

The County of Lambton

Community Plan

for Positive Immigration Outcomes
(2026-2030)





The Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership is an initiative funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and housed within the Corporation of the County of Lambton

Funded by:

Financé par :



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada



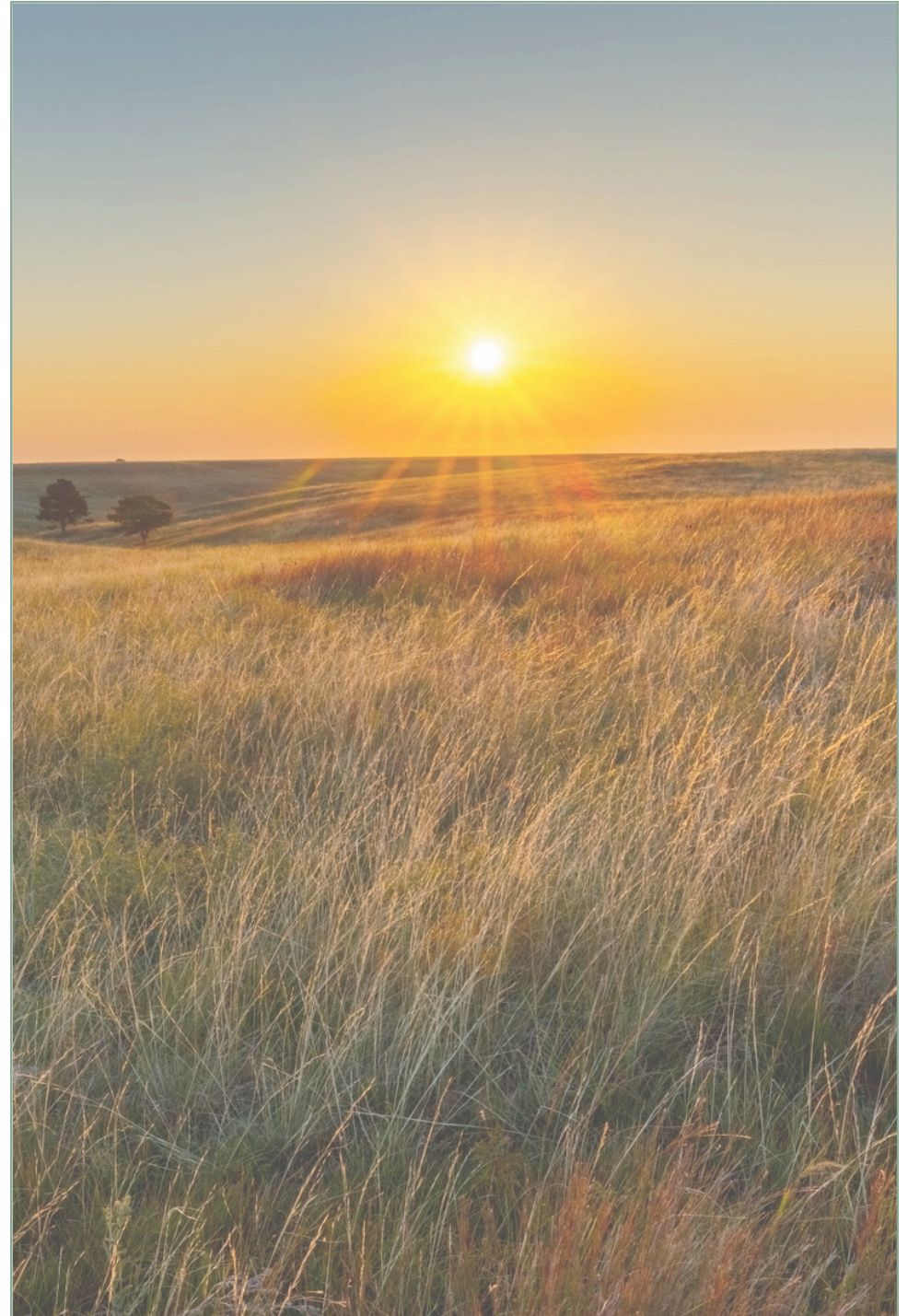
Acknowledgement of Ancestral Lands

We acknowledge that the Chippewa, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples, referred to collectively as the Anishinaabeg, inhabited these lands at the time of transfer to the Crown by treaty. Lambton County was part of the Huron Tract Purchase, which was transferred under Treaty #29 in 1827, and also includes lands associated with the Sombra Township

Purchase transferred under Treaty #7 in 1796, and Long Woods Purchase transferred under Treaty #21 in 1819. We also acknowledge the earlier Indigenous people who travelled these lands in the time of the Wampum treaties.

We acknowledge that we are all treaty people, with our own set of rights and responsibilities. Treaties are a foundational part of our society, and the settlement of Lambton County within a treaty area was made possible through the treaty process. The existence of treaties is proof that the first settlers of what is now Canada acknowledged First Nations as sovereign people and negotiated Nation to Nation. By understanding the colonial history of Canada we can renew our relationships with each other and move towards meaningful reconciliation.

Further, it is through the connection of the Anishinaabeg with the spirit of the land, water and air that we recognize their unique cultures, traditions, and values. Today, we are part of this same land that sustains all life, and it is the sacred responsibility of all people to ensure that the environment remains protected. Finally, we acknowledge that the inherent languages of the Anishinaabeg preclude any English/French meaning.



- **Immigrant:** a person who has settled permanently in another country.
- **Convention Refugee:** a person who meets the refugee definition in the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. A person must be outside their country of origin and have a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.
- **Migrant:** a person who is outside their country of origin. It is used for people currently on the move or people with temporary status or no status at all.
- **Newcomer:** a general term for a person living in Canada for less than five years. It can include permanent residents, refugees and temporary residents like international students or migrant workers.
- **Permanent Resident:** a person granted the right to live permanently in Canada. The person may have come to Canada as an immigrant or as a refugee. Permanent residents who become Canadian citizens are no longer permanent residents.
- **Protected Person:** according to Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, a person who has been determined to be either (a) a Convention Refugee or (b) a person in need of protection (including for example, a person who is in danger of being tortured if deported from Canada)
- **Refugee:** a person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is located outside of their home country
- **Temporary Resident:** a person who has permission to remain in Canada only for a limited period of time. Visitors and students are temporary residents, and so are temporary foreign workers such as agricultural workers and live-in caregivers.

The Case for Local Immigration



Aging Population



Declining Birthrates



Departure of Youth



From July 2023 to July 2024 immigrants accounted for 104% of the population increase in the County

Net loss from decline in natural growth

Number of people that passed on were more than the number of newborns.

↓ (-) 523

Net loss from people leaving to other provinces

Out-migration from Lambton County to other provinces exceeded in-migration from other provinces.

(-) 169 →

Net growth from people coming in from other locations in Ontario

In-migration to Lambton County from within Ontario exceeded out-migration to other locations in Ontario.

← 590

Net growth from international migration

More immigrants moved into Lambton County than local residents who left Canada.

↑ 2,657

In 2023/24, as a result of immigration, Lambton County's population grew by 1.8%



Total Immigrant Population in Lambton County

12,195

2021 Census

9.7% of total population



Recent Immigrants to Lambton County

970

2016-2021

0.8% of total population

Top 3 Countries of Origin

Established Immigrants



United Kingdom



United States



Netherlands

Recent Immigrants

India



Philippines



Jamaica



More than

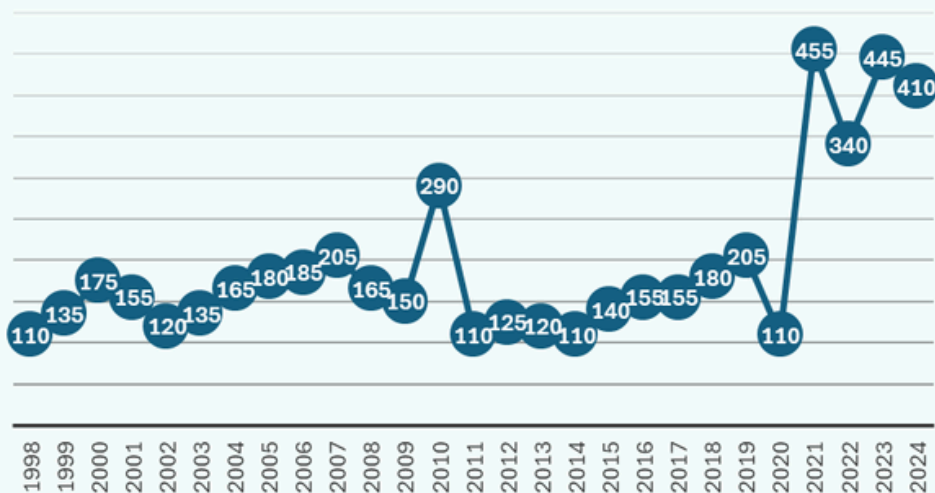
85%

of immigrants in Lambton County reside in

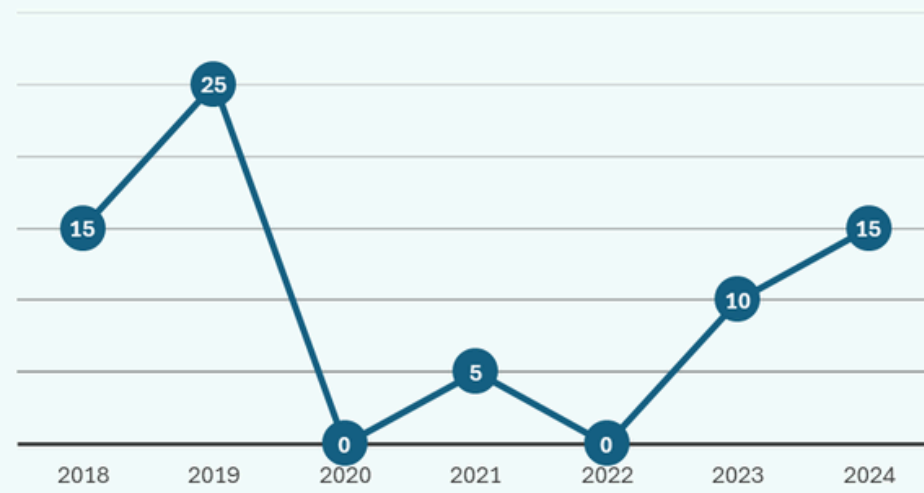
Sarnia

Based on the 2021 census data published by Statistics Canada

Permanent Residents Immigrating to Lambton County



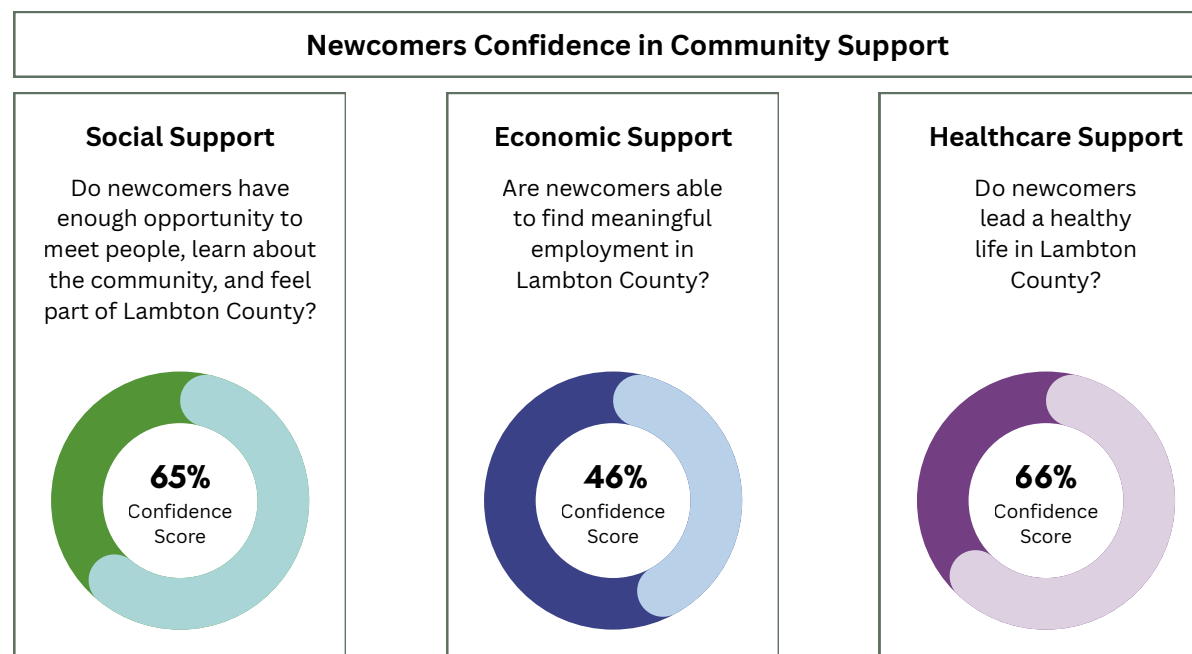
Convention Refugees Resettled in Lambton County



Source: IRCC, Research and Data Branch, Permanent Residents, December 31, 2024 data

Perceptions of Settling in Sarnia-Lambton			
Appeal	Strong Sense of Safety 	Affordable Housing 	Reasonable Cost of Living 
	Integrated Services 	Diversity 	Entrepreneurial Opportunities 
Areas for Growth			

Based on responses to a 2025 survey provided by 20 service providers from the settlement, employment, education and health sectors in Lambton County



Based on 25 responses to a newcomer survey administered in 2025 by the Local Immigration Partnership

The confidence score indicates whether newcomers feel they have the necessary support within the community to integrate successfully. A score of 100 indicates that newcomers are highly confident that they have all the support they need to be successful in maintaining their social, economic, physical and mental well-being.



Established in 2009, the Sarnia-Lambton Local Immigration Partnership is a network of local organizations focused on ensuring that newcomers have the necessary welcome and support to contribute positively to the social and economic vitality of Lambton County. The partnership is funded by the federal government through Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and housed within the Social Services Division of the Corporation of the County of Lambton.



Vision

Activate the social and economic potential of newcomers to Lambton County



Mission

Sustain the welcoming characteristics of Lambton County



Goal

Forge meaningful community partnerships for the successful integration of newcomers in Lambton County



Values



Collaboration

Working together across sectors to build strong partnerships that support immigrant integration



Equity

Fair access to services, opportunities, and resources for all recognizing and addressing systemic barriers



Inclusivity

Fostering a community where all newcomers feel valued and respected



Adaptability

Creative problem solving and continuous learning to improve settlement outcomes



Accountability

Impact assessment and reporting



Sustainability

Strategic planning of activities for long term impact



THE LOCAL IMMIGRATION COUNCIL: PARTNERS ACROSS SECTORS WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT NEWCOMERS



The 2026-30 Community Plan is anchored on the County of Lambton's vision to build an innovative and collaborative community of people stewarding the environment and growing together. The plan aims to strengthen the local agenda to successfully integrate newcomers and focuses on: showcasing Lambton County's welcoming characteristics, mobilizing newcomers' skills and innovation, and promoting health and wellbeing for a growing community.

Showcase Lambton County's
Welcoming Characteristics

Working closely with settlement organizations such as the YMCA and the Francophone Community Centre as well as the County of Lambton's libraries and museums and other partners, the Local Immigration partnership aims to bolster cultural events in the community to sustain the welcoming and inclusive characteristics of Lambton County. To deepen newcomers' understanding of the community, the partnership also intends to facilitate newcomers' interaction with Indigenous culture and heritage as well as local history.

Mobilize**Newcomers' Skill and Innovation**

Recognizing the important role that newcomers have in addressing labour shortages, the Local Immigration Partnership, in collaboration with the Workforce Development Board and the Economic Partnership will facilitate dialogue in Lambton County between employment service providers, local employers, and newcomers around key challenges in integrating newcomers into the local economy.

The partnership recognizes self-employment as another important avenue for integrating newcomers into the local economy. Newcomers may face challenges to own and operate businesses in their new communities. Among these are lack of knowledge about regulations and support programs. Working closely with the Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Enterprise Centre, the Local Immigration Partnership, will engage newcomer businesses and entrepreneurs to facilitate their productivity and contribution to the local economy.

Promote**Health and Wellbeing for Newcomers**

Promoting the physical and mental health of newcomers plays an important role in maintaining the community's overall health and ensuring efficient use of health resources. The Local Immigration Partnership, in close collaboration with health partners such as Lambton Public Health, Bluewater Health and North Lambton Community Health Centre, will work to raise newcomers' awareness of health resources in the community and promote healthy living in Lambton County.

Strategic Focus

1

Showcase Lambton County's Welcoming Characteristics

Sustain community events that facilitate cultural exchange

- Take stock of ongoing cultural events in the community
- Streamline community resources and effort around key cultural events
- Coordinate a whole-of-community participation at the local edition of the nationally celebrated Welcoming Week

Bolster newcomers' knowledge of social services

- Facilitate newcomers' engagement with social service providers
- Coordinate information sessions around social issues of relevance or concern for newcomers
- Organize facility tours to encourage newcomers' better understanding of social services in the community

Advance newcomers' awareness and knowledge of local history and heritage

- Orient newcomers to Indigenous history and culture
- Coordinate newcomers' participation at community events celebrating Canadian history and heritage
- Facilitate newcomers' participation at museum and library events
- Promote local volunteer opportunities for newcomers

Strengthen social support for newcomers and promote success stories

- Facilitate professional development opportunities for social service workers focused on understanding the newcomer context
- Review newcomers' engagement with social services, address challenges, and promote success stories
- Review local data to understand the social context of newcomers to Lambton County

Strategic Focus

2

Mobilize Newcomers' Skill and Innovation

Set the agenda for newcomer's involvement within the local economy

- Facilitate employment service providers' understanding of the newcomer context and their role within the local economy
- Review newcomers' involvement in the local economy, address challenges, and promote success stories

Bolster newcomers' knowledge of employment and entrepreneurship support

- Facilitate newcomers' engagement with employment and business service providers through fairs and facility tours
- Coordinate information sessions around economic issues of relevance or concern for newcomers

Strengthen newcomer businesses and their contribution to the local economy

- Take stock of newcomer businesses in the community and identify challenges and opportunities for growth
- Facilitate networking opportunities for newcomer businesses and highlight their contribution to the local community

Strategic Focus

3

Promote Health and Well-being for Newcomers

Promote a healthy lifestyle for newcomers

- Orient newcomers to existing and emerging physical and mental health issues in the community
- Promote healthy diet and exercise options in the community

Bolster newcomers knowledge of the local healthcare system

- Facilitate newcomers' engagement with healthcare providers
- Organize facility tours to encourage newcomers' better understanding of healthcare in the community

Develop an understanding of newcomers health priorities

- Facilitate healthcare providers understanding of the newcomer context
- Review local data to understand the health context of newcomers in Lambton County

The local community provides settlement support to newcomers through organizations such as the YMCA and the centre communautaire francophone. Other community service providers such as Lambton College and North Lambton Community Health Centre provide specialized support for international students and migrant workers. Beyond direct services, the Local Immigration Partnership facilitates a whole-of-community engagement in supporting permanent residents, refugees, and protected persons.

The partnership works collaboratively with local organizations, across sectors, to sustain the welcoming and inclusive characteristic of the community. Its purpose is to raise awareness about the importance of immigration for the community and to review the capacity of local services to support the successful integration of newcomers. The partnership also monitors the evolving needs of newcomers and facilitates a collaborative dialogue amongst service providers focused on mobilizing support where required.

The Local Immigration Partnership presents this community plan to guide Lambton County's collective effort to support newcomers and facilitate positive immigration outcomes for the community over the coming five years. The plan has benefitted from extensive research conducted together with the Network for Economic and Social Trend (NEST) of Western University and substantial consultation with 30 local organizations. It matches research recommendations with local priorities and capacity. The partnership extends its sincere gratitude for the expertise and encouragement from the community to develop and launch the plan.

LAMBTON COUNTY'S COMMUNITY PLAN FOR POSITIVE IMMIGRATION OUTCOME (2026-30)

STRATEGIC FOCUS

01

SHOWCASE LAMBTON COUNTY'S WELCOMING CHARACTERISTICS

- Facilitate newcomers' sense of belonging through community events that encourage cultural exchange
- Deepen newcomers' understanding of the community through awareness of indigenous culture and heritage as well as local history

MOBILIZE NEWCOMERS' SKILL AND INNOVATION

- Facilitate community dialogue and collaboration around key challenges in integrating newcomers into the labour market
- Engage newcomer businesses and entrepreneurs to facilitate their productivity and contribution to the local economy

02

PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOR NEWCOMERS

- Sustain the overall wellbeing of newcomers by promoting a healthy lifestyle
- Facilitate engagement between newcomers and healthcare providers

CROSSCUTTING ACTION ITEMS



INTERACTIVE NAVIGATION OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Coordinate newcomers' engagement with service providers based on emerging concerns and interest
- Work with local cultural and religious organizations to understand gaps in newcomers access to community services



CULTURALLY SENSITIVE DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Facilitate professional development opportunities for community service providers on cross-cultural competence
- Strengthen social cohesion through community dialogue and partnership



EVIDENCE-BASED UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL IMMIGRATION

- Facilitate the collection and dissemination of local immigration data
- Contribute newcomer success stories to the local immigration discourse

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY



LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

A council of local organizations monitoring the community's effort to maximize benefits of local immigration



IMMIGRANT ADVISORY COUNCIL

A collection of local cultural and religious organizations contributing a newcomer perspective to the delivery of community services



WELCOMING COMMITTEE

A committee of local organizations overseeing cultural events and orienting newcomers to community services



LOCAL IMMIGRATION DATA AND RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

A collaborative group of organizations sharing research expertise, data, and information to strengthen the knowledge base of local immigration



NEWCOMER EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE NETWORK

A network of local employment service providers and economic coordinators sharing experience and resources to boost newcomers participation in the local economy



NEWCOMER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING WORKING GROUP

A network of local healthcare providers and coordinators coming together to orient newcomers to well-being and healthy living