

## TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

Newcomers living in Surrey experience frustration when attempting to find a job appropriate to their skills and experience. Employers here face difficulties recruiting job-seekers with necessary skills and experience.

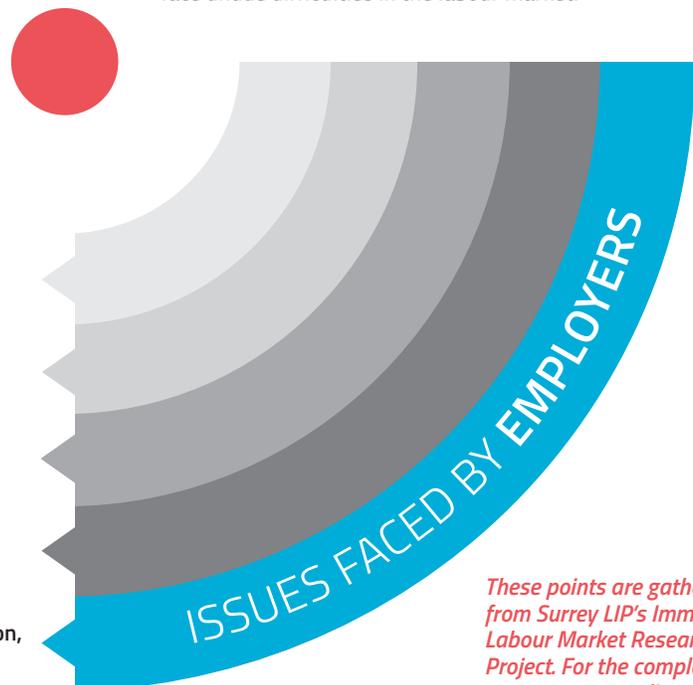


- Many immigrants are encouraged about employment prospects by their high standing in Canada's immigration point system, but once here find they are not considered for appropriate opportunities.
- English language proficiency is a common problem, especially workplace-specific.
- Many have difficulties gaining Canadian experience, which is highly valued by employers
- There is low awareness of programs and services geared to employment.
- Canadian recruiting and hiring practices are often different from those in countries of origin.
- Many face difficulties in having foreign credentials recognized.
- Entrepreneurs and the self-employed must work within new and often dramatically different systems

**Bottom Line** A significant proportion of newcomers face undue difficulties in the labour market.

- In Surrey many employers are small and medium-sized enterprises and lack HR capacities that would make recruiting and training immigrants easier.
- Employers agree that immigrants have good work ethics and high potential to succeed, but believe they could better understand company and business needs, and adjust their experience to local requirements.
- According to the Province of B.C.'s Labour Market Outlook, Surrey will likely have more than 8,000 unfilled positions between now and 2022.
- In Surrey a significant proportion of employers engage in industrial and transportation sectors, which are not an easy fit for immigrants who have qualified under a points system that places a high value on educational attainment.

**Bottom Line** Employers face skills shortages, and recognize that newcomers are an important part of the solution, but often lack the resources to recruit and train them.



*These points are gathered from Surrey LIP's Immigrant Labour Market Research Project. For the complete report see [surreylip.ca](http://surreylip.ca)*

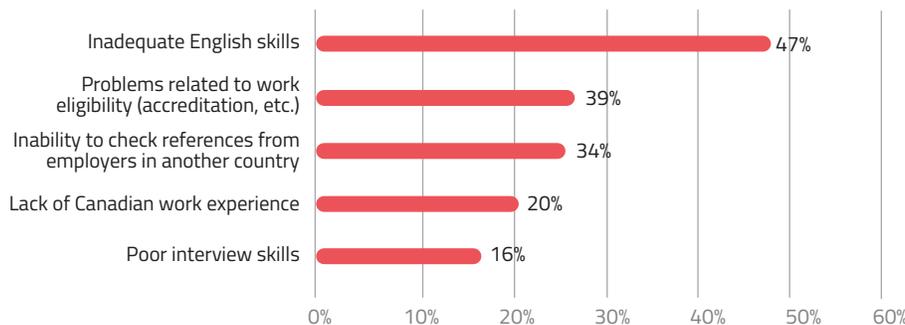
# MAKING SOME COIN

Surrey's employers are as eager to hire immigrants as immigrants are to work, but a survey points out some of the obstacles they face in doing so.

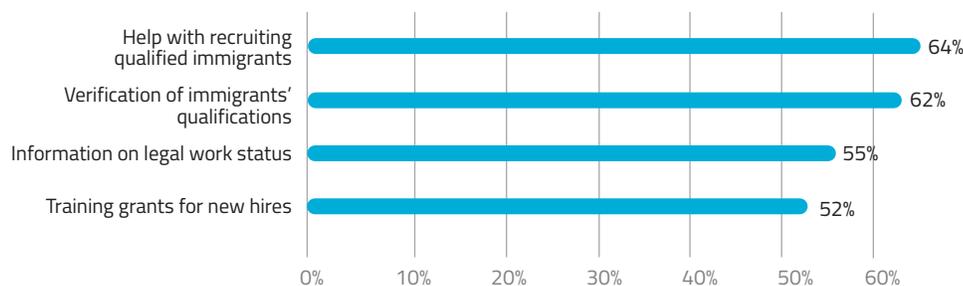
## Digging Into the Problem

A survey completed by 114 Surrey-based employers identified some of the barriers to hiring immigrants, as well as potential solutions that would make the process easier.

### Biggest barriers to hiring immigrants (percent of respondents agreeing)



### Potential solutions that would enable more hiring (percent agreeing)



As a supplement to the survey, 16 employers were contacted for in depth interviews, leading to several additional insights including:

- Employers rely on online postings, which immigrants are sometimes not aware of.
- On the job training is rarely geared to immigrants.
- Immigrants work hard and are less likely to leave than native-born employees.
- English language skills, unfamiliarity with workplace culture and qualification mismatches are significant barriers to hiring.
- Many employers aren't aware of programs and services that would make hiring immigrants easier.

## Recommendations

The project made several recommendations, while assuming no or limited additional funding. These included:

- Use the Surrey LIP to work toward strengthening coordination of immigrant employment and employer-related programs and services.
- Encourage employers and industry groups to adopt occupation and sector-specific English language training strategies.
- Create a Surrey Labour Shortage Task Force.
- Use the Surrey LIP to create an employer/immigrant portal focused on jobs and employment specific to Surrey.
- Increase employer and industry awareness of service organizations' capacity for preparing immigrants for the labour force.

### ABOUT THE SURREY LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Established in 2014, Surrey LIP is led by the City of Surrey and governed by a committee drawn from 30 community organizations.