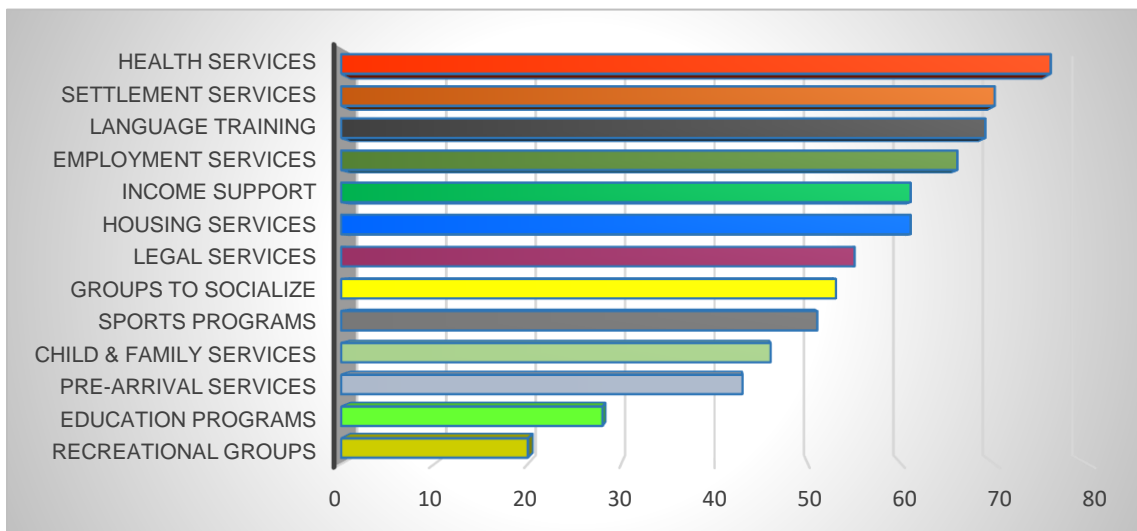


Image 8: Service usage compared to knowledge about services (in percentage)

Following the above finding, participants' data were grouped into two groups as respondents living in Canada over two years and respondents who are living in Canada for two years or less.

The results are presented in image 9.

- Newcomers who are living two years or less in Canada have accessed selected services more than those living over two years very significantly.
- 80 % of them have used health services, 80% have used settlement services, 77% have used language training program, 74% have used housing services and 69 % have used legal services.
- Use of income support also relatively higher for newcomers living in Canada 2 years or less (65%) than those respondents living in Canada over two years (53%).
- Compared to the respondents living in Canada 2 years or less, respondents who have been living over two years have used settlement, language training, legal services, health and housing services less. (See the image 9)
- Both group have used employment services over 60 percent.
- Recent newcomers have used income support more (65%) than those who have been living in Canada over two years (53%).
- While 40% recent newcomers have used child and family services whereas 60% of respondents who have lived in Canada over two years have used child & family services.

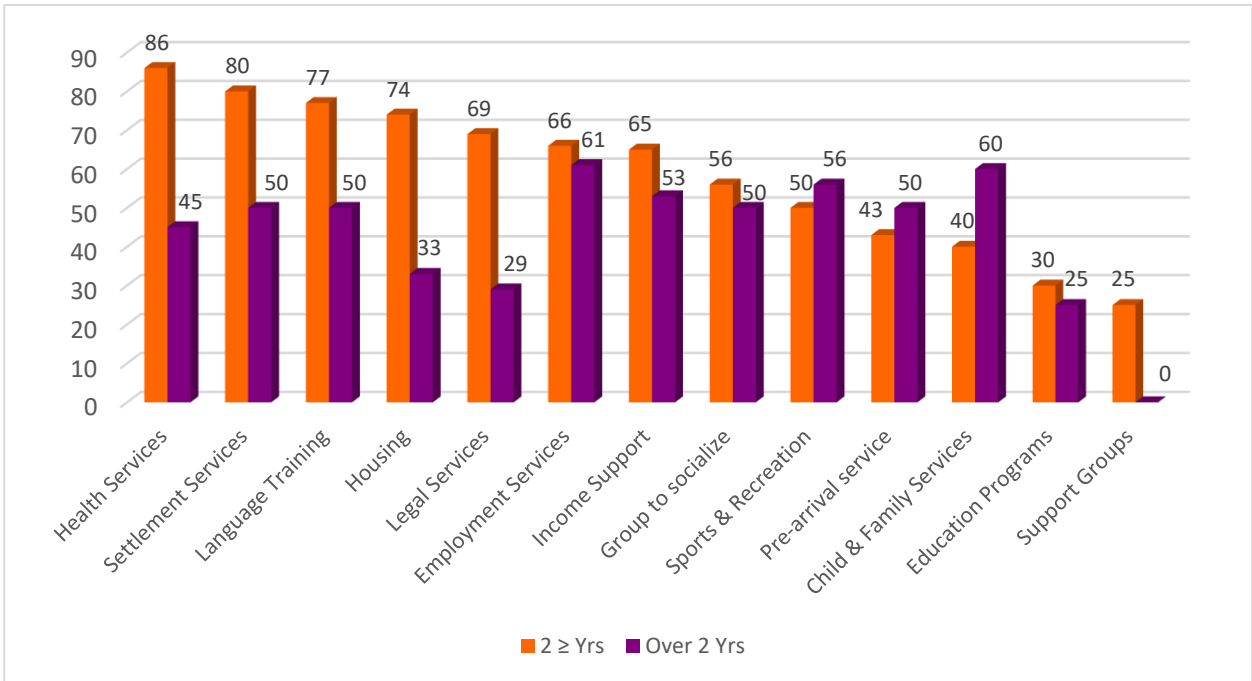


Image 9: Service usage against Knowledge of Services in percentage, comparing residents living in Canada over 2 years vs and 2 years or less

- While 40% recent newcomers have used child and family services, 60% of respondents has use child and family services.
- Use of education by both groups is lower where only 25 percent of respondents who heard about the service have used it.
- While 25 percent of recent newcomers have used support groups whereas none of the respondents have used this service.

Number of services used by the survey participants

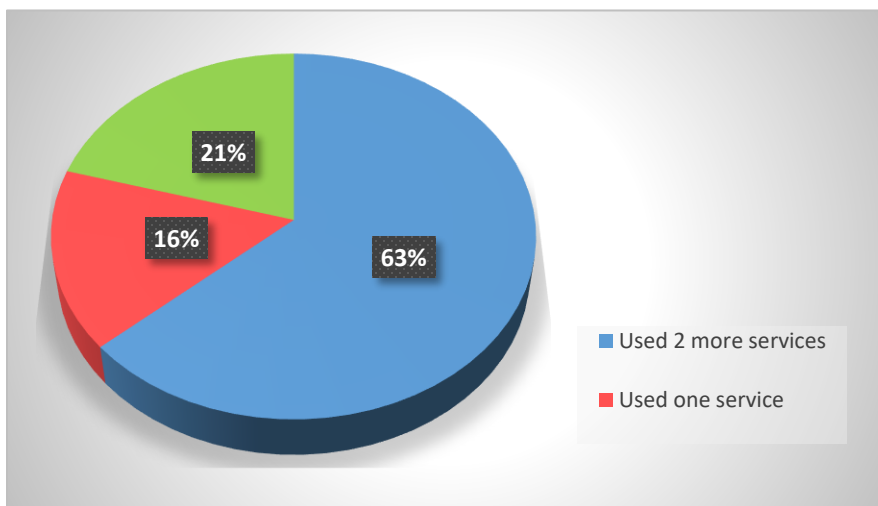


Image 10: Number of services used by respondents (in percentage).

Among the respondents, approximately 2/3 of respondents have used two or more services, whereas 16 percent have only used one service and 21 percent have used none of the services. Based on the data collected the majority of those who use only one service have used either employment service or language program or Health services.

Among the respondents who have used one service or none of the services, 53 percent has stated that none of their family members have used any free community services. Only 13% have stated that their family members have used those services. (Image 11)

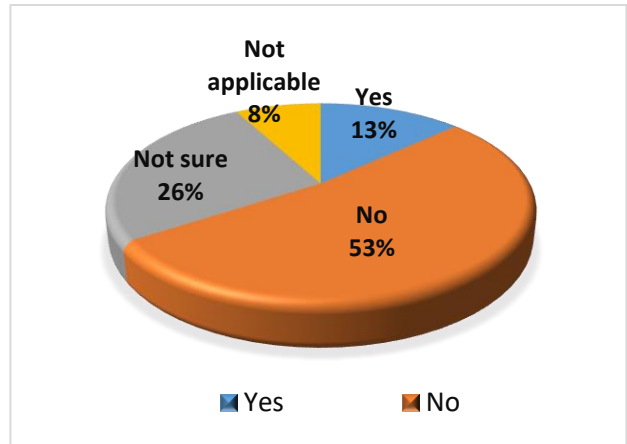


Image 11: Service used by family members

Reasons for not accessing newcomer services

- Among the respondents who have used only one service or none of the services, 56% have stated that they didn't know about the services available for new immigrants. In other words, 23% of the total respondents were not aware of these services. This shows that the majority of the respondents who haven't used the free community services had no access to service information.
- Of those who are aware of services, the chart below lists the reasons they give for not accessing services.

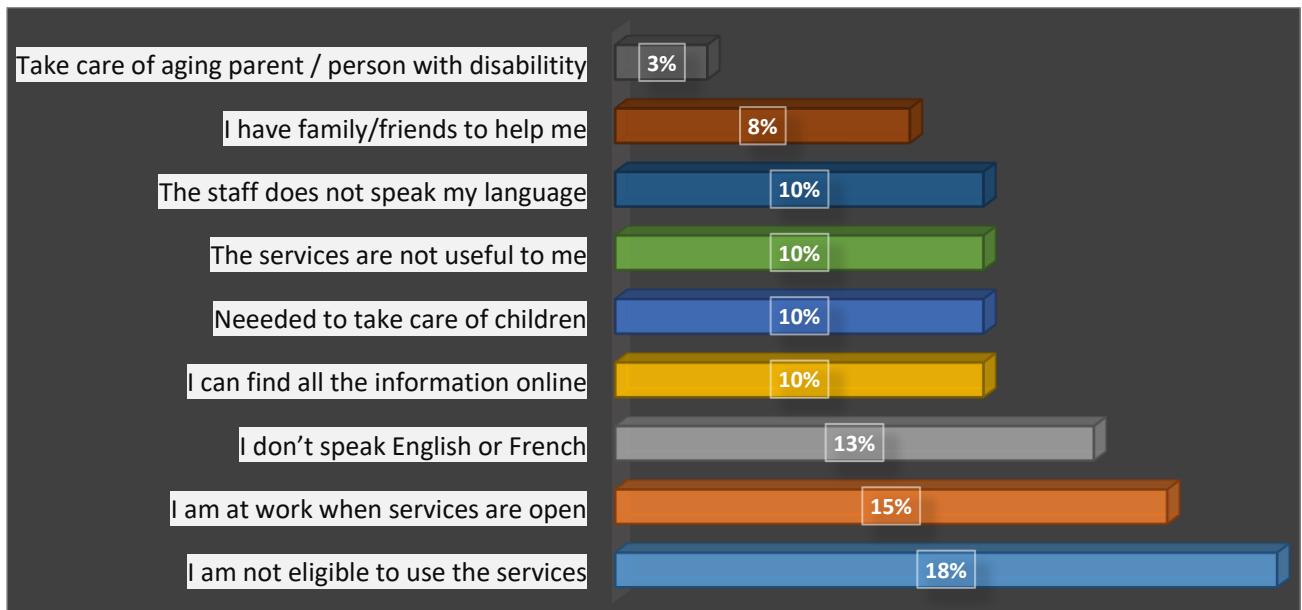


Image 12: Reasons for not accessing newcomer services *despite* knowledge of services

- Among the rest of the respondents, 18% of the respondents stated that they are not eligible to use those services. Interestingly 85% of them have been living in Canada less than two years. In other words, though they are eligible to use all the settlement services, they either misinformed or not informed.

- 13% of respondents could not use the services because they did not speak English or French while 10 percent of the respondents stated that they are not using the service as staff does not speak their first language
- While 15% were busy at work and could not use the services during their regular hours of operation, 10% stated that they had to take care of their children.
- 10 percent of respondents stated that they can find information online and 8 percent of the respondents mentioned that they have family /friends to help to navigate the services.

Sources of Information about services

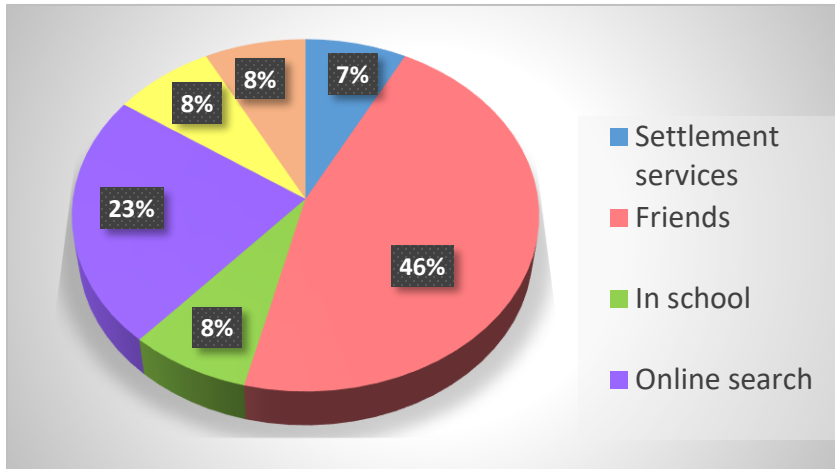


Image 13: Sources of information about services

Nearly 50% of the respondents have heard about the services from their friends, followed by online search (23%). Then an equal amount of respondents have heard about free community services from settlement service agencies, at school, at the airport (Information package) and from neighbours.

This clearly shows that new immigrants mostly count on their family and friends in learning about services and

technology is also play an important role in learning about services.

Type of Services demanded by the respondents close to their residence

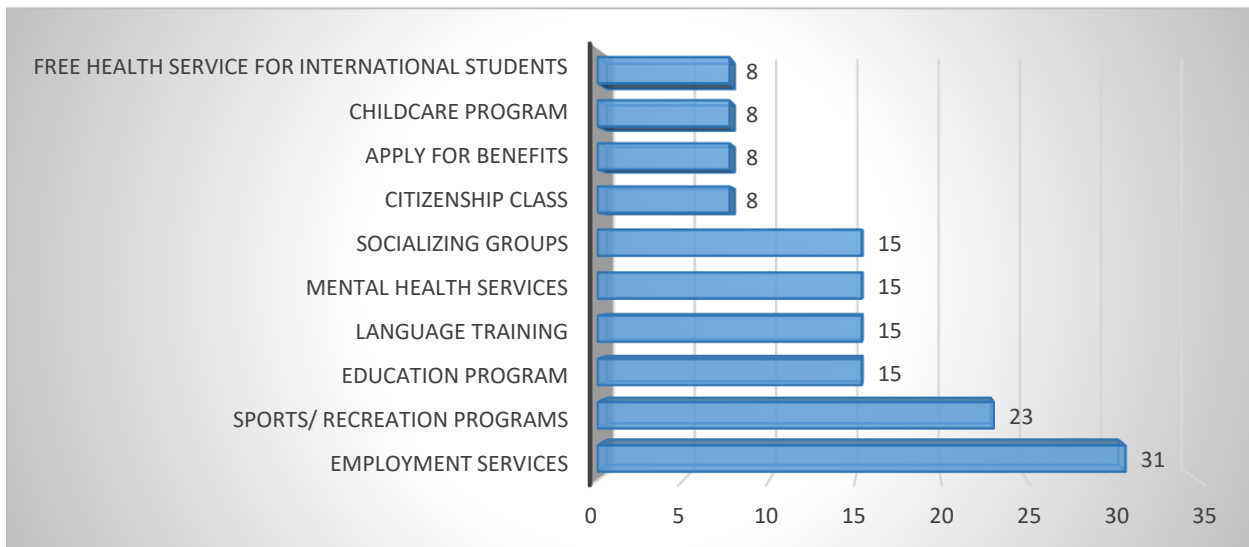


Image 14: Demand for services near their homes

In response to the question of what services they would like to have access near their homes, 31 percent stated they wish to have employment related services near their homes. It was followed by sports & recreation programs (23%). 15 percent of the respondents stated that they are looking for

- Socializing groups
- Mental health services for visitors on immigrants without status
- Language training programs
- Education programs

8% of the respondents stated they would like to have the following services close to their home.

- Childcare programs
- Citizenship classes
- Free medical services for international students
- Help to apply for Government benefits

International students from the community college stated that the university doctor’s office is only open limited hours and there are many restrictions on students’ medical coverage.

While respondents have their own definition to what “near their home” means, the responses may indicate that they are experiencing physical barriers to accessing these services or that they may feel more comfortable if the services are closer to their home.

Suggestions by the participants to increase access to settlement services

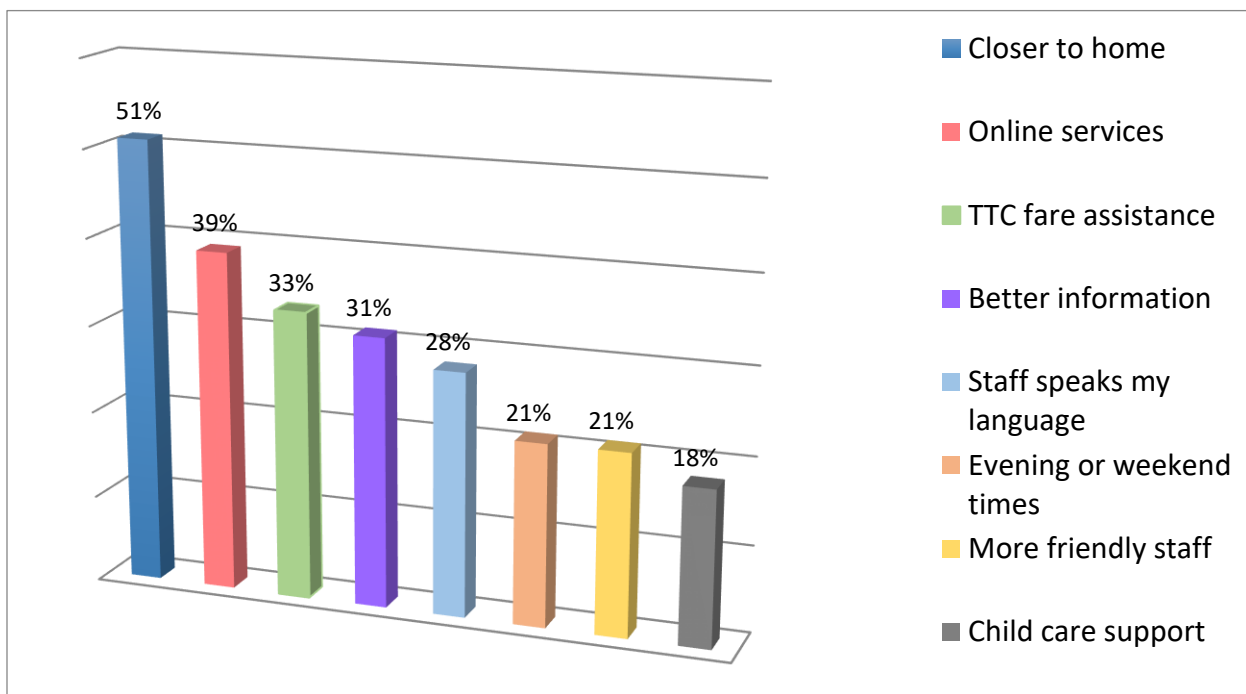


Image 15: Demand for services delivery methods and other expectations

- When asked about what would make it easier for respondents to use community services, the greatest number of responses (51%) indicates that they would like to have them closer to home. However, 1/3 of them also indicated that they would like to access services or information online.
- There are 33% that seek TTC fare assistance to access the services. However, 69% of them stated they would use online if services are accessible online.
- 39% of the total respondents would like to access online services, as it would be more convenient to access services at their time of convenience.
- 31% would like to receive better information, which gives us an idea that information for community services may be lacking in detail or is not accessible
- 28% would be more comfortable if staff members were able to speak their language, while 21% would like friendly staff.
- Many respondents seem to be busy with work or other priorities during weekday and day times, thus 21% would like to have evening or weekend times for community services
- 18% seek child care support services

General Observations

- Respondents do not have any knowledge on online LINC classes, online Employment services such as webinars and resume building assistance.
- Number of the female participants interviewed at EarlyON Centre have enrolled to language programs initially, however, they discontinued after having first child. Most of them are unable to continue as they are tied up with household activities and taking care of their young children.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Respondents have better knowledge about employment services, income support and language training program and least knowledge about legal service, pre-arrival service, recreation/ support group and group for socializing. Access those services are also follow the similar pattern. Larger percentage of newcomers have used health services, settlement services, language programs and employment services by the respondents.

The following are the barriers for respondents in accessing services and service information;

1. Time conflict of respondents where service hours conflict with working hours of respondents.
2. Limited language skills in understanding the services and communicated with staff.
3. Responsibilities at home to take care of children or elders

Many female respondents have challenges in accessing services due to family responsibilities and travelling to service location is also a challenge for them. Bringing services close to their home and making services available online would increase women participation in settlement programs and successful integration. As many newcomers do not have access information on newcomer settlement programs and services, service providers' organizations must research further find out more effective outreach methods.

Appendix 1:

Languages spoken by the respondents: (Answers to question 13)

- Below are a list of languages respondents can speak:

<i>Amharic (1)</i>	<i>Nepalese (1)</i>
<i>Arabic (3)</i>	<i>Portuguese (1)</i>
<i>Azerbaijani (1)</i>	<i>Punjabi (2)</i>
<i>Bengali (7)</i>	<i>Russian (1)</i>
<i>Cantonese (3)</i>	<i>Sinhalese (9)</i>
<i>Czech (1)</i>	<i>Somali (3)</i>
<i>English (45)</i>	<i>Spanish (3)</i>
<i>Farsi/Dari (2)</i>	<i>Tagalog (1)</i>
<i>French (1)</i>	<i>Tamil (18)</i>
<i>Gujarati (2)</i>	<i>Telegu (2)</i>
<i>Hindi (11)</i>	<i>Turkish (3)</i>
<i>Kannada (1)</i>	<i>Urdu (11)</i>
<i>Malayalam (2)</i>	<i>Vietnamese (1)</i>
<i>Mandarin (19)</i>	

Appendix 2

Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership

Newcomer Access to Services and Need Assessment Survey – 2019-20

(Note for Interviewers - Interviewers will use the following script to introduce the purpose of the survey to the survey participant.)

Introduction:

My name is I am part of the Toronto East Local Immigration Partnership Project. TEQ LIP works to improve services for newcomers to Scarborough. We are conducting this survey to learn how newcomers use services or why newcomers don't use services, and understand what services newcomers need.

This interview will take about 10 minutes and your information will remain anonymous. We will be using your responses along with the responses from other respondents as collective data. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Okay, let's begin...

Informed Consent:

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you can stop participating at any time. All information you give us during the research will be confidential and anonymous.

I understand the purpose of the survey and I agree to participate in this study by TEQ LIP. Please select I agree or I do not agree below. If you select "I agree" you are consenting or agreeing to take this survey.

- I agree**
- I do not agree**

1. Are you a newcomer who has lived in Canada for less than five years?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

2. How long have you been in Canada?

- Less than 1 Year
- 1 to 2 Years
- 3 Years
- 4 to 5 Years

3. How long have you lived in Scarborough?

- Less than 1 Year
- 1 to 2 Years
- 3 Years
- 4 to 5 Years

4. Which of these free community services in your area have you **heard of**? Check all that apply
- Employment services (for example, Help with job search & job readiness, bridging program, recruiting services, professional network)
 - Groups to socialize & meet others (for example, Women groups, senior café, Cooking group, music group)
 - Health services to stay healthy (for example, healthy living workshops, how to deal with stress, where to go when sick, Health centres, free dental services)
 - Housing services (for example, applying for housing, tenant services)
 - Income support (for example, government help for newcomers who need financial aid, social assistance, child subsidy, disability pension)
 - Language training (for example, free language classes for newcomers, job specific language learning programs, language literacy program)
 - Legal services/ support (for example, tenant support, applying for social assistance, legal representation at court, employment issues, immigration application)
 - Pre-arrival services (services provided online **before** coming to Canada to help with settling in Canada)
 - Programs to support my/ family education (for example, credential assessment, homework clubs, orientation to colleges and universities)
 - Settlement support services (for example, PR & immigration application, help with forms, information on how to settle in Canada, orientation to the Canadian life/culture/education system, Citizenship preparation)
 - Services for Child & Family (for example, Drop-in Day program for toddlers, Day care service, workshops for young parents)
 - Sports programs for children and adults (for example, Learn to swim or skate, Yoga classes, table tennis, soccer, baseball, summer camps)
 - Support & Recreation groups (for example, crisis support groups, therapy groups, health & wellness groups)
 - Others (Specify):
 - I have not heard about ANY of the above services

5. Which of the following free community services have you **used**? Check all that apply (copy same options as above)
- Employment services (for example, help with job search & job readiness, bridging program, recruiting services, professional network)
 - Groups to socialize & meet others (for example, women groups, senior café, Cooking group, music group)
 - Health services to stay healthy (for example, healthy living workshops, how to deal with stress, where to go when sick, Health centres, free dental services)
 - Housing services (for example, applying for housing, tenant services)

- Income support (for example, Government help for newcomers who need financial aid, social assistance, child subsidy, disability pension)
- Language training (for example, free language classes for newcomers, job specific language learning programs, language literacy program)
- Legal services/ support (for example, tenant support, applying for social assistance, legal representation at court, employment issues, immigration application)
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- Sports programs for children and adults (for example, Learn to swim or skate, Yoga classes, table tennis, soccer, baseball, summer camps)
- Support & Recreation groups (for example, crisis support groups, therapy groups, health & wellness groups)
- Others (Specify):
- I haven't used ANY of the above services

6. Did you select 2 or more options from the question above?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

(If the respondent checked "YES" to Q 6, respondent can skip to last section of the survey – Demographic Information")

7. If you did **not** use **any** of the above services, select the reasons why? (Please select all that apply).

- I didn't know about the services
- I am not eligible to use the services
- I can find all information I need online
- I have family/friends who help me
- I couldn't use the service because I don't speak English or French
- The staff does not speak my language
- I needed to take care of children
- I needed to take care of an aging parent or someone with a disability
- I am at work when the services are open
- The services are not useful to me
- Other.....

8. Did any other person in your family use any of the free community services for newcomers?

Yes		No		Not sure		Not applicable	
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9. If you have used **any service/s**, how did you hear about the service?

10. What service(s) do you need (now or in the past) that you **cannot** find near your home?

11. What would make it easier for you to use free community services for newcomers?

- If I can get the services online (Online chat with counsellor, etc.)
- If there is child care support while I use a service
- If the service is provided later in the evening or weekends
- If the staff is more friendly and understanding
- If the service gives me better information
- If the service is closer to my home
- If the staff speak my language
- If I get help to pay for TTC to get to appointments
- Other.....
- Other.....

12. What services did you use **before** coming to Canada that you cannot find in Canada?

Demographic Information

13. Gender: Male Female _____ Prefer not to say

14. Age: 18 – 19 20 – 30 31 – 40 41 – 50 51 - 60
 61 – 65 Over 65

15. Country of Origin: -----

16. What language/s do you speak? -----

17. Which Language do you speak most often at home? -----

18. Please tell us first three digits of your postal code: -----