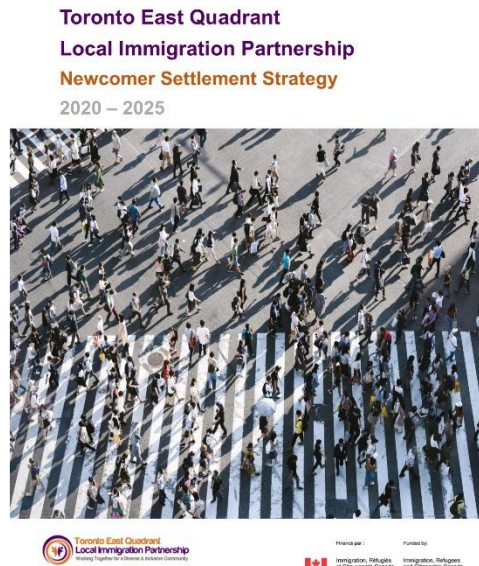


Toronto East Quadrant
Local Immigration Partnership
Project Evaluation Report
April 2020 – March 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION



The 2020-21 fiscal year was the year of planning for the five years newcomer settlement strategy development. This year was very unique as the entire country went through the COVID-19 pandemic. It led to major shutdowns and had a significant impact on our community, stakeholders, immigration, the way services are delivered, and on society overall. Following the decision taken by the Ontario Government and the Federal Government to implement safety measures including Emergency shut down, banning mass gatherings, and enforcing other safety measures to control COVID-19, the TEQ LIP conducted all planning meetings virtually.

This year's activities began with a community consultation, data review, and strategic planning. Towards the end of the year, the TEQ LIP worked on action planning, and the formation of Action Groups. The Partnership Council and the TEQ LIP team decided to continue with the four Action Groups for the next five years, implemented necessary changes including the emerging needs.

The Action Groups are

- **Access to Information**
- **Employment**
- **Health and Well-being**
- **Inclusion and Equity**

In addition to those key activities, the TEQ LIP continues to use existing communication tools (the E-Blast, Newsletter, Twitter) to organize annual capacity building and networking events (i.e. BRIDGES 2021 Collaboration Forum). The TEQ LIP also contributed to the Neighborhood Improvement Area planning tables, and various city-wide initiatives with the four quadrant LIPs and the City of Toronto Newcomer Office. This year, TEQ LIP also participated in the North and South Scarborough COVID-19 Cluster tables.

2. ABOUT THE TORONTO EAST QUADRANT LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

The Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) are the mechanisms through which the Federal Ministry of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) supports the development of local partnerships and community-based planning around the needs of newcomers.

The TEQ LIP was initiated in 2012 as an amalgam of four community-based LIPs and covers the geographic area of Scarborough. It is one of four Quadrant LIPs in Toronto. It seeks to involve diverse stakeholders in the partnership development process including service provider organizations, levels of government, school boards, professional associations, ethno-cultural organizations, faith-based organizations, the social services sectors, as well as the community at large.

TEQ LIP's Vision

Organizations and stakeholders across Scarborough are working together to build strong, inclusive and welcoming communities supporting newcomers' settlement success by fostering collaboration, partnerships, and equitable participation by all members.

Stated Outcomes of The TEQ LIP:

- To support better co-ordination and collaboration in the planning and delivery of integration services across multiple sectors, including settlement and language training in local communities;
- To provide a framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable local and regional solutions for the successful social and economic integration for newcomers;
- To strengthen local capacity to integrate newcomers in a manner that fosters improved labour market access, increased social inclusion, and the creation of sustainable welcoming communities for newcomers;
- To achieve improved newcomer outcomes as indicated by increased economic, social, political, and civic participation by newcomers.

As a multi-sectoral partnership at the local community level, stakeholders are engaged in actions that facilitate the integration of newcomers and promote inclusion by working collaboratively.

3. ABOUT THE 2020-2021 TEQ LIP EVALUATION

The TEQ LIP conducts an annual project evaluation that is designed to help assess to what extent the TEQ LIP is effective in achieving its stated outcomes and to identify areas of improvement. For the past four years, the evaluation was implemented as a joint evaluation with all Toronto LIPs, meaning that all four Quadrant LIPs used the same evaluation survey with their partners.

The evaluation aimed to assess the following:

- 1) TEQ LIP's impact on member agencies and changes made by partner organizations as a result of their involvement in TEQ LIP**
 - a. Increase in awareness of newcomers needs, settlement trends, services and gaps
 - b. Use of TEQ LIP resources and information in strategic planning and funding applications
 - c. Other changes in services delivery or design as a result of information received from TEQ LIP
- 2) TEQ LIP's impact on service coordination and formation of partnerships**
 - a. The development of new partnerships, both formal and informal, and how these relationships help organizations achieve their project outcomes
 - b. Increase in awareness of other service providers and their programs, and impact on service coordination
 - c. Increase in incoming and outgoing referrals
- 3) TEQ LIP's impact on communication and availability of information**
 - a. Effectiveness of TEQ LIP communication tools including the website, E-Blast, Twitter, and publications
 - b. Effectiveness of TEQ LIP meetings and events as sources of information about newcomer needs, settlement trends, and service gaps.
- 4) Conclusion: TEQ LIP strengths, promising practices and recommendations**
 - a. Overview and conclusion on three main evaluation areas
 - b. Recommendations for improvement

Evaluation Process and Tools

The evaluation was carried out using an anonymous online survey of TEQ LIP Action Group members and Partnership Council members and was sent to 107 recipients.

The evaluation survey was developed and implemented jointly by the four Toronto Quadrant LIPs to allow for shared learning. It is the same survey that was used in the previous three fiscal years to allow for comparison of outcomes and changes year over year. This evaluation report represents only responses collected from TEQ LIP members.

Evaluation Timeline

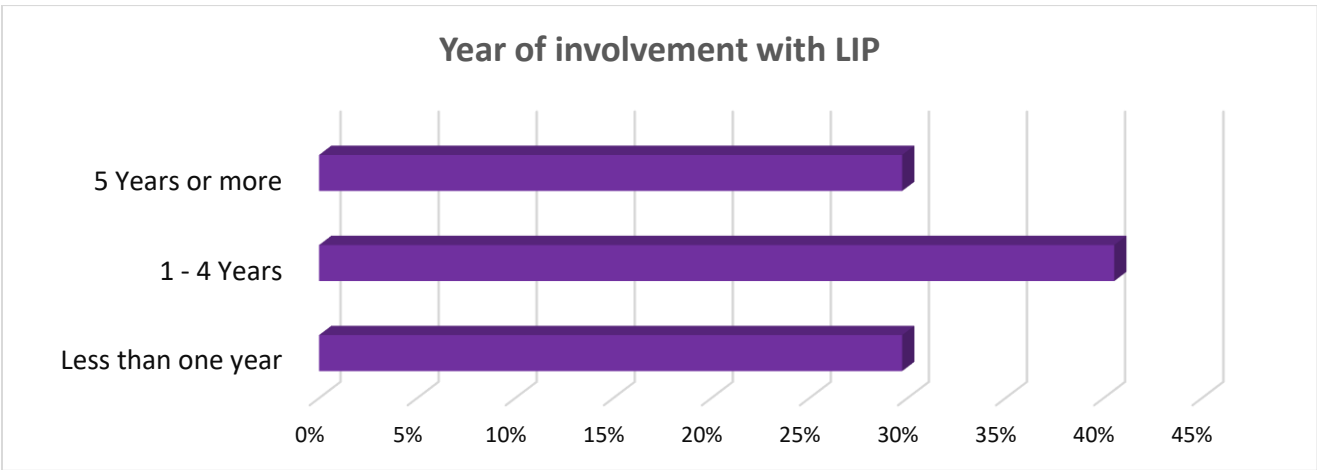
The online evaluation survey was carried out in Jan/Feb 2021 and was completed by a total of 37 participants representing a response rate of 32%.

Limitations of the Evaluation

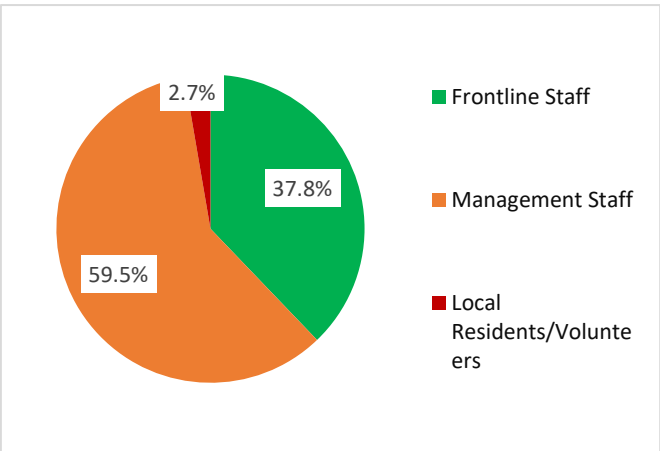
The annual TEQ LIP program evaluation is carried out by TEQ LIP staff, from survey administration to data analysis and report writing. The lack of resources to hire an outside evaluator means that the evaluation does not benefit from a perspective that is external to the program. The evaluation is limited in scope to measuring the impact on formal TEQ LIP partners and does not completely reflect the perspective of other stakeholders such as informal partners and event participants.

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS

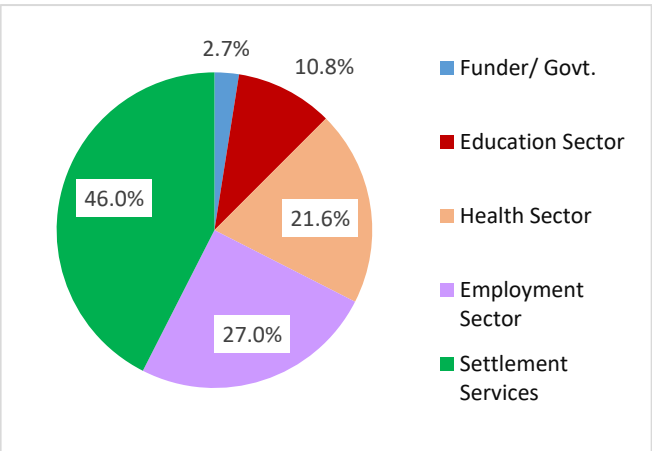
4.1 RESPONDENT INFORMATION



40% of survey respondents have been involved with the TEQ LIP between 1 - 4 years who have reasonable work experience and familiarity with the TEQ LIP. 30% of the respondents are very experienced and knowledgeable about TEQ LIP while another 30% of the respondents are new to LIP activities.



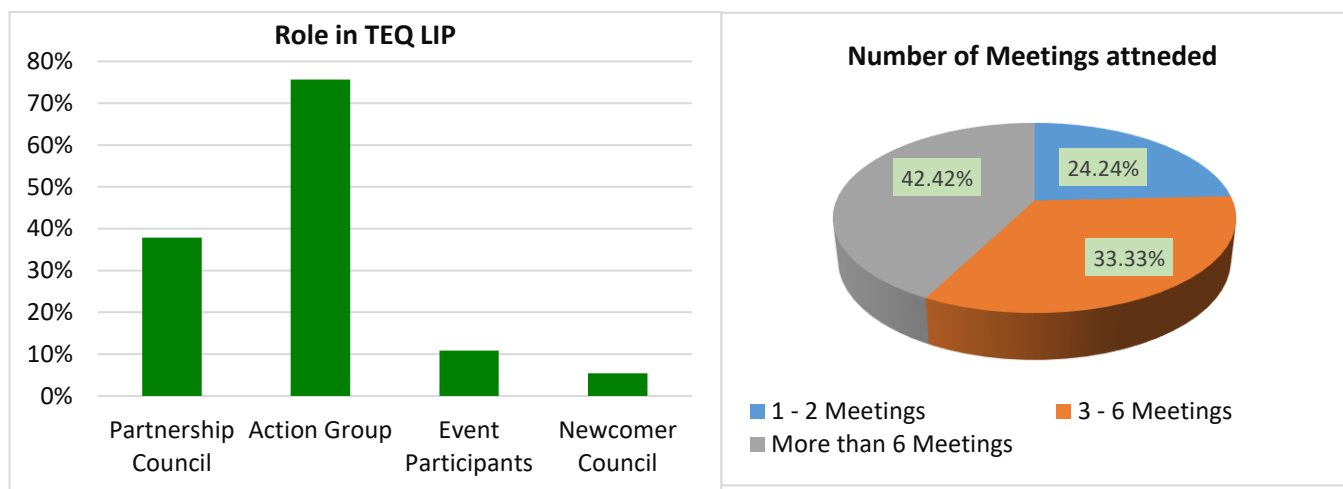
Respondents' position at their agencies



Respondents' sector

The charts below demonstrate that the respondents include a mix of front-line staff, management staff, immigrant community representatives (local residents and volunteers), and a range of sectors representation.

- 60% of respondents are managers/directors, 38% are front line staff, and only 3% are residents or volunteers. Compared to last year, more managers than the frontline staff participated in the survey.
- The settlement sector is the most represented at 46%, followed by the employment sector at 27%, health sector at 22%, followed by the education sector 11% and funders or government at 3%.
- 38% of respondents are members of the Partnership Council, 76% are members of an Action Group, 11% are event participants and 5% are Toronto Newcomer Council members (some are members of Action Group as well as the Partnership Council).
- Among the respondents, 42% have attended more than 6 meetings, 33% have attended 3 – 6 meetings and 24% have attended only one or two meetings.
- As the year 2020-2021 was a strategic planning year, partners were heavily involved in the planning process. Most of the Action Groups suspended their activities between July to November 2020. The strategic planning process that took over 8 months had an impact on number of meeting a LIP partner was able to attend in the past one year.



4.2 TEQ LIP'S IMPACT ON MEMBER AGENCIES AND CHANGES MADE BY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AS A RESULTS OF INVOLVEMENT IN TEQ LIP

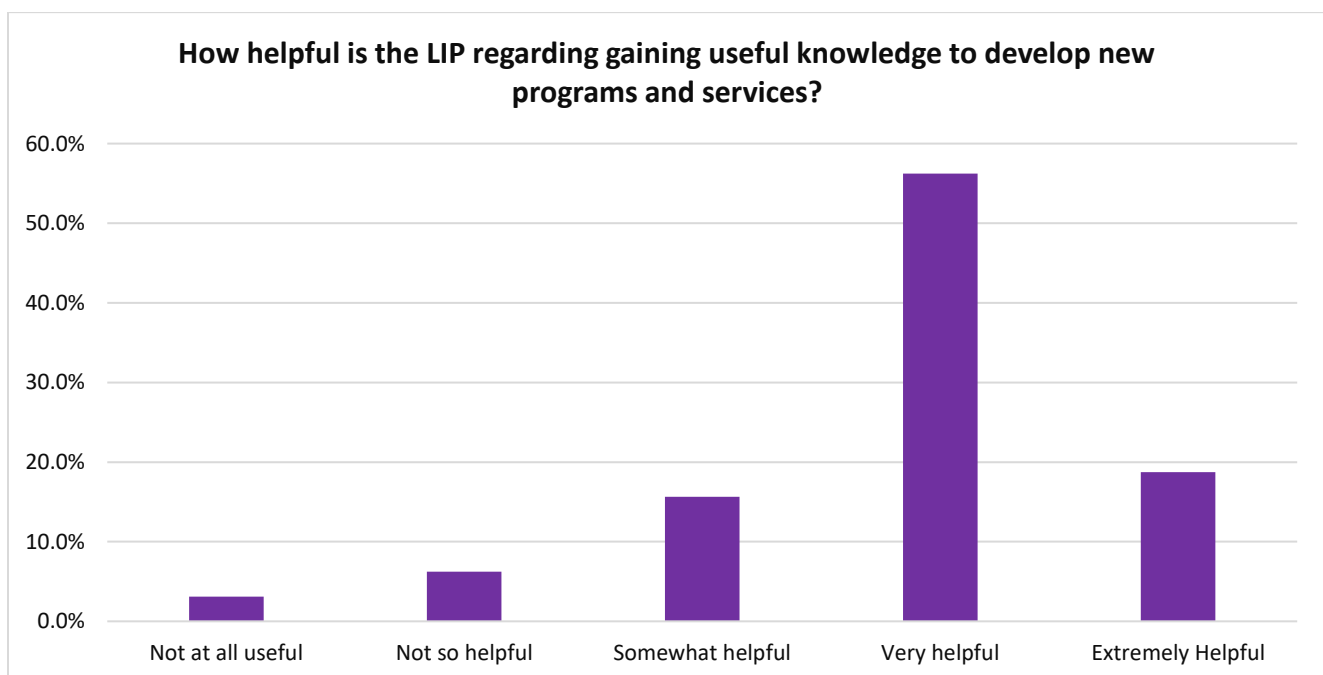
The TEQ LIP aims to be a source of information in Scarborough in such a way that will impact service providers from design of service to strategic planning by facilitating a better understanding of newcomer needs and gaps, and providing a wider awareness of other services offered in Scarborough. The TEQ LIP is committed to supporting its members through conducting community research and sharing best practices. When asked what they value about TEQ LIP, 92 % value *networking and*

information sharing opportunities and 76% said they valued the opportunity for collaboration and fostering partnerships. (This will be discussed in detail under 4.3)

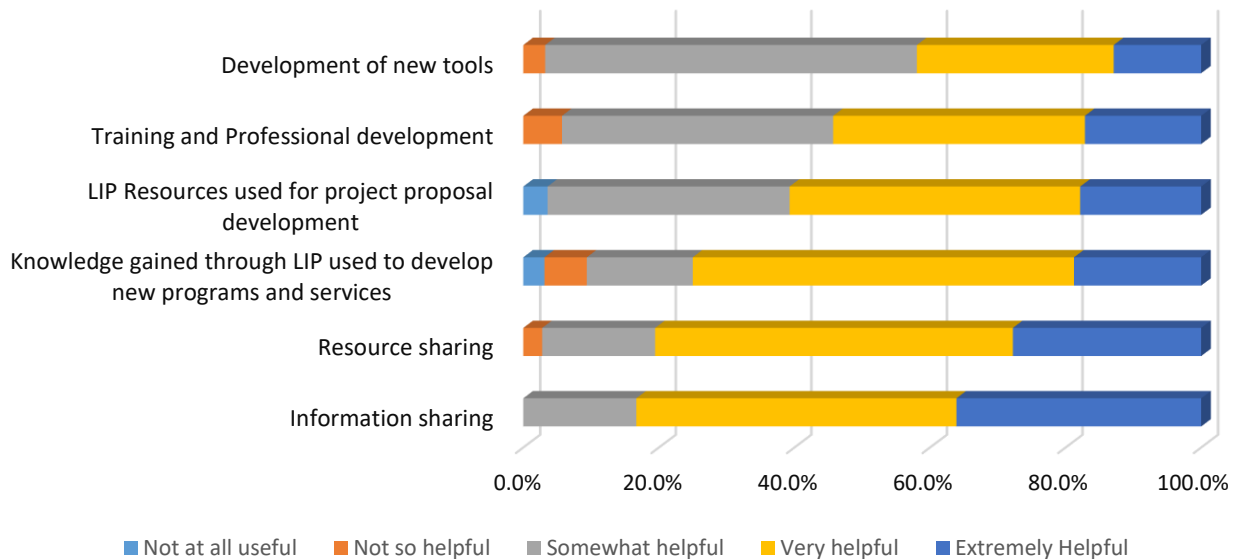
97% of respondents say that TEQ LIP has helped their organization increase awareness about newcomer needs through information sessions, publications, research and information sharing. This is 8% higher than the previous year.

How has the programming, planning, or service delivery of TEQ LIP partner organizations changed in the past year as a result of their involvement with TEQ LIP?

- 8% accessed new funding.
- 8% mentioned that their organization discontinued a program or service based on the information gathered from TEQ LIP.
- 24% started a new program or service in response to newcomers' needs.
- 24% changed the way a program or service is delivered to make it more accessible to newcomers and the same number of respondents mentioned that more programs are delivered in collaboration
- 38% of organizations are *more likely to take the services of other organizations into consideration when planning their own services and programs*



How helpful is the LIP to your organizations in these following areas?



The above chart helps us understand the LIP's usefulness in various areas indicated above.

- In most of the categories, 60% or more of respondents indicated that the LIP is *helpful to extremely helpful*. Regarding information and resource sharing, 83% or more indicated that the TEQ LIP is *helpful to extremely helpful*.
- The area with the highest proportion of low scores is *knowledge gained through LIP used to develop new programs and services* with 9% choosing not useful.

“Information and resource sharing is very helpful because then we can provide the most updated information to our clients.” –Survey Respondent

Responses of respondents on *specific activities, events or projects of the LIP that have benefited their organizations*:

- Information sharing helps to have better understanding on current needs of newcomers.
- The Newcomer Insight Collaborative is very promising
- Networking and sharing best practices
- LIP events, panel discussions and working group activities continuously benefit the partners.
- Data shared by SDI project and data analysis capacity building workshops.

4.3 TEQ LIP'S IMPACT /CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

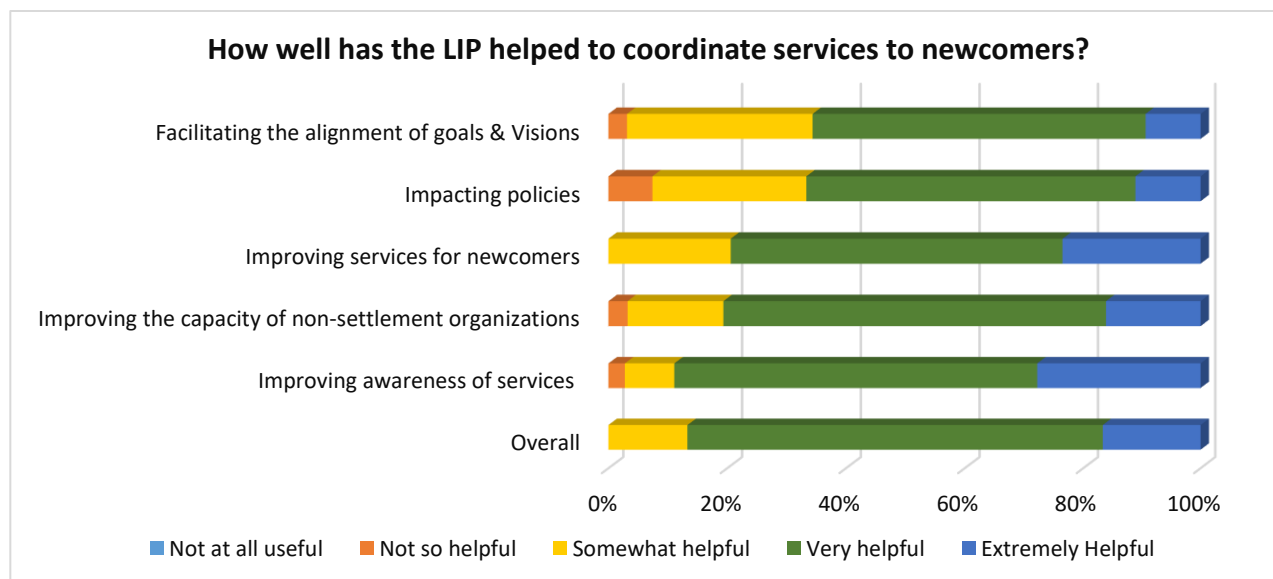
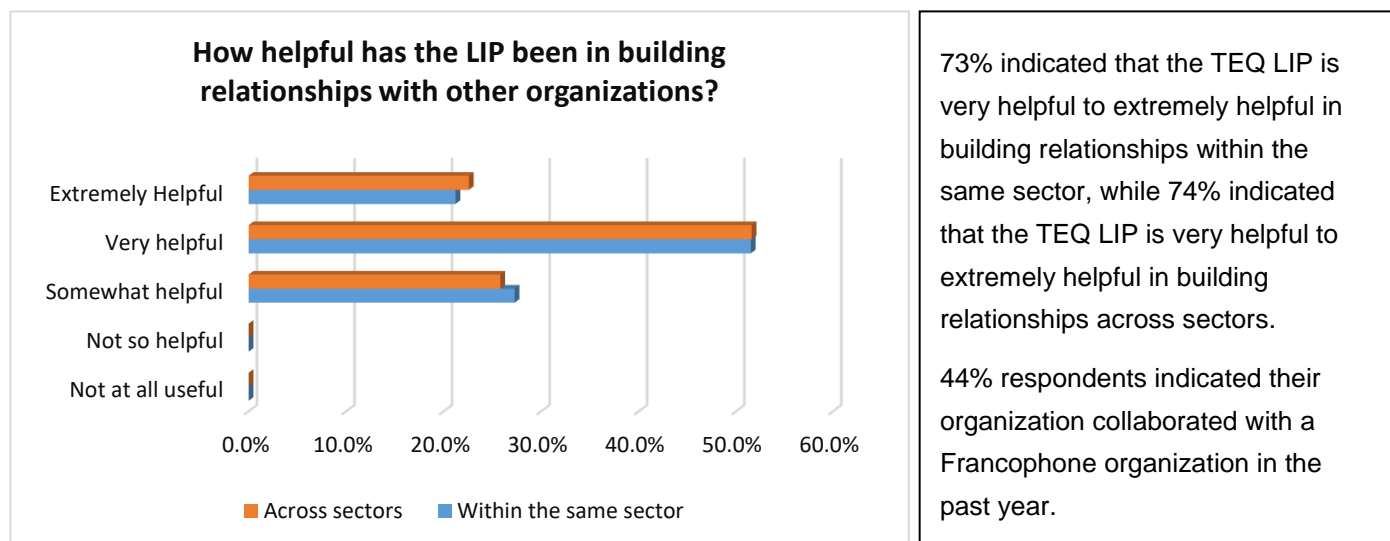
"Through referral from the LIP, I was able to form a partnership with another organization and host workshops at my own organization." –Survey Respondent

The TEQ LIP's chief aim is to improve the community services sector's ability to serve newcomers by facilitating partnerships, collaboration, and service coordination.

41% of online survey respondents answered that their organization partnered with another as a result of being involved in the LIP, for example, joint events, development of joint resources, space sharing etc.



- 41% offer *more programs jointly or in partnership with other organizations* as a result of involvement in the TEQ LIP, and 38% are *more likely to take other organizations' services into consideration when planning their own services* (60% and 54% in previous evaluation, respectively)
- 92% value the LIP's role in *providing opportunities for collaboration and fostering partnerships*.
- 76% mentioned that LIP created opportunity for collaboration and support fostering partnership in the same sector and across sector.
- 54% indicated that *referrals to other organizations have increased* compared to the previous three years (2019 -74%, 2018 - 60%, 2017 - 72%). This could be due to the pandemic which forced all the organizations to change the way that services are delivered. The LIP also used most of the time in strategy development where Action Groups have limited opportunity to meet on a regular basis.

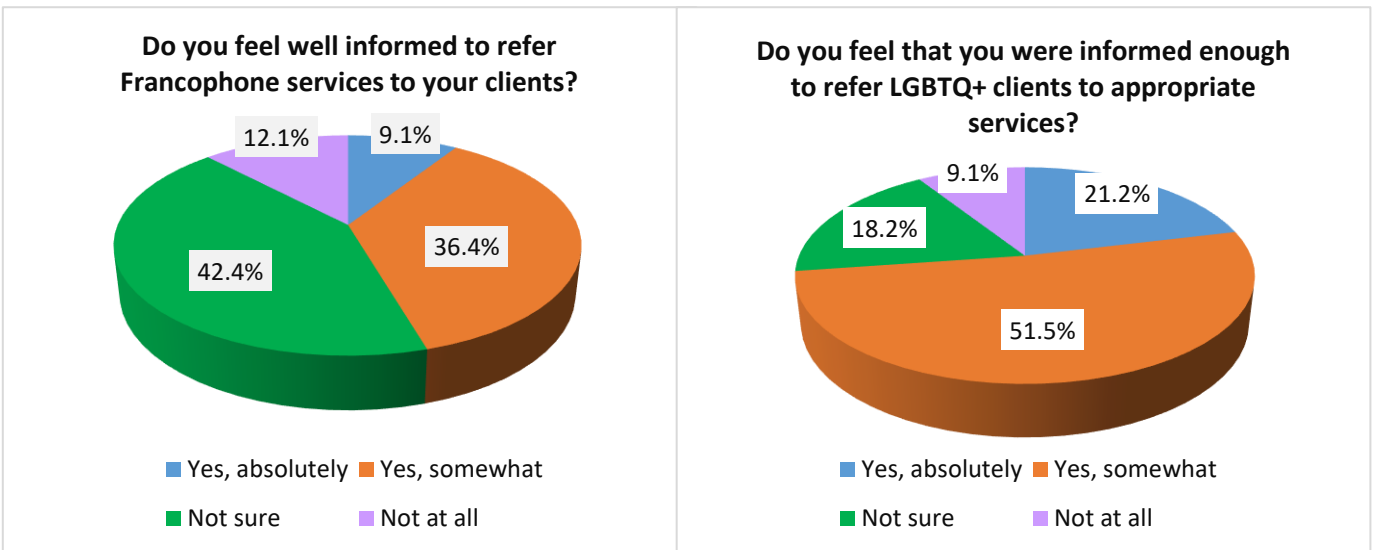


The above chart details how much the LIP has helped to coordinate services to newcomers.

- In every category, 60% or more of respondents chose either *very helpful* or *extremely helpful*. However, there is a decline in rating of “improving services for newcomers” and “facilitating the alignment of goals & visions”.
- *Impacting Policies* received the lower scores (67%) this year, however it is 7 percent higher than last year.
- This demonstrates that the TEQ LIP is very helpful in improving awareness of services and improving the capacity of non-settlement organizations.

Capacity of respondents to refer Francophone and LGBTQIA+ newcomers to appropriate services

Francophone newcomers and those that identify as LGBTQIA+ have been identified as an underserved group in Scarborough. Supporting awareness of needs and services for these groups has been a priority for TEQ LIP. To learn about the effect of these activities, the TEQ LIP asked respondents whether they would say that they felt informed enough to refer Francophone and LGBTQ+ newcomer clients to appropriate services.

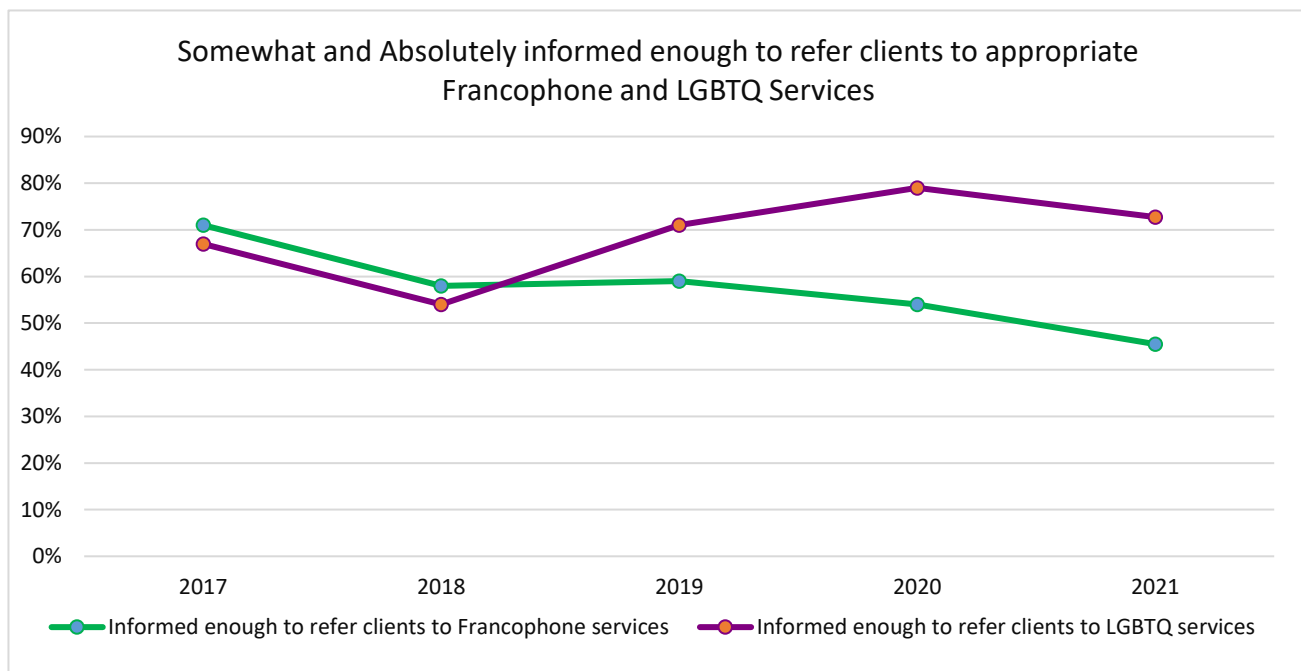


9% of respondents feel “absolutely” informed enough to refer Francophone clients to appropriate services, a decrease of 3% over last year’s survey, which represents 3 respondents. 36% of respondents indicated that they feel “somewhat” informed to refer clients, 6% less than last year. 12% respondents mentioned that they do not feel at that that they were well informed to refer Francophone services to their clients.

Regarding referral to LGBTQ services, 21% of respondents feel “absolutely” informed enough to refer LGBTQIA+ clients to appropriate services which is same as last year rating, and 52% feel “somewhat” informed, an increase of 6% from the previous year. On the other hand, 9% of respondents indicated that they were not informed at all. This has been the consistent rate for the last few years.

If you compare the last five years, Francophone services was rating higher at 71% and the rate has been declining continuously in the past five years. In 2016-17, TEQ LIP gave an acute focus on enhancing access to Francophone services and added a section on the website, and facilitated a Francophone committee to coordinate and promote Francophone services. Later, the committee started functioning separately and kept TEQ LIP updated on their services. The results clearly shows

that LIP should give more attention to connect Francophone services with other settlement and non-settlement services in the future.



On the other hand, the LGBTQ rating has been increasing except in 2018. The TEQ LIP has been continuously addressing the needs of this group, having conducted surveys and focus group discussions in the past, and sharing the results with LIP partners. This could be reflected in the responses collected through the survey.

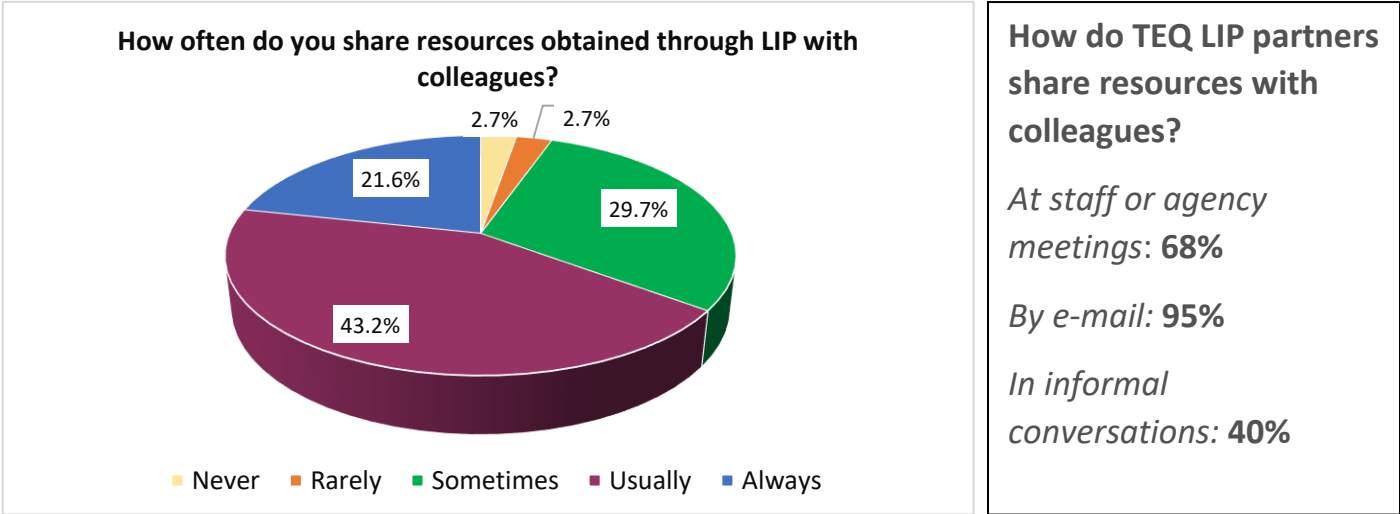
Ways in which the partnership you formed through TEQ LIP helped your agency to achieve your objectives

- Providing updated information and resources enable us to better serve our clients.
- Enabled us to understand basic needs of newcomers from different angles.
- It has been helpful to learn about emerging needs during the pandemic and learn from other agencies how to approach service delivery.
- Knowledge and information through TEQ LIP sharing helped to strengthen referral system.
- Information gathered from LIP helped to design projects and organize events.
- We were able to leverage knowledge and expertise from another organization without spending from our own budget.
- Able to connect with other organizations to address unique needs of clients, collaborating for service delivery.

4.4 TEQ LIP’S IMPACT ON COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING, AND EFFECTIVENESS OF TEQ LIP COMMUNICATION TOOLS

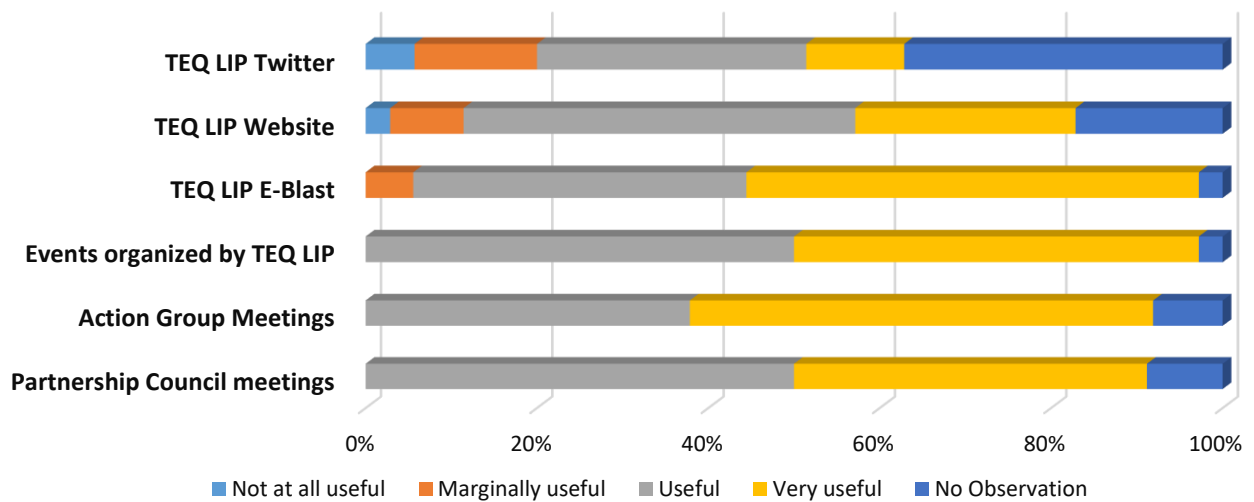
The TEQ LIP provides information to partners on emerging trends related to newcomer settlement, on services in the community, service gaps, and opportunities for service alignment. It also provides partners opportunities to share their information and network with others doing community work in Scarborough. A variety of tools are used to disseminate information such as the E-Blast, TEQ LIP website, in-person updates from TEQ LIP staff, partner information sharing in meetings, and social media.

92% of survey respondents indicated that they value the networking and information sharing opportunities provided by the TEQ LIP



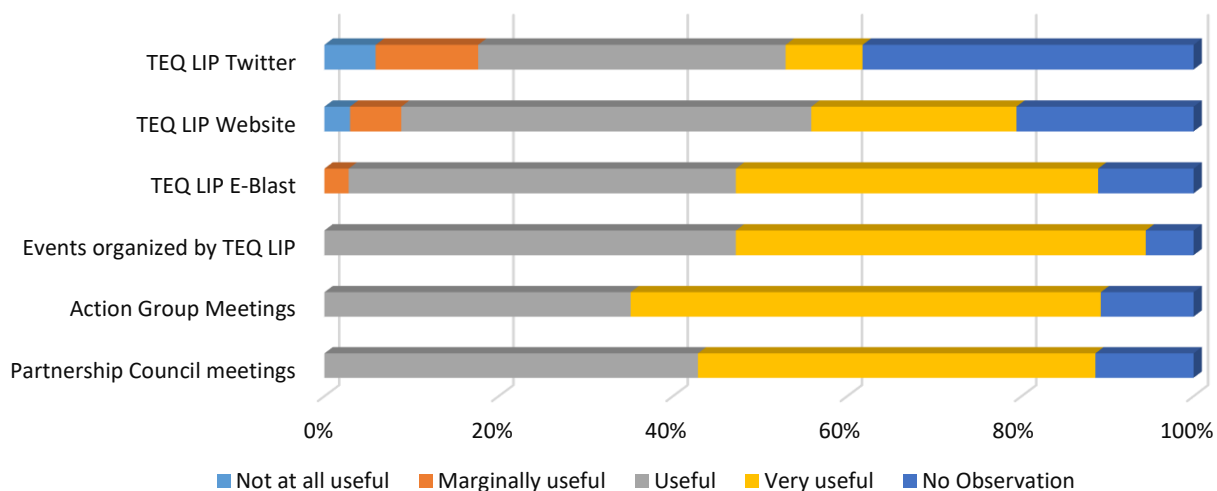
On the next page, we see the effectiveness of various TEQ LIP communication tools rated on their usefulness both as sources of information on trends related to newcomer settlement, and as sources of information regarding other services in the community, service gaps, and opportunities for service alignment.

How useful are the following TEQ LIP activities as sources of information ?



- Every communication tool, except for the *TEQ LIP Twitter*, was rated by the large majority (70% or more) of respondents as either “Useful” or “Very Useful”. Twitter retains a large proportion (37%) who indicate that they have “No Observation” regarding its usefulness, which is a slight decrease over the previous year (43%).
- The most valued source for information related to newcomer settlement trends is *Events Organized by TEQ LIP* (97%) followed by *Action Group meetings* (92%) and the *TEQ LIP E-Blast* (92%). All these areas showed a slight increase compared to last year.
- Similarly, the most valued as a source of information on services and gaps is *Events organized by TEQ LIP* (94%), followed closely by *Action Group meetings* (89%) and *Partnership Council* (89%). Partners seem to be gathering more information from events, Partnership Council and Action Groups as well as from the formal communication tool such as e-blast.

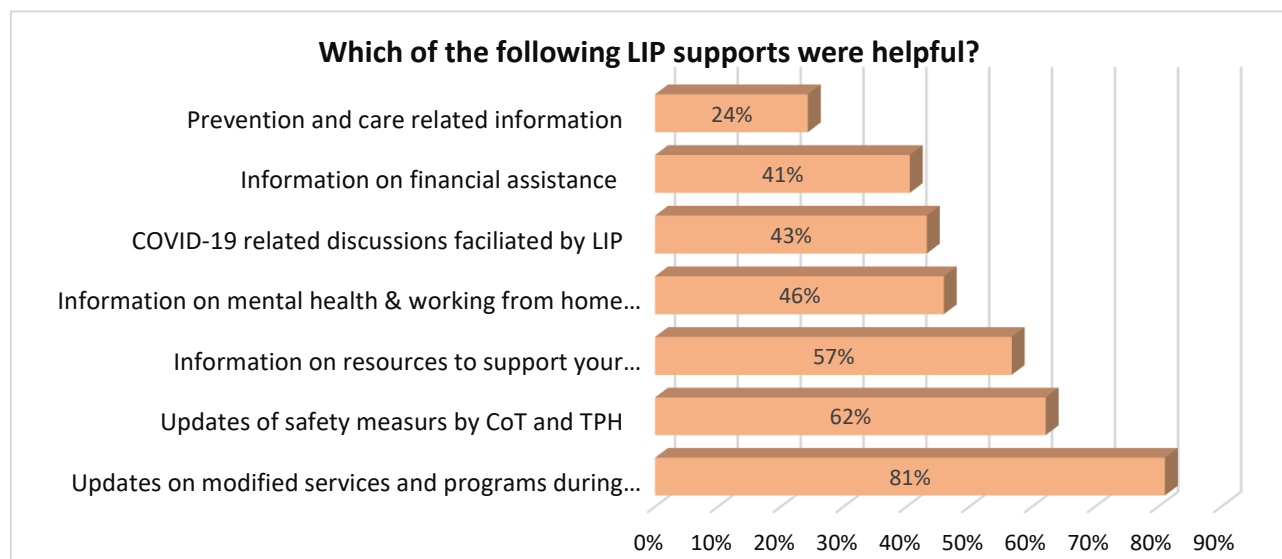
How useful are TEQ LIP events and activities as sources of information regarding service gaps and opportunities for service alignment?



4.5 TEQ LIP'S CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND SERVICE COORDINATION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

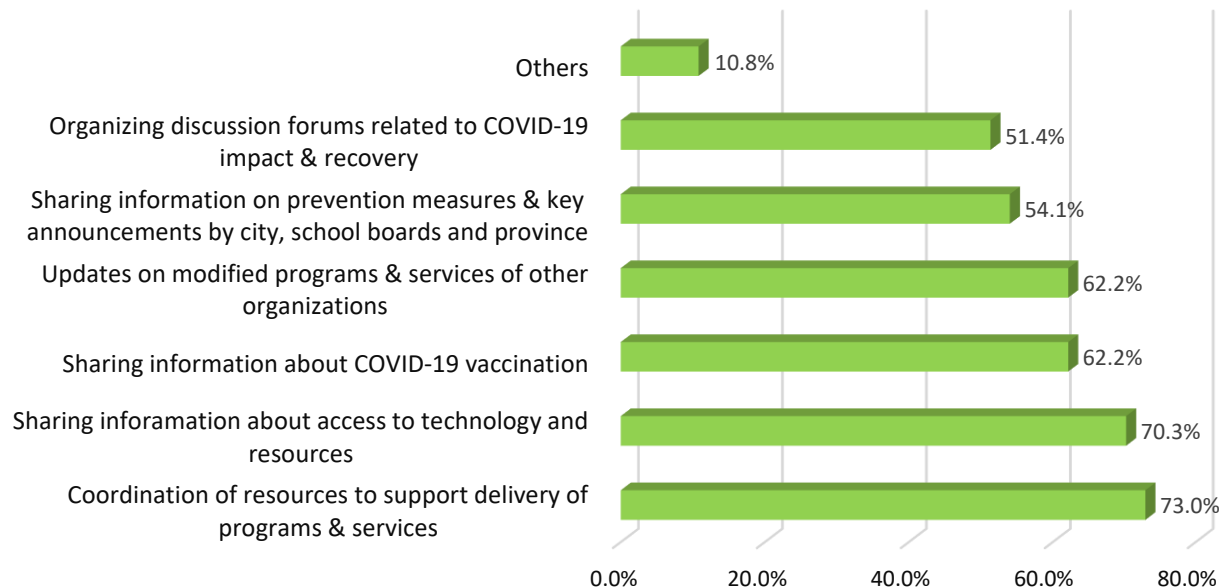
COVID-19 pandemic emerged, led to major shutdowns and had a significant impact since April 2020 on our community and stakeholders, immigration, the way services are delivered, and on society overall. As requested by all three levels of governments, all the organizations in Scarborough have had to limit personal interactions, suspend or cancel larger events, and are using modified work arrangements to ensure the health and safety of their staff and clients.

On the other hand, clients were badly hit by the pandemic as the changes adopted by the government impacted employment, mental health, and housing. The TEQ LIP has committed to providing updates on modified services, income support for immigrants and small businesses, and conducted surveys to provide updates on the emerging needs to LIP partners. There were five surveys conducted in the past year. This section presents the assessment on LIP support during the pandemic.



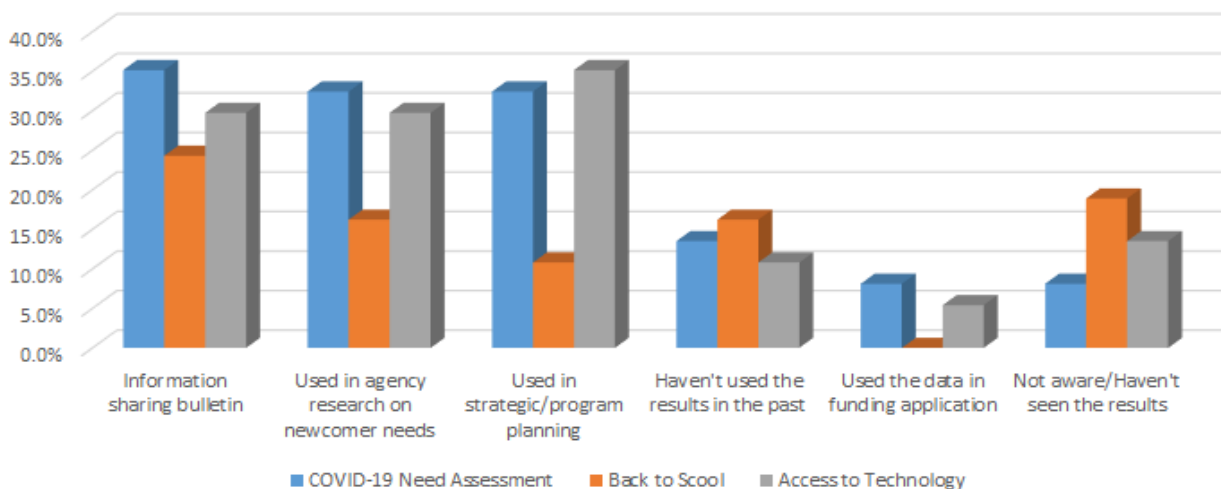
- 81% of the respondents mentioned that the updates on modified services and programs during pandemic was very useful to serve their clients.
- 62% of respondents valued LIP support to get updates from the City of Toronto and Toronto Public Health on a regular basis, and 57% mentioned that the information on resources obtained through the LIP helped the day-to-day operations of their organizations.
- Respondents mentioned that they expect the LIP to coordinate resources to support program and service delivery (73%) and to continue to share information about access to technology and resources (70%)
- 62% expect the LIP to share information on COVID-19 vaccination and updates on modified programs and services of other organizations in Scarborough.

What type of support do you hope to get from LIP in the coming months ?



- It was also recommended to create opportunities to deepen collaborative work with other settlement/employment agencies on the level of community-wide strategy for workforce development.
- Among three services conducted last year, COVID-19-related emerging newcomer needs assessment survey results and access to technology survey results, used more in agency research on newcomer needs for strategic and program planning, than the Back to school survey results.
- Over 25% of respondents mentioned that they have shared the information with their networks through their information bulletins.

How LIP partners used COVID-19 related surveys in 2020-2021

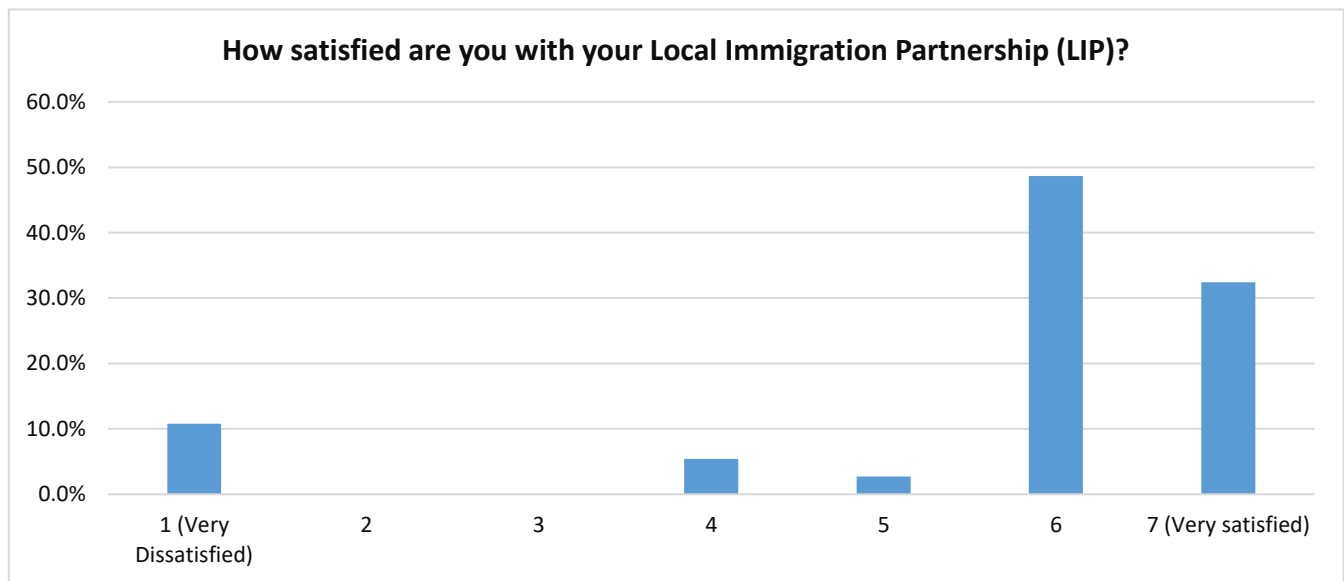


Electronic Communication and Social Media

- The **@TEQ_LIP Twitter account** continues to gain followers, currently at 838, which is an increase from 754 in the 2019-20 fiscal year, 649 in 2018-19 fiscal year, and 505 in 2017-18. The account is followed by other LIPs, service provider organizations, political representatives, community members, and other stakeholders in the settlement sector such as journalists and researchers, indicating that it is a useful means of communication for stakeholders and community members outside of the formal TEQ LIP partnerships.
- The **TEQ LIP E-Blast** continues to be widely distributed with 500 subscribers, which is the same as the 2019-20 fiscal year (482 subscribers in 2018-19 and 427 in 2017-18). Though there were 23 new subscribers, the number of people who unsubscribed from the list for various reasons such as moving to another region, joining different types of employment sectors, etc. As indicated above, a comparison to last year's survey shows an increase of those that indicate it a "Very Useful" source of information (91%).
- The **TEQ LIP website** continues to be rated as a useful tool, however, some respondents still chose "No Observation" which indicated that a certain percentage (17%) of TEQ LIP partners are not familiar enough with the website to judge whether it is a useful source of information while 25% find it "Very Useful". Website traffic has decreased by 30% compared to the previous year.

5. CONCLUSION: TEQ LIP STRENGTHS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

When asked “How satisfied are you with your LIP?”, 32% of respondents indicated that they were “Very Satisfied”, choosing 7 on a 7-point scale with this rating being the same as the previous year’s survey (2019-20). However, the number of respondents who chose either 6 or 7 on the scale remained relatively stable over the past four years (81%, 72%, 77%, and 79% respectively).



1) TEQ LIP’s impact on member agencies and changes made by partner organizations as a result of involvement in the TEQ LIP

75% of respondents indicated that the LIP is helpful (5) to extremely helpful (7) in terms of *providing knowledge that agencies use to develop new programs and services*. Partners value the TEQ LIP as a source of information for newcomer needs and trends. They use this information in understanding newcomer demographic data in their catchment area, the complexity of newcomer issues in marginalized communities (i.e. LGBTQ+, seniors, individuals with disability, etc.), and existing services. The past one year period was very unique as the residents and service providers went through the pandemic. 81% of the respondents mentioned that the updates on modified services and programs during the pandemic was very helpful to their organizations.

There was a further decrease in the number of members this year (54%) that indicated that the TEQ LIP is very helpful to their organization by providing *training and professional development support* (down from 65%).

Overview and conclusions on three main areas of evaluation

There is still a lot of opportunity for improvement in terms of the TEQ LIP's impact on member agencies. Compared to the past three years, the impact of effective referral practices have decreased this year by 20%. However, there were positive responses related to "changes to services as a result of involvement in LIP" with scores having improved slightly (24%). Only 8% indicated that they *accessed new funding (last year – 16%)*, a significant decrease from last year (8%), 34% *started a new program or service* in response to newcomers' needs identified through participating in the TEQ LIP, and 22% *changed a key design element of a service*, a significant increase from last year's 2%.

2) TEQ LIP's impact on service coordination and formation of partnerships

A consistent theme in survey responses is that partners value the TEQ LIP for opportunities to meet representatives from other service providers in Scarborough, learn about their services, and in forming working relationships. Respondents rate the TEQ LIP very highly in terms of its helpfulness in building relationships to other organizations within the same sector and across sectors.

41% of LIP partners indicate that they have formed a partnership because of being involved in the TEQ LIP, and the majority reported an increase in referrals, in referral effectiveness, and an increase in the likelihood that they will take other services into consideration while planning their own.

In this focus area, we measure service providers' awareness of other service providers and their programs, which includes knowledge of appropriate services for underserved groups such as Francophone and LGBTQIA+ newcomers. The numbers of partners who feel they have adequate knowledge to refer LGBTQIA+ newcomers increased since 2018 and there is a slight drop (73%) in 2020-21 (2017-18 – 54%; 2018-19 – 71% & 2019-20 – 79%) The changes in program delivery during the pandemic and LIP's concentration on strategic planning could have been contributing factors for this declined rate.

Since 2017, there is a declining trend observed where members feel they are well informed to refer their clients to most appropriate Francophone services in Scarborough. However, the rate of working in partnership with Francophone services has been increasing since 2017 (16% in 2017-18 to 22% in 2018-19 and 21% in 2019-20), and last year, it was 44%. This is more than a 100% increase from previous year rating. However, LIP should give more attention to connect with Francophone services and making more connections. Information of existing Francophone services should be made available to the LIP membership.

3) TEQ LIP's impact on communication and availability of information

The TEQ LIP has continued to reliably share information with a variety of tools and methods – the E-Blast, TEQ LIP Website, Twitter, Newsletter, and information sharing and updates in Action Groups and Partnership Council Meetings. All of the communication pathways were assessed as "useful" or "very useful" by a majority of respondents, with the exception of Twitter.

Twitter continued to have a lower score in being a source of information to learn about new and emerging trends related to newcomers' settlement. While Partnership Council Meetings, Action Group meetings, Events organized by LIP, and the E-Blast remain as very effective (rated above 90%) sources of information to learn about emerging trends. Though the LIP website was rated over 90%, the rate declined by 20%. While the Partnership Council meetings and the Action Group meetings are serving only the LIP partners, the E-Blast, Twitter, and events organized by LIP, is serving a larger size audience. The E-blast, in particular, is shared with nearly 500 individuals. Therefore, the depth of the impact created by those communications among the non-LIP membership cannot be measured with this partner survey.

Recommendations

- There is a clear and persistent need to increase awareness on programs and services provided by organizations who serve Francophone and LGBTQ newcomers to enhance effective referrals and service coordination. Special attention should be given to connect with Francophone services networks of Scarborough and invite the network representatives to provide updates periodically.
- Similarly, the LIP should address other newcomer groups identified during the strategic planning process last year. The LIP should continue to help LIP member agencies to learn about emerging needs and ongoing challenges faced by newcomers in their settlement process.
- Continue offering consistent and reliable information in a diversity of communication channels that target different audiences use, i.e. email, E-Blast, TEQ-LIP website, Twitter, and the TEQ-LIP Newsletter. Special attention should be given to increase the Twitter presence as many LIP memberships have increased using social media in the past two years.
- TEQ LIP website has been functioning as an effective communication tool and had more traffic in the past. However, the traffic has reduced in the past two years. Therefore, the LIP team should explore ways in which more TEQ LIP members could engage with the TEQ LIP website. Revamping the website to make it more informative and make it easier to navigate would help to increase website traffic and will function as an effective source of information.
- Though the TEQ LIP is rated high for information sharing and resource sharing, and functions as a source of information to develop new programs and services, it is rated low in supporting training and professional development of member organizations. It is recommended to invest time to explore the training and capacity needs of LIP members and facilitate capacity building activities in the future.
- As the TEQ LIP enters into a new project cycle and starts implementing a new implementation plan from April 2021, and based on the responses to the survey, as well as specific comments

provided by respondents, it is recommended to revisit the evaluation process and modify the survey to suit the focus areas as specified in the strategic plan.

More responses from the online survey: *How can the LIP be more relevant to your organization?*

- Bring in more joint capacity-building opportunities and workshops for agency staff
- Consistent and relevant professional development opportunities for service provider staff and most especially provide more seat allocations so that our frontline workers can also benefit from it.
- Create more opportunities to LIP members to share information on their resources and services.
- Increase networking opportunities and resource sharing.
- Invite Employers and other sector representatives to LIP meetings.
- Providing more information and resources about newcomer women and girls
- Strengthen inter-LIP connections to support our initiatives with program expansion to other areas.

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