

## Immigrants urged to participate in online 'satisfaction survey'

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The Cultural Coalition of Chatham-Kent wants to ensure immigrants receive better services in the future.

However, in order to do this, they need some information.

The group is inviting immigrants who have lived in Chatham-Kent for up to 15 years to participate in an online "satisfaction survey."

The anonymous survey is available at [www.culturalcoalitionck.ca/survey](http://www.culturalcoalitionck.ca/survey), until Feb. 29. It seeks such information as:

country of origin;

languages spoken;

marital status;

educational background;

employment status;

year of arrival in Chatham-Kent; and

previous location in Canada.

Evelyn Radomski, statistical analyst for the project, said the project aims to adapt local services to meet the needs of Chatham-Kent newcomers by determining what languages documents should be translated into.

She noted 39 people have participated since the survey went online on Dec. 15.

"The information gleaned will help us develop a retention strategy," said Teresa Fysh, cultural coalition program manager.

She said the survey is seeking information from immigrants who came to Canada up to 15 years ago, because many newcomers don't feel fully integrated until after being in Canada four to five years.

She noted there is both a lack of settlement services and job opportunities in Chatham-Kent for immigrants.

Radomski said, "we have newcomers leaving because they cannot find employment."

Cultural coalition president Maureen Geddes said the landscape has changed for immigrants, because there are accreditation requirements in almost every industry.

She said several years ago, an immigrant with a skill, such as plumbing, could settle in Canada, get a job right away in their field and begin making a living.

Today, immigrants with specialized skills must go through testing and obtain a new accreditation in order to work in their field, she added.

"Our main purpose is to help integrate people economically, so they can stay and thrive in Chatham-Kent," Geddes said.

She noted immigrants who want to invest in the community also help create new jobs.

Fysh said the survey is also an opportunity to do an inventory of new immigrants to Chatham-Kent, where they come from and what skills they have brought.

There's been a change in where immigrants to Chatham-Kent are coming from, which includes Asian countries such as Korea and China, and Middle East countries, she said.