

Integrating Immigrant Skills into the GTA Economy: Tri-Level Agreement?



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Questions to be asked first..

- Why?
- What?
- Where?
- Who?
- When?
before
- How?



Why?

- Population and labour force growth dependent on immigration
- immigrants' skills not being used effectively
- Immigrant poverty, unemployment and underemployment rates higher
- no single cause or solution
- many players/governments involved
- impact felt locally but little input or control

What?

Focused Objectives

- To facilitate speedy, effective **labour market integration** for skilled immigrants into their fields of expertise
- To engage all levels of government and key partners in a **collaborative** and **cooperative** way to accomplish this
- To ensure that a particular **local lens** is applied when solutions are developed and implemented



Where?

- Immigrants settle locally: but may live in one place, work in another, get services in third
- policies and programs determined at all levels of government, but delivery is often local and by third parties
- lower tier, upper tier, single tier, GTA?



Who?

- Federal: CIC, HRSD and others
- Provincial: TCU, CI and others
- Municipal: 5 (T,Y,P,H,D) separate?together?
- Other stakeholders:
 - Skilled immigrants and their associations
 - Regulators and Professional associations
 - Employers, Associations, Unions, Sectors
 - Educational institutions
 - Academic credential assessment services
 - Community-based service providers



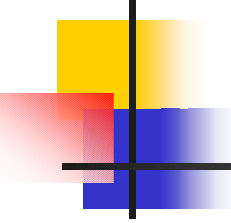
When?

- New leadership and policy direction
- Electoral cycle
- Issue Recognition vs Crisis
- Fiscal Constraints



How?

- Bring all key players together at the local level to facilitate coordination and collaboration
- and/or
- Formalize processes and commitments in F/P/M agreements to ensure sustainability



Cautionary Notes re F/P/M formal agreements

- Relationships
- No existing LMDA/ Immigration agreements to build on: Focussed agreement in absence of others
- Complexity/Time/ Electoral cycle
- Process vs Action
- Not a panacea



Objectives for F/P/M collaboration

- Recognition of the overseas/settlement/labour market integration/inclusion continuum
- Vertical and horizontal collaboration, cooperation and coordination
 - expertise and resources of the relevant government players identified and brought together to achieve common goals
- Information and Research sharing
 - Improved planning and service delivery
 - Identification of policy, program and funding gaps



Objectives (cont'd)

- Policy and program development input
 - policy and program coherency
 - ways to address identified gaps
- Best use of current and new resources
 - duplication of programs and services prevented
 - local priorities addressed
 - funding predictability and accountability
- common framework for multi-stakeholder engagement



Is a formal agreement necessary?

- No. If:
 - political support is implicit
 - staff are mandated and committed to coordinate, collaborate, work together differently (inter, intra, and extra governmentally)
 - no changes to jurisdictional mandates, existing dollars, program criteria, approval mechanisms
 - no impediments to information exchange and policy/program input



Is a formal agreement necessary?

- Yes. If:
 - political direction needed to mobilize staff to work differently(inter, intra, and extra)
 - significant changes in roles or responsibilities (eg devolution)
 - new dollars, new approval mechanisms, policy or program changes required
 - public visibility for political objectives is required
 - public and stakeholder accountability for sustainability



Potential Content of Agreements

- Objective from perspective of immigrants' and labour market needs
- Principles
- Roles: Who does what? (programs and services implemented individually, collaboratively, jointly)
- Mechanisms for sharing information, research, best practices
- Mechanisms for joint planning and collaboration
- Mechanisms for reciprocal notice and meaningful consultation prior to implementation of new policies or programs
- Mechanisms for multi-stakeholder involvement in collaborative initiatives and priority setting
- Funding: Who funds what? To what level? Funding formulae and mechanisms, ensuring predictability
- Accountability and evaluation frameworks
- Mechanisms for dispute avoidance and resolution



Continuing the conversation..

- Learn from others, but not limited by them
- openness of parties to new approaches