

Outline of Paper

- Concept of social resilience and the institutional landscape context that framed newcomer's ability to navigate the pandemic
- Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan
- Activities of the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP)



Resilience and Equity

Social Resilience:

A perspective that “stresses the transformative capacities of individuals, groups, and social institutions in dealing with challenges and simultaneously recognizes how power relations and institutional structures shape these capacities” (Preston et. al. 2021, 3)

COVID-19 & The Economic Response Plan

- Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

This income support program was introduced in March 2020. It provided \$500 week to employed and self-employed individuals who lost income as a result of COVID-19.

- Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)

This program was designed to allow employers, who met eligibility criteria, to retain or re-hire workers. It delivered a wage subsidy of 75 per cent up to \$847 per employee.

- Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)

This benefit was directed at post-secondary students and recent graduates who could not access Employment Insurance. It provided support from May to August 2020.

CERB Recipients

- 35.2 per cent of workers who earned \$5,000 or more in 2019 received CERB payments with women receiving payments more often than men
- 41.4 percent of visible minorities received CERB as compared to 32 per cent of the population who did not belong to population groups designated visible minority
- “Of all immigrant workers admitted to Canada from 1980 to 2019, 41.2 per cent received CERB in the first months of the pandemic
- Refugees more likely to have received payments (51.6 percent) compared to 46.2 per cent of family-sponsored immigrants and 32 per cent of economic immigrants

(Morrisette 2021)

Who fell between the cracks?



Ottawa Public Health Survey (August 2020) Findings

- Racialized populations (particularly those who identify as Black) are over-represented among people diagnosed with COVID-19 in Ottawa
- In most racial groups, females are more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19 than males
- Among people diagnosed with COVID-19, most of those who are racialized are immigrants (i.e. not born in Canada) people who identify as Middle Eastern, Black and South Asian appear to be more recent immigrants (within the last 5 years)
- People working in health-related occupations have been the most affected by COVID-19; people who are racialized are over-represented across all occupational categories. (OPH 2020).

OLIP: Enablers for Equity Work

The partnership was well-positioned to play a key role in responding to the pandemic. Pre-COVID enablers included:

- Ontario Policy – Public Health Standards
- Municipal Anti-racism Strategy and Plans
- Shared vision / priorities across sectors through OLIP
- Equity Partnership & Community of Practice - authentic relationships & tough dialogues
- Focus on building capacity for disaggregated data collection to improve planning and grow accountability

Community Dialogue: Awareness and Insights

OLIP convened a Community Dialogue on the Impact of COVID on immigrants and racialized communities.

- Over 70 participants came together to gain community insights
- Themes identified precarious employment, transportation, housing conditions, access to information, food insecurity, status, the digital divide for low-income and mental health challenges

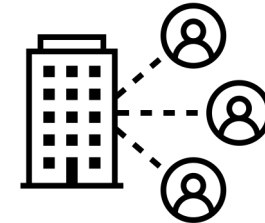


OLIP as a Platform for Collaborative Planning

OLIP's Health and Wellbeing Sector Table initiated the *Strengthening Disaggregated Sociodemographic Data Related to COVID-19 Initiative*.

Using the three strategic components of partnership, data, and community engagement, this initiative supported a collaborative pandemic response across 10 activities.

OLIP worked to advance organizational capacity to use socio-demographic data to measure health disparities and inform health planning for immigrants, migrants, and racialized communities.



OLIP's collaborative governance structure & process allows partners to connect regularly and plan strategic actions in the implementation of priority goals

OLIP in Action: Pandemic Response

Collaborative
Pandemic
Response,
with equity
lens

Consciousness
of the high
risk of
exposure
facing
immigrants

Collaborative
Actions

- 11 areas of need identified and addressed collaboratively

Targeted
Protection

- Education, wrap-around services, testing, voluntary isolation, targeted vaccination

Grounded
Knowledge

- Dialogue, COVID Stories, Research Commissioned, DSD COVID Data, KM, intervention evaluation



Thank you