

In December 2015, the Windsor-Essex community came together to discuss how best to serve the influx of Syrian refugees destined to make Windsor and Essex County their new home. Two years later, on December 5, 2017, the community was brought back to reflect on the resettlement process and discuss the challenges which lay ahead for both the refugees and the system of services working to meet their needs. The *WE Came Together – Progress Report on Syrian Refugee Resettlement* event was hosted by The City of Windsor, WE LIP, The Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County and New Canadians' Centre of Excellence Inc.

Over 80 attendees from community stakeholder organizations heard about best practices and emerging issues which surfaced in sectors such as employment, language and settlement healthcare, welcoming community, education, and housing. Additionally, Syrian newcomers shared their stories of resettlement, detailing both their challenges and successes.

Guest speaker Virginia Hatchette, Assistant Deputy Minister, provided an overview and major initiatives of the Ontario Refugee Resettlement Secretariat of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. During the Sector Breakout Session, participants were provided an opportunity to further discuss the Secretariat's mandate components as they relate to Windsor-Essex. The topics included removing barriers, engagement and strategic communication. A report will be developed to capture key points of the discussions and community success stories.



MANDATE | REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT SECRETARIAT

- The Refugee Resettlement Secretariat engages with government partners, service providers, employers, volunteers, and refugees to help improve the social and economic outcomes for vulnerable newcomers and refugees.
- The Secretariat is:
 - Working with partners across Ontario and Canada to **address system barriers and gaps** that slow the progress of, or prevent, refugees from successfully integrating;
 - Developing a **communications strategy** that highlights the contributions of refugees to Ontario's social fabric, economic prosperity and civic life, and profiles citizen engagement in welcoming and supporting refugee resettlement and integration; and
 - Implementing an **outcomes framework** to determine how successful outcomes are achieved and inform policies and programs that serve refugees.



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Financé par :



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

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