



Commentary | October 2023

# Satisfaction with AFNOO's Services, Partnerships and Collaboration: 2022 Survey Findings

**NORTHERN**  
POLICY INSTITUTE

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By: Holly Parsons

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- Thunder Bay is on Robinson-Superior Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg and Fort William First Nation.
- Kirkland Lake is on the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of Cree, Ojibway, and Algonquin peoples, as well as Beaverhouse First Nation.

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## Partner



### AFNOO

As a non-profit organization, AFNOO represents Francophones in Northwestern Ontario by developing and giving access to resources that facilitate the integration of Francophones into the community while offering undeniable support to organizations in the region.

AFNOO has over 20 member groups across the Northwest, representing education, culture, early childhood, women, health, entrepreneurship, seniors and youth.

AFNOO chooses to further align itself with the French Ontario CSP by taking into consideration the unique realities of Francophones in the vast Northwestern Ontario region.



## About the Author

# Holly Parsons



Holly Parsons moved to Australia to pursue her undergraduate degree and graduated with a B.A. in Politics & Policy Studies and International Relations from Deakin University in Melbourne. Holly gained experience in research, policy analysis, and advocacy while working at grassroots NGOs in Australia and Indonesia. Once moving back to Canada, Holly was a Policy Analyst at Northern Policy Institute and worked on various research projects related to population growth, northern governance, homelessness, addiction and mental health, and others. Holly is currently pursuing a master's degree in Human Security and Peacebuilding from Royal Roads University. In her spare time, Holly loves to travel, ski, read, cook vegan recipes, and be outdoors.

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	6
Introduction .....	7
Client Satisfaction Survey .....	7
General Demographics .....	7
Settlement Experience .....	11
Client Survey Summary .....	17
Employer Satisfaction Survey .....	18
General Demographics .....	18
Settlement and Employment Services .....	18
Recruitment and Skills Gap .....	20
Employer Survey Summary .....	24
Partner Satisfaction Survey.....	25
General Demographics .....	25
Services and Programs .....	25
Collaboration with AFNOO .....	28
Partner Survey Summary.....	29
Conclusion and Recommendations.....	29
References.....	31
Appendix A: Client Survey Questions .....	32
Appendix B: Employer Survey Questions.....	40
Appendix C: Partner Survey Questions.....	49

# Executive Summary

Without a wide range of accessible settlement services, newcomers may face major challenges settling in Northwestern Ontario. L'Association des Francophones de Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO) provides important settlement services to Francophone newcomers to help them as they settle in Northwestern Ontario. To identify clients' needs and gaps in AFNOO's services, Northern Policy Institute (NPI) partnered with AFNOO to release three Satisfaction Surveys to individual clients, employer clients, and partner organizations. Supplementary data from Client Intake Forms was also collected.

The information collected from the surveys was analyzed by NPI to help make recommendations that can guide AFNOO's mandate, increase overall client, employer, and partner satisfaction, and further support French immigrants. Overall, the goal is to help boost immigration and retention efforts in Northern Ontario, through increasing the strength of AFNOO's settlement and integration services.

AFNOO's clientele predominantly comprises highly skilled, French-speaking international immigrants pursuing full-time employment in Canada, often accompanied by dependent family members. These clients generally receive comprehensive settlement information, encompassing guidance on basic needs, support services, and critical healthcare and legal services. Despite appreciating the overall utility and accessibility of AFNOO's offerings, a significant portion highlights a need for enhanced assistance with essential documentation. A small segment of clients is aware of the RNIP and shows interest in applying for permanent residency through this pathway. Notably, 57 per cent of AFNOO's clients feel welcomed by their Northwestern Ontario communities, attributing this sentiment to the optimistic outlook for their families' success in the region, which significantly influences their settlement experience in Northern Ontario.

In general, AFNOO's employer clients are in the Northwestern region and operate in a variety of sectors including hospitality and resource extraction. All employer clients acknowledge the growing importance of newcomers as a vital recruitment pool. These employers highlight a pressing need for immigration consulting services to streamline the newcomer hiring process. While a substantial majority value AFNOO's information and orientation sessions as the most beneficial services received, several note that not all of AFNOO's offerings are relevant to their needs. Half of these employers report highly positive experiences in hiring newcomers. Furthermore, a significant 83 per cent of employers identify the scarcity of housing as the primary barrier in attracting and recruiting newcomers.

Partner organizations, located in either Thunder Bay or Greater Sudbury, serve a diverse client base across a wide geographic area extending from Thunder Bay through Northwestern Ontario to the entire province. These organizations cater to a broad spectrum of clients, including permanent and temporary residents, youth and students, Indigenous communities, employers, and Francophones, by providing a comprehensive range of services. Collaboration with AFNOO primarily occurs through event cooperation and client referrals. Partner organizations feel their partnership with AFNOO is overwhelmingly positive, for example, by leading to an increased awareness about relevant programs being offered in Northern Ontario as well as service coverage and presence in Northern Ontario.

Based on the findings, there were several recommendations provided:

1. Promote the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP)
2. Prioritize services that offer support with immigration and other important documents
3. Continue to build strong partnerships with organizations in the education sector
4. Continue to build strong partnerships with municipalities, local public health authorities, and other community organizations
5. Engage in a consultation process with employer clients to determine their needs
6. Engage in a consultation process with partners to determine their needs
7. Prioritize direct outreach to communities and community members, particularly in rural and remote areas
8. Prioritize family-friendly welcoming initiatives
9. Host networking events for employers

These recommendations are to serve as a guide to help support AFNOO in fulfilling their mandate and if followed, can help improve immigration support for French immigrants residing in and relocating to Northern Ontario.

# Introduction

In the Fall of 2022, l'Association des Francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO) partnered with Northern Policy Institute (NPI) to launch three surveys over a four-week period, between September 27 and October 25. Each survey targeted one of the following groups: AFNOO's individual clients, their employer clients, or their partner organizations.

This data collection initiative serves three main purposes: first, the information collected by all three surveys provides important insight on the needs of clients and partner organizations. Secondly, the surveys help to identify specific successes and opportunities for improvement of current programs and services. Thirdly, the surveys help to gauge overall individual, employer, and partner satisfaction with current programs and services. Collectively, this information can be used to guide AFNOO's mandate and future work.

The Client Satisfaction Survey asked questions pertaining to the settlement experience of newcomers to Northern Ontario, their experience looking for or finding work in the region, and their interactions with AFNOO's programs and services. The Employer Satisfaction Survey asked

questions relating to employee demographics and skill requirements, their experience recruiting and hiring newcomers, and their interactions with AFNOO. The questions in the Partner Satisfaction Survey focused mainly on the partner client experience collaborating with AFNOO.

Seven individual clients responded to the Client Satisfaction Survey; six employer clients responded to the Employer Satisfaction Survey; fourteen partner organizations responded to the Partner Satisfaction Survey. Notably, to overcome the low response rate from individual clients, this paper also includes supplementary data from AFNOO's Client Intake Forms which were filled out by 32 clients. While AFNOO provides settlement services, its overarching mandate is to serve Francophones in Northwestern Ontario, not all of whom have access to, or are eligible for, settlement services.

The aim of the report is to summarize the findings from each of the three surveys and the Client Intake Forms and provide recommendations to help guide AFNOO in fulfilling its mandate and increase client, employer, and partner satisfaction.

## Client Satisfaction Survey and Client Intake Form

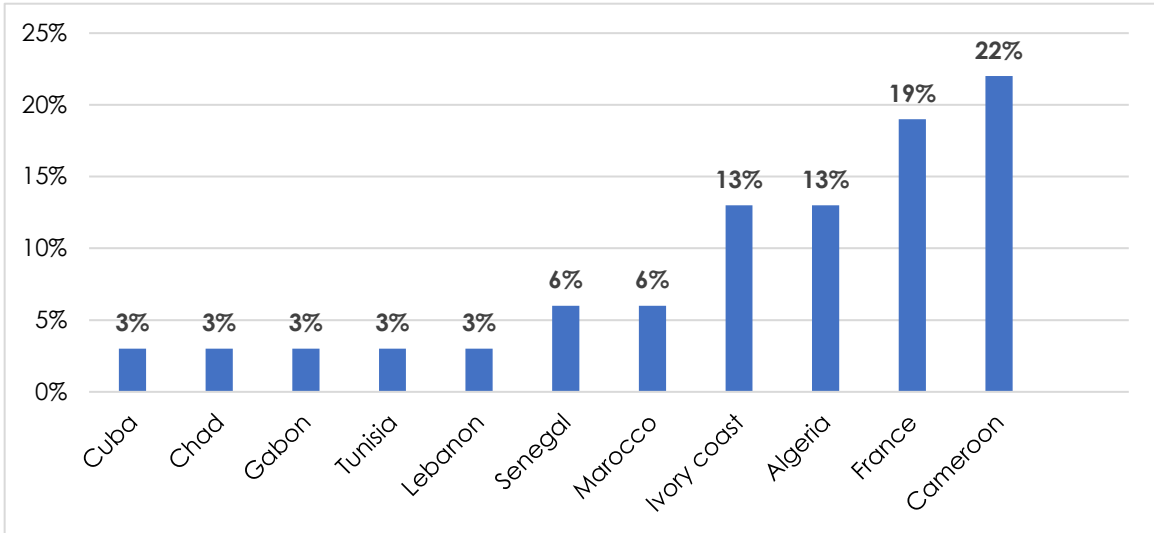
Since the AFNOO's settlement and employment services began in 2020, client intake data has been collected from all AFNOO's 32 clients during the intake process. AFNOO used this comprehensive list of clients to distribute the 2022 Client Satisfaction Survey. Seven clients completed the 2022 Client Satisfaction Survey, for whom intake data is also available.

### General Demographics

According to AFNOO's Client Intake Forms, 43 per cent of clients resided in Northwestern Ontario at the time of intake. Most clients immigrated from either Northern, Western, or Central Africa (69 per cent). More specifically, 22 per cent of clients immigrated from Cameroon, 19 per cent immigrated from France, while 13 per cent immigrated from either Ivory Coast or Algeria. To compare, the Client Satisfaction Surveys, which were completed by seven individual clients, found that 71 per cent of clients immigrated from Cameroon, while 14 per cent of clients immigrated from either Algeria or Ivory Coast.

Data from both the Client Intake Forms and the Client Satisfaction Surveys show that the majority of AFNOO's clients fall into a younger age bracket and are within the working-age population. According to client intake data, clients range in age from 24 to 54 years old, with an average age of 36. Survey data shows a slightly narrower age range of 27 to 42, with an average age of 35. During intake, most clients (78 per cent) indicated they are or will be accompanied by family members who will need to be supported financially. Forty per cent of those clients immigrated with children under the age of 18.

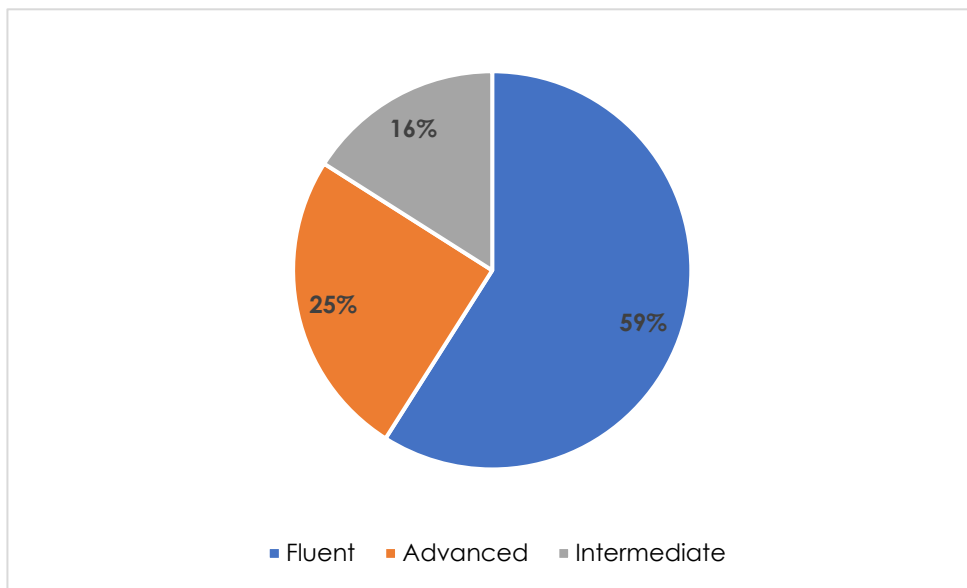
Figure 1. Clients' country of origin, Client Intake Form 2020-2022



Source: Author's calculations. Data provided by AFNOO, Client Intake Form 2020-2022. n=32.

In terms of language demographics, client intake data shows that AFNOO's clients are predominantly French speaking, with all clients indicating they are at an intermediate level or above. Notably, 59 per cent of clients indicated they are fluent in French.

Figure 2. French language proficiency, Client Intake Form 2020-2022

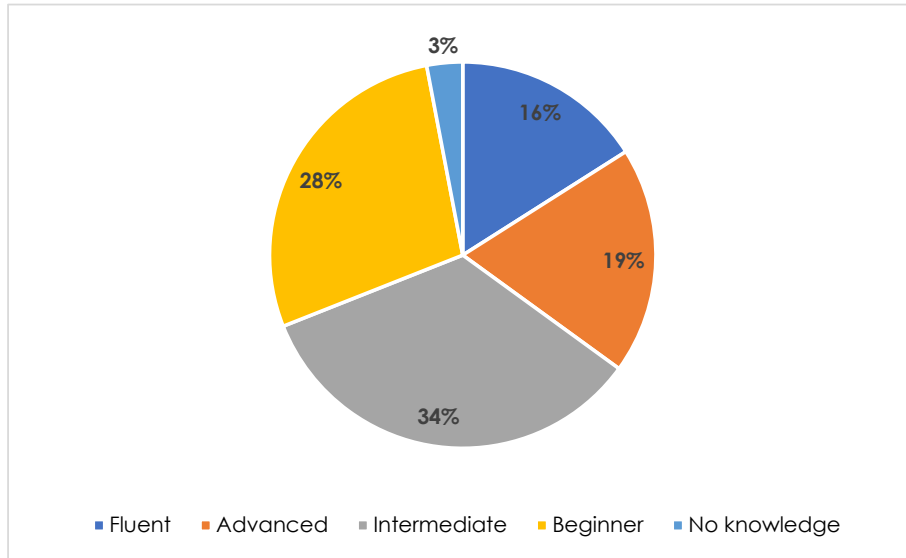


Source: Author's calculations. Data provided by AFNOO, Client Intake Form 2020-2022. n=32.



When it comes to English, 16 per cent of clients consider themselves to be fluent, while roughly a third of clients (31 per cent) indicated that they are at a beginner level or have no knowledge of the English language.

**Figure 3. English language proficiency, Client Intake Form 2020-2022**

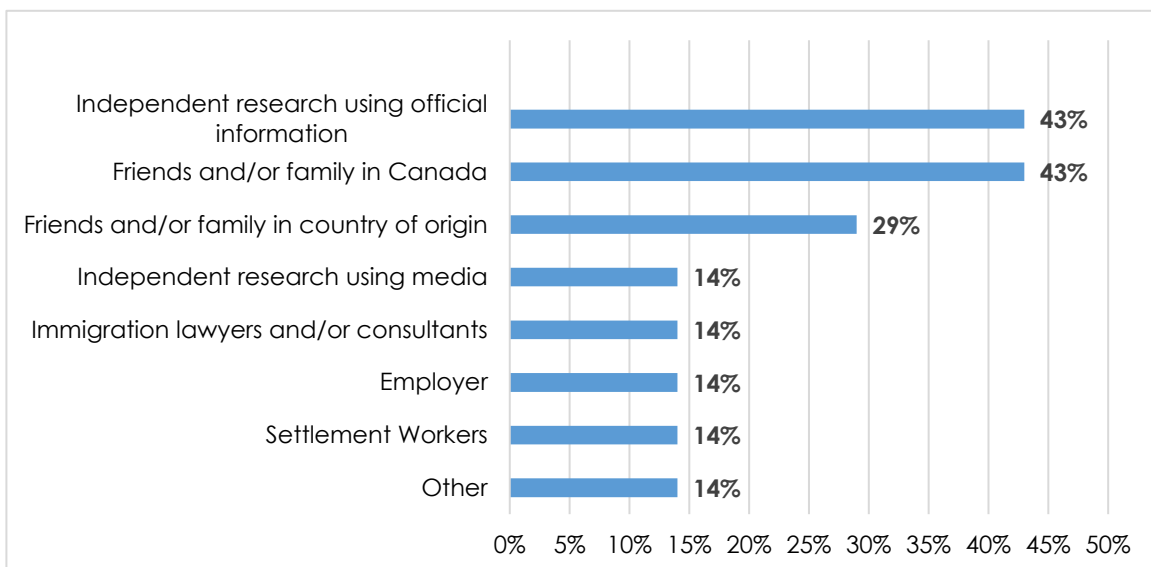


Source: Author's calculations. Data provided by AFNOO, Client Intake Form 2020-2022. n=32.

An overwhelming majority of clients (91 per cent) would prefer AFNOO's services be delivered in French. Of note, 28 per cent of AFNOO's clients also speak Arabic.

According to client survey data, 43 per cent of clients heard about the immigration program they used through independent research using official information (i.e. Government of Canada and Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada), 43 per cent used friends and/or family in Canada, 29 per cent through family and/or friends in country of origin.

**Figure 4. Information source about their immigration program, Client Intake Form 2020-2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data provided by AFNOO, Client Intake Form 2020-2022. n=32.  
 Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

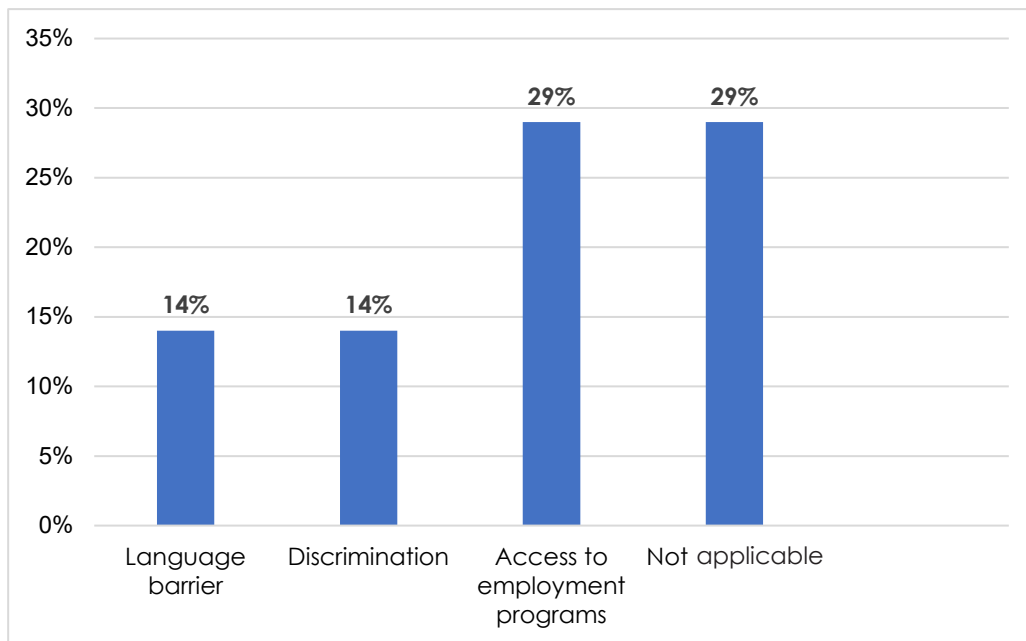
The Client Satisfaction Survey found that a relatively small number of clients (29 per cent) had heard of the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP), and the same percentage of clients (29 per cent) indicated they would consider applying for permanent residency under the RNIP stream.

According to intake data, all clients have at least a high school diploma. More specifically, 72 per cent of clients have a post-secondary education (i.e. university or college degree), 25 per cent of clients have a technical certificate (i.e. trade certificate) or license, and 3 per cent have a high school diploma. According to client survey data, when they applied for their respective immigration programs, clients' credentials included their post-secondary education as well as professional experience in Canada and abroad.

Client intake data shows 59 per cent of clients are employed full-time (i.e. 30 or more hours per week), 28 per cent are unemployed and looking for work, and nine per cent are employed part-time (i.e. 30 or fewer hours per week). To compare, client survey data also found that most clients are employed full-time (57 per cent), while a smaller number of clients (14 per cent) are either employed part-time, unemployed and looking for work, or did not answer this question.

About a third of clients (29 per cent) indicated that the main challenge they face(d) in their job search was access to employment services. It is important to note, however, that clients responded to this question during intake, and therefore, prior to being connected to employment services through AFNOO. Meanwhile, 14 per cent of clients indicated their main challenge was language barriers and discrimination. For context, the Canadian Human Rights Commission defines discrimination as "an action or a decision that treats a person or a group badly for reasons such as their race, age or disability" (Canadian Human Rights Commission 2023).

**Figure 5. Challenges face(d) during job search, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**

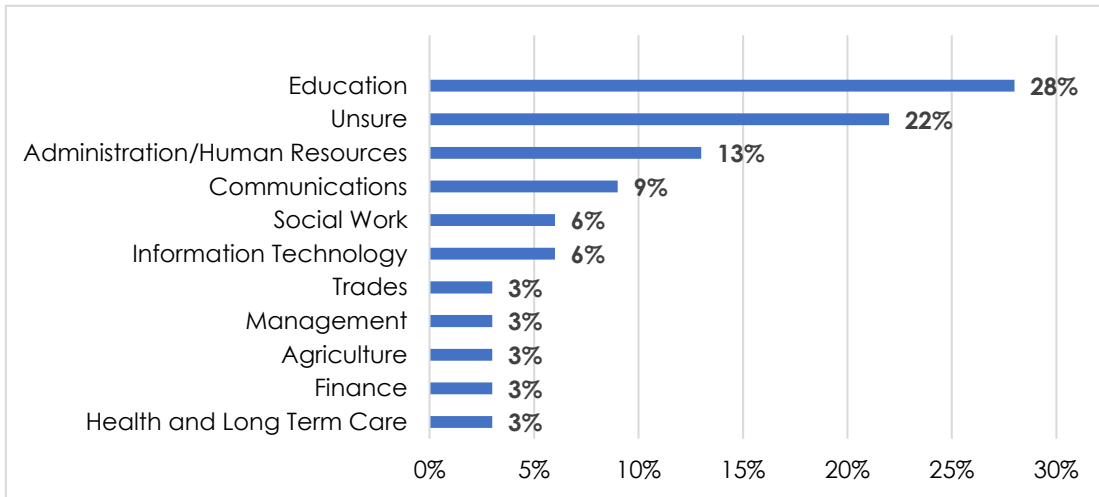


Source: Author's calculations. Data collected between September 27 and October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7.

Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

Fifty-seven per cent of clients are employed in the education sector, while 14 per cent are working in the real estate, rental, and leasing sector. Another 29 per cent of clients preferred not to say or they did not answer this question. Over half of clients (57 per cent) are employed in a profession that requires a university degree (i.e. Skill Level A), while 14 per cent of respondents are employed in a profession that typically requires a college diploma or trade certificate (i.e. Skill Level B). When asked during intake what industry clients are hoping to work in, 28 per cent noted education, 22 per cent were unsure, and 13 per cent stated administration and human resources. A smaller number of clients indicated other industries such as social work, information technology, and trades.

**Figure 6. Industry in which clients are hoping to be employed, Client Intake Form 2020-2022**



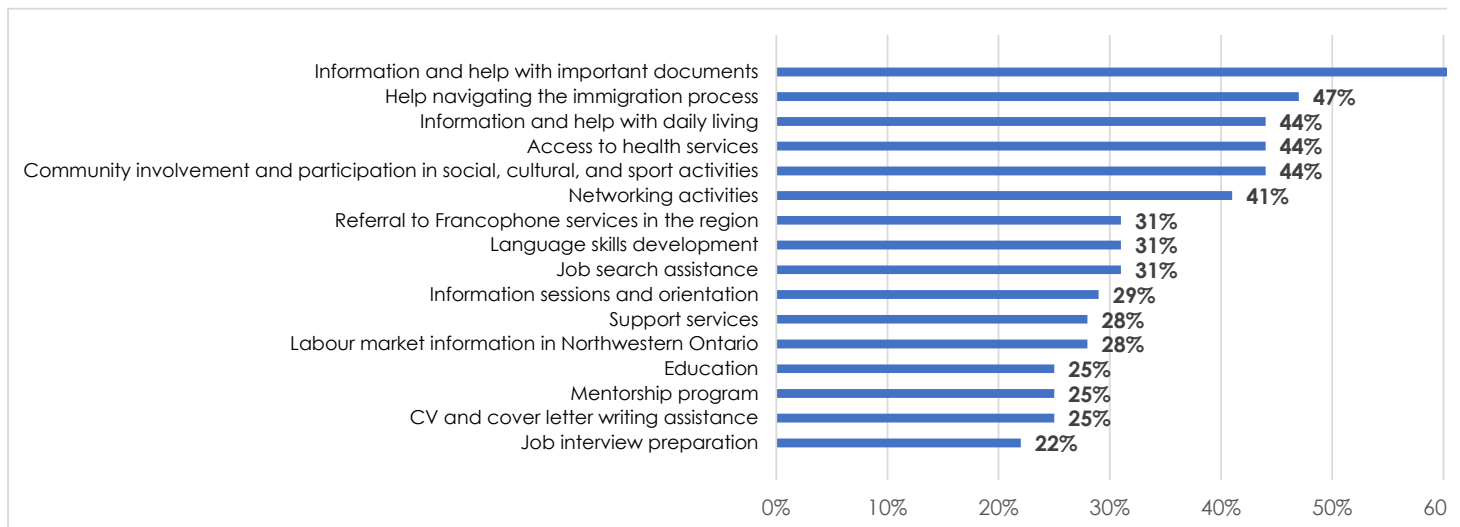
Source: Author's calculations. Data provided by AFNOO, Client Intake Form 2020-2022. n=32.  
 Note: graph total is equal to 99 per cent rather than 100 per cent due to numerical rounding.

In terms of their career goal, 43 per cent of clients indicated full-time employment, while another 43 per cent refrained from answering this question. Additionally, 14 per cent indicated their career goal is to be self-employed. Clients noted they would like to achieve this goal within a year to a maximum of three years.

## Settlement Experience

During intake, when asked what services they need, a majority of clients (63 per cent) indicated they need services that provide information and assistance with important documents. Just under half of clients (47 per cent) indicated they need services that help them navigate the immigration process. Forty-four per cent of clients are needing information and help with daily living, access to health services as well as community involvement and participation in social, cultural, and sports activities. Twenty-two per cent of clients require services in job interview preparation. Of note, 63 per cent of clients or a family member require an accessible environment to receive requested services.

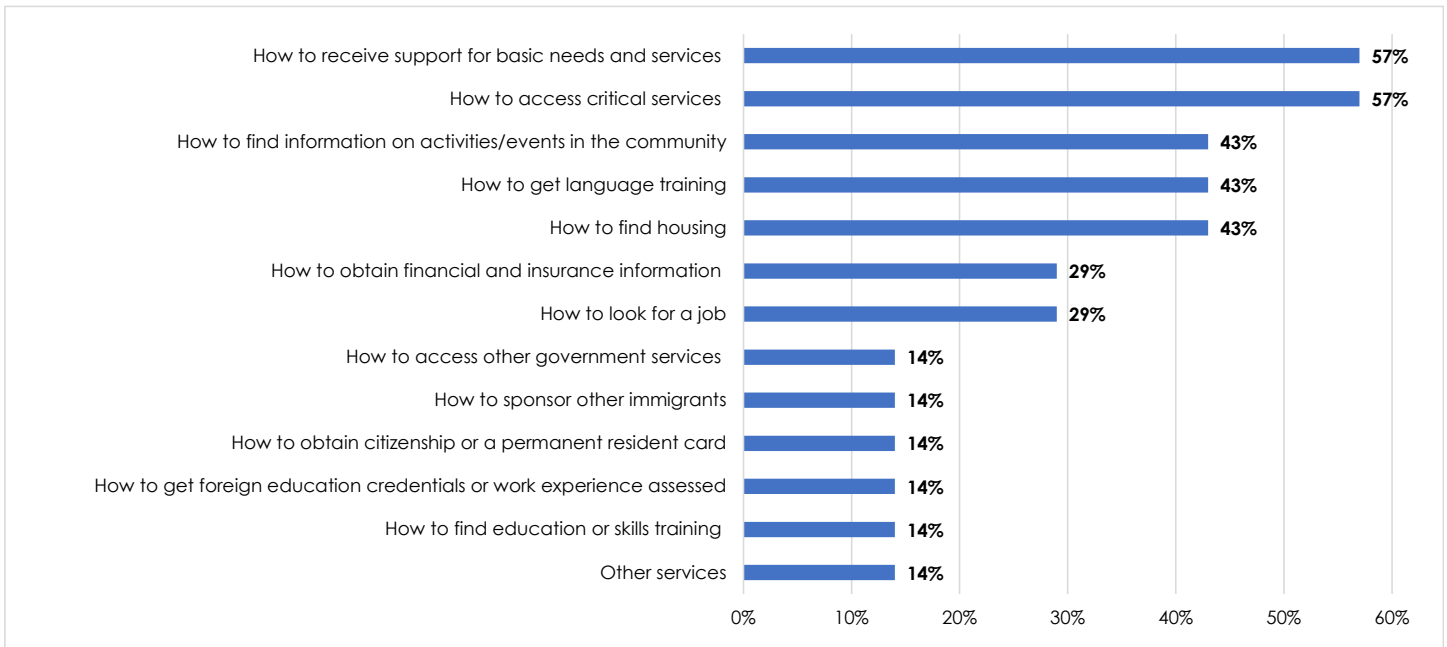
**Figure 7. Required settlement services, Client Intake Form 2020-2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data provided by AFNOO, Client Intake Form 2020-2022. n=32. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

Once in Canada, clients obtained a variety of important information to help them settle. Over half of clients (57 per cent) indicated they received information on how to receive support for basic needs and services, and how to access critical services, such as medical, mental health, dental, and legal services.<sup>1</sup> A large number of clients (43 per cent) obtained information on how to find activities and events in the community, how to get language training, and how to find housing. Other information received include how to obtain financial and insurance services, how to look for a job, and how to access government services.

**Figure 8. Information obtained once arrived in Canada, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data collected between September 27 and October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

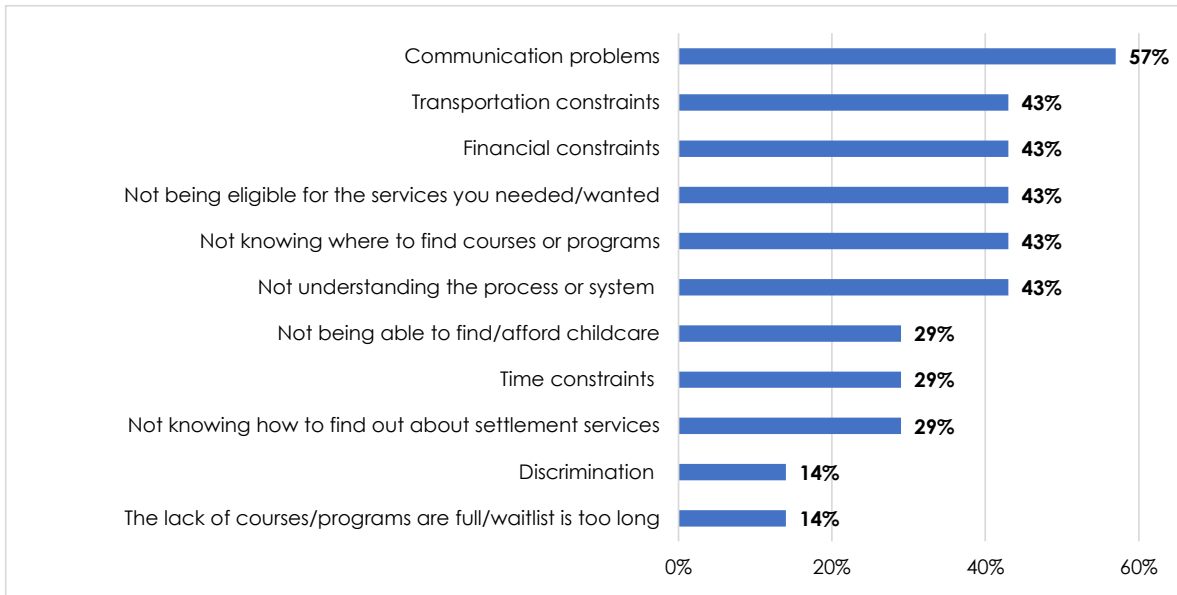
Of note, AFNOO's clients receive an establishment plan. Though, this might not be reflected in the number above given that Thunder Bay or Northwestern Ontario might not have been the initial landing location in Canada for some clients.

Clients obtained information from several sources: government organizations or departments, as well as websites and volunteers of a funded host program (29 per cent); non-government organization such as settlement services and community workers (29 per cent); immediate family (29 per cent); and media such as the internet, newspaper, or television (29 per cent). Other sources include relatives (14 per cent), friends (14 per cent), and employers or colleagues (14 per cent).

The main difficulty clients (57 per cent) faced when accessing support services from any organization in the region was with communication (i.e. language barriers), followed by transportation constraints (43 per cent), financial (43 per cent), not being eligible for the services they needed/wanted (43 per cent), not knowing where to find courses or programs (43 per cent), and not understanding the process or system (43 per cent). Other notable difficulties include not being able to find and/or afford childcare (29 per cent), time constraints such as family, work, or other time constraints (29 per cent), and not knowing how to find out about settlement services (29 per cent).

1 Of note, AFNOO's clients receive an establishment plan. Though, this might not be reflected in the number above given that Thunder Bay or Northwestern Ontario might not have been the initial landing location in Canada for some clients.

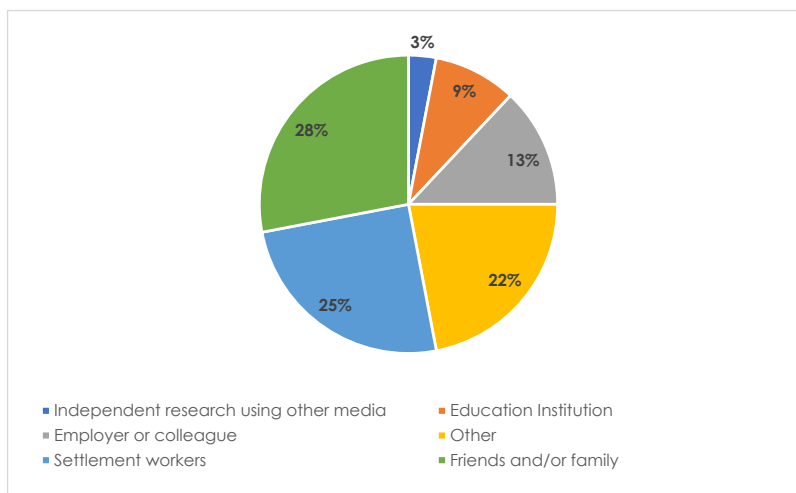
**Figure 9. Difficulties faced in accessing support services once arrived in Northern Ontario, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data collected between September 27 and October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

According to intake data, the three primary ways new clients found out about AFNOO's services were through friends or family (28 per cent), settlement workers (25 per cent), or "other", such as an unidentified organization or referrals (22 per cent). Other sources included their employer or colleague, education institutions including post-secondary institutions or district school boards, or independent research using other media including Facebook.

**Figure 10. Source used to learn about AFNOO's services, Client Intake Form 2020-2022**

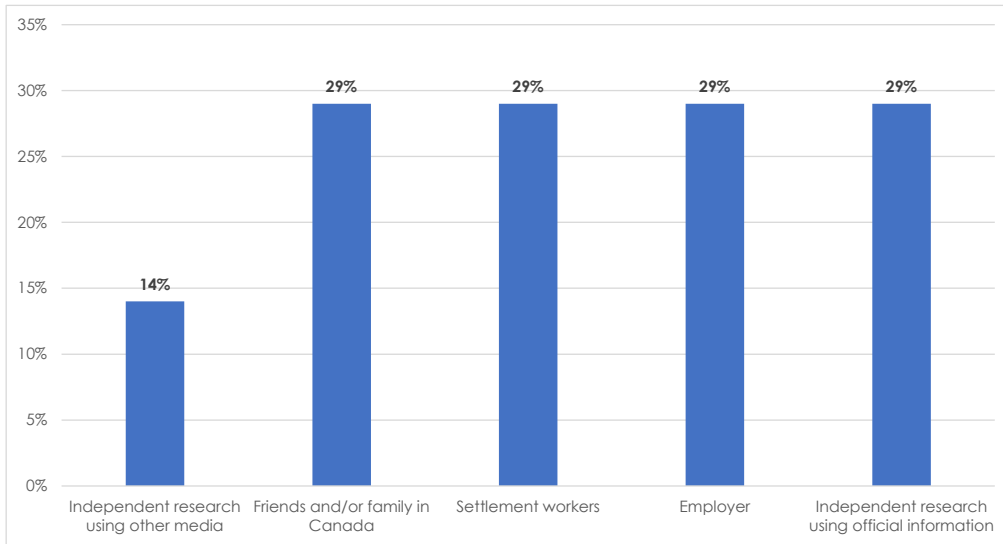


Source: Author's calculations. Data provided by AFNOO, Client Intake Form 2020-2022. n=32.

To compare, client survey data indicates clients learned about AFNOO's settlement and employment services equally from friends and/or family in Canada (29 per cent), settlement workers (29 per cent), independent research using official information (29 per cent) or their employers (29 per cent). A fewer number of clients found out about AFNOO's services from independent research using other media (14 per cent).



**Figure 11. Source used to learn about AFNOO's services, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**

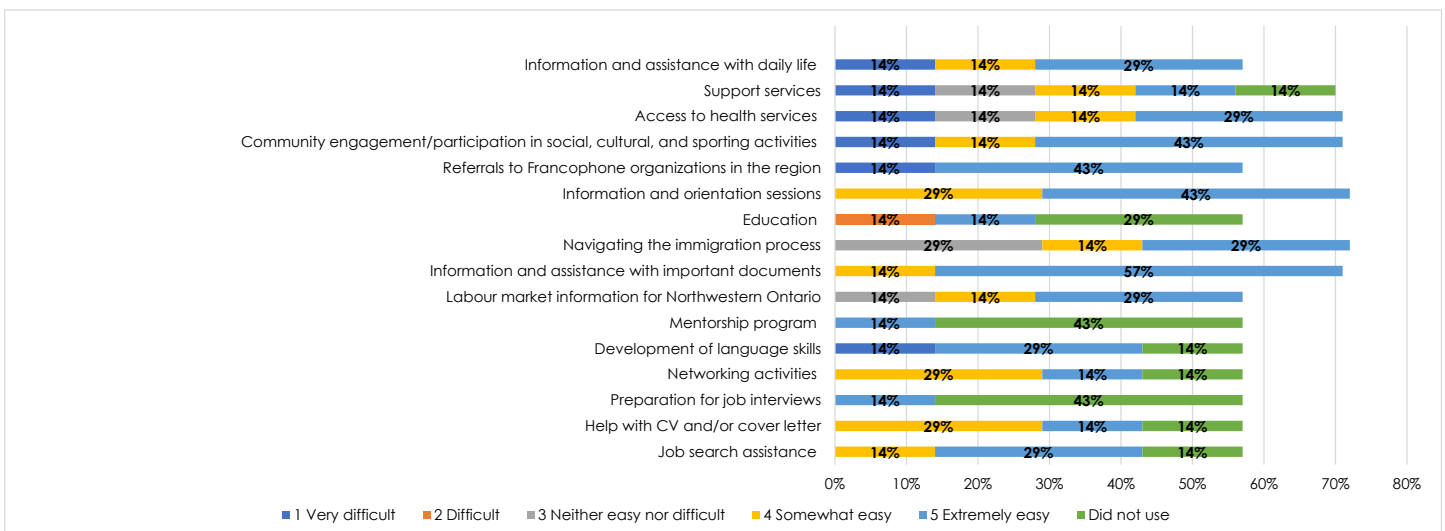


Source: Author's calculations. Data collected between September 27 and October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

Client survey data also found that most clients knew about AFNOO's services before arriving in the region (43 per cent), while for 14 per cent it was either three months before arriving, three to six months after arriving, or more than nine months after arriving that they were aware of AFNOO.

In terms of accessing services, clients found that information and assistance with important documents to be the easiest information to access (57 per cent), followed by information and orientation sessions (43 per cent), referrals to Francophone organizations in the region (43 per cent), community engagement (43 per cent) and participation in social, cultural, and sporting activities (43 per cent). Fourteen per cent of clients felt the services that were "very difficult" or "difficult" to access were development of language skills, referrals to Francophone organizations in the region, community engagement and participation in social, cultural, and sporting activities, access to health support services, information and assistance with daily life, and education.

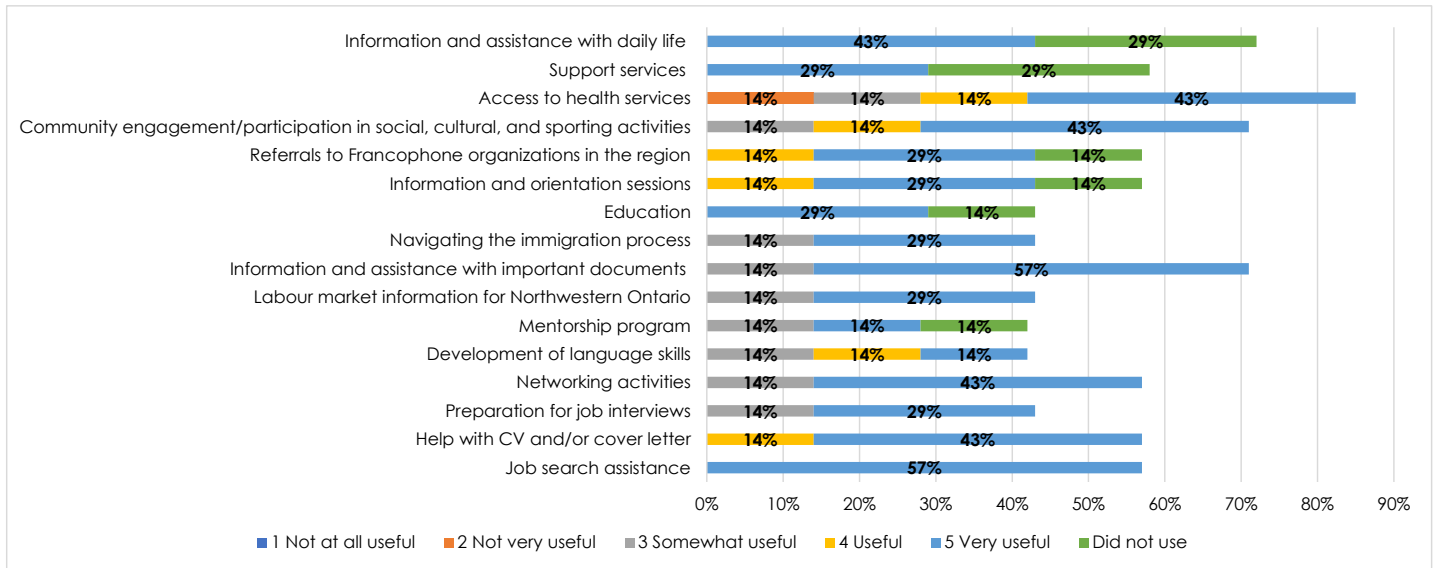
**Figure 12. Accessibility services and information from AFNOO's settlement services on a scale of one to five, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data collected between September 27 and October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, the data does not total 100 per cent.

Overall, clients found services offered by AFNOO to be useful, with a small majority of clients (57 per cent) indicating job search assistance and information and assistance with important documents to be the most useful. Other services that a large number of clients (43 per cent) found useful include information and assistance with daily life, access to health services, community engagement and participation in social, cultural, and sporting activities, networking activities, and help with CVs and/or cover letters. Of note, a small number of clients indicated education services were not useful (14 per cent), likely due to the language of instruction being English.

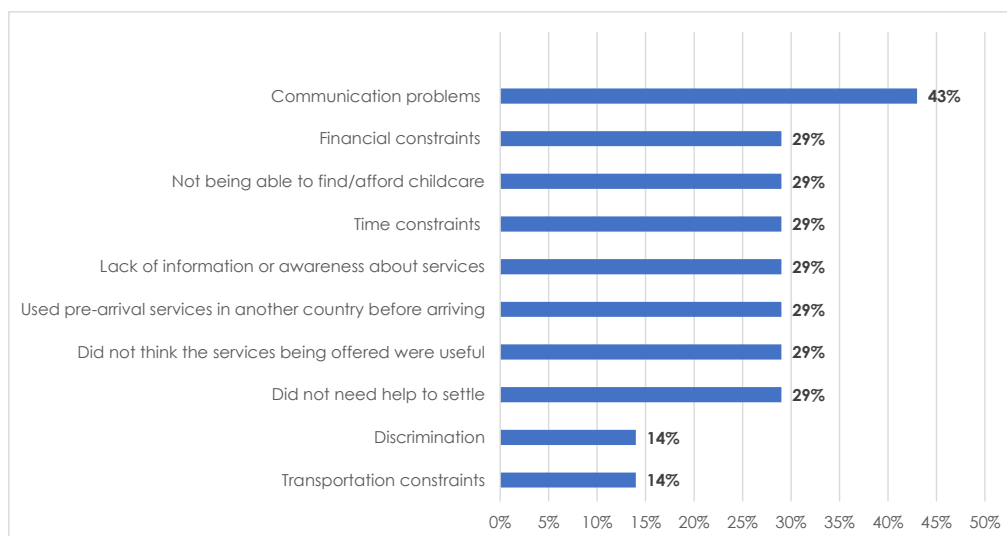
**Figure 13. Usefulness of the information received from AFNOO on a scale of one to five, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7.  
 Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

Importantly, some clients (43 per cent) who did not use the services identified in Figure 7, indicated it was due to communication problems (i.e. language barrier). Additionally, nearly two thirds of clients indicated it was due to financial constraints, not being able to find/afford childcare, time constraints, lack of information or awareness about services, used pre-arrival services in another country before arriving, did not think the services offered were useful, and did not need help settling. Notably, discrimination and transportation constraints did not play a large role in preventing clients from using AFNOO's services.

**Figure 14. Reasons for not using AFNOO's services, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7. N  
 Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

Clients also offered some suggestions on how services could be improved to better support immigrants in the future, such as direct outreach to communities and community members, being present in rural and remote communities, and by helping immigrants financially.<sup>2</sup> Clients were split on their preferred method to receive information from AFNOO in the future; 29 per cent prefer virtual group meetings, while 14 per cent prefer in-person group meetings, virtual one-on-one meetings, or one-on-one in-person meetings. Two clients did not answer this question.

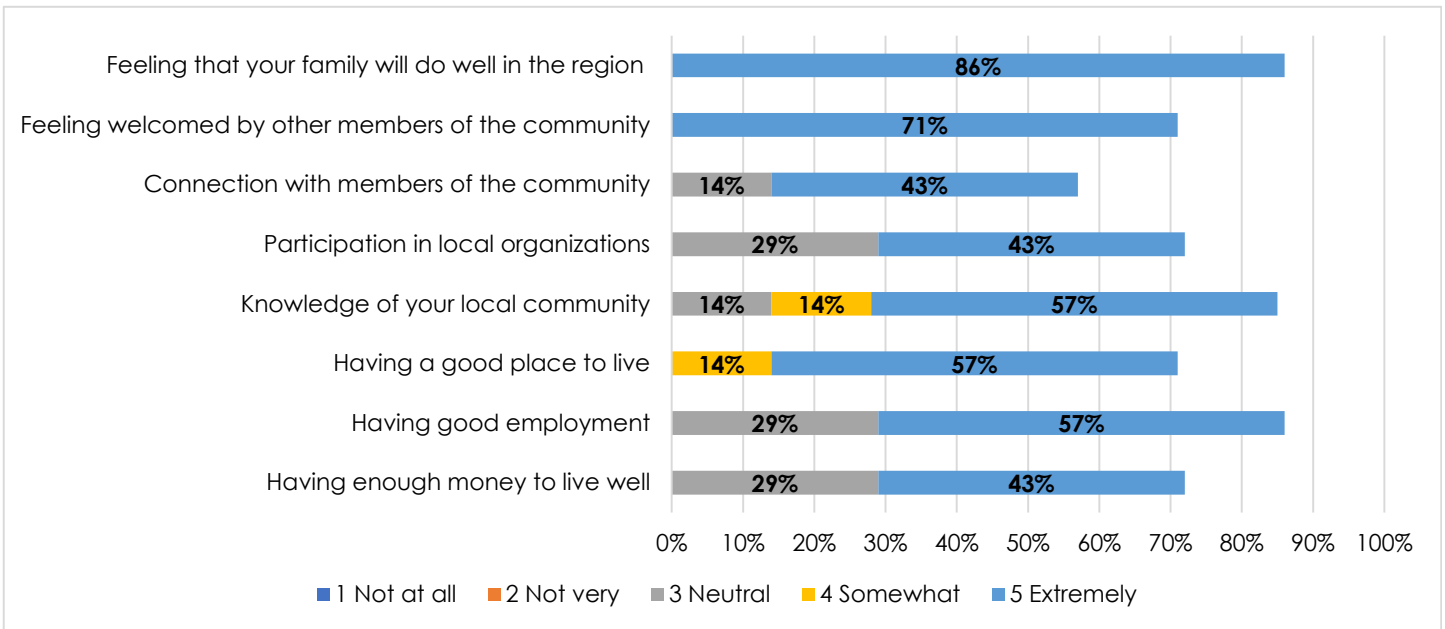
Results of the survey show that challenges experienced by 29 per cent of clients when settling in Northern Ontario was a mixed bag that includes:

- coping with financial constraints, lack of social interactions or new friends
- accessing religion/cultural services
- accessing culturally appropriate food
- getting access to childcare
- accessing critical services
- finding good quality housing
- getting used to the weather
- learning an official language/language barriers

Other challenges identified by fewer clients (14 per cent) include facing discrimination or racism and related trauma; missing social or family support from homeland; taking/getting access to education or training; adapting to a new culture or new values; and finding an adequate job.

When it comes to factors that contribute to feeling settled in Northwestern Ontario, a large majority of clients (86 per cent) noted that feeling their family will do well in the region is a very important contributing factor. As well, 71 per cent of clients noted that feeling welcomed by other members of the community is extremely important to feeling settled. Other important contributing factors include knowledge of the local community, having a good place to live, and having good employment, amongst others.

**Figure 15. Factors that contribute to feeling settled in Northwestern Ontario, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**



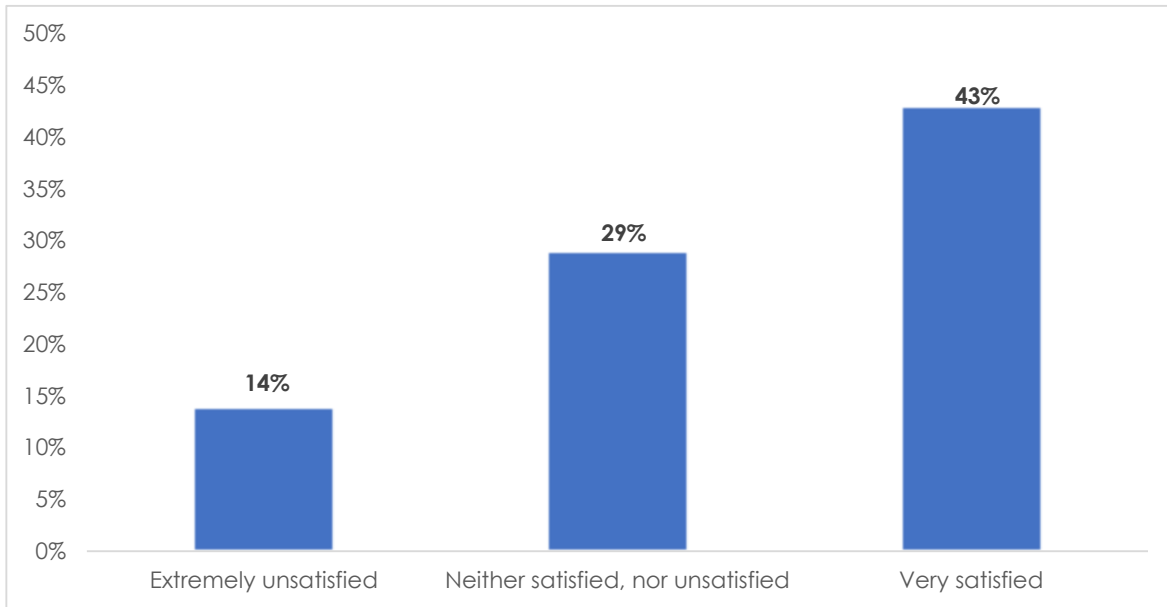
Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7.  
Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

When asked if clients find their community in Northwestern Ontario welcoming, 57 per cent of clients indicated they did, 29 per cent were uncertain or preferred not to say, and 14 per cent felt it was not. For context, a welcoming community provides adequate housing, accessible public transit, jobs, language and cultural support, and other essential services to help immigrants and diverse groups succeed.

2 Suggestions provided by survey takers do not necessarily align with organization's goals and/or mandate.

Moreover, 43 per cent of clients are "very satisfied" with their life in Northern Ontario, while 29 per cent are "neither satisfied nor unsatisfied" and 14 per cent "extremely unsatisfied". Another 14 per cent did not answer this question.

**Figure 16: Level of satisfaction with life in Northern Ontario, Client Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Client Satisfaction Survey. n=7.  
 Note: Data does not equal 100 per cent because one client did not answer this question.

Seventy-one per cent of clients are either "likely" or "very likely" to recommend living in the Northern Ontario region to a family member or friend, while 14 per cent are "neither likely nor unlikely". One client did not answer this question. Finally, 71 per cent of clients would like to know more about reconciliation and the history of Northern Ontario's Indigenous peoples, while the others did not answer this question.

## Client Survey Summary

In general, AFNOO's clients are highly skilled, French-speaking international immigrants seeking full-time employment in Canada, many of whom immigrated with dependent family members. In terms of their settlement, many clients received a variety of information to help them settle including how to receive support for basic needs and services and how to access critical services, such as medical, mental health, dental, and legal services. That being said, a large majority of clients noted that they also require services that provide information and assistance with important documents. Still, they found AFNOO's services to be generally useful and accessible. A small number of individual clients have heard of the RNIP and the same number of clients indicated they would consider applying for permanent residency under the RNIP stream. Half of AFNOO's clients (57 per cent) find their community in Northwestern Ontario welcoming, with many clients noting that the feeling that their family will do well in the region is a very important contributing factor to feeling settled in Northern Ontario.

Northern Policy Institute distributed the Employer Survey on AFNOO's behalf to employers that worked with the organization in some capacity, such as employers that used AFNOO's employment programs or hired an employee recommended by AFNOO. In total, six employers completed the 2022 Employer Satisfaction Survey.

# Employer Satisfaction Survey

## General Demographics

Employers are in either Thunder Bay, Fort Frances, Geraldton, or Sioux Lookout, and primarily operate in one of the following sectors: mining, quarrying, or oil and gas extraction; retail trade; accommodation and food services; public administration; or other services (except public administration). All employers operate with a workforce of at least 40 full-time and/or part-time employees.

**Table 1. Approximate number of each employee type, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**

	Full-Time Employees	Part-Time Employees
Employer 1	20-29	20-29
Employer 2	40+	x
Employer 3	40+	40+
Employer 4	10-19	40+
Employer 5	40+	40+
Employer 6	30-39	30-39

Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.

A majority of employers (67 per cent) indicated that English is the primary language used in their workplace, one employer indicated that French is the primary language in their workplace and another employer indicated their workplace is bilingual French and English. Notably, 83 per cent of employers indicated that French language skills were a benefit to their organization.

## Settlement and Employment Services

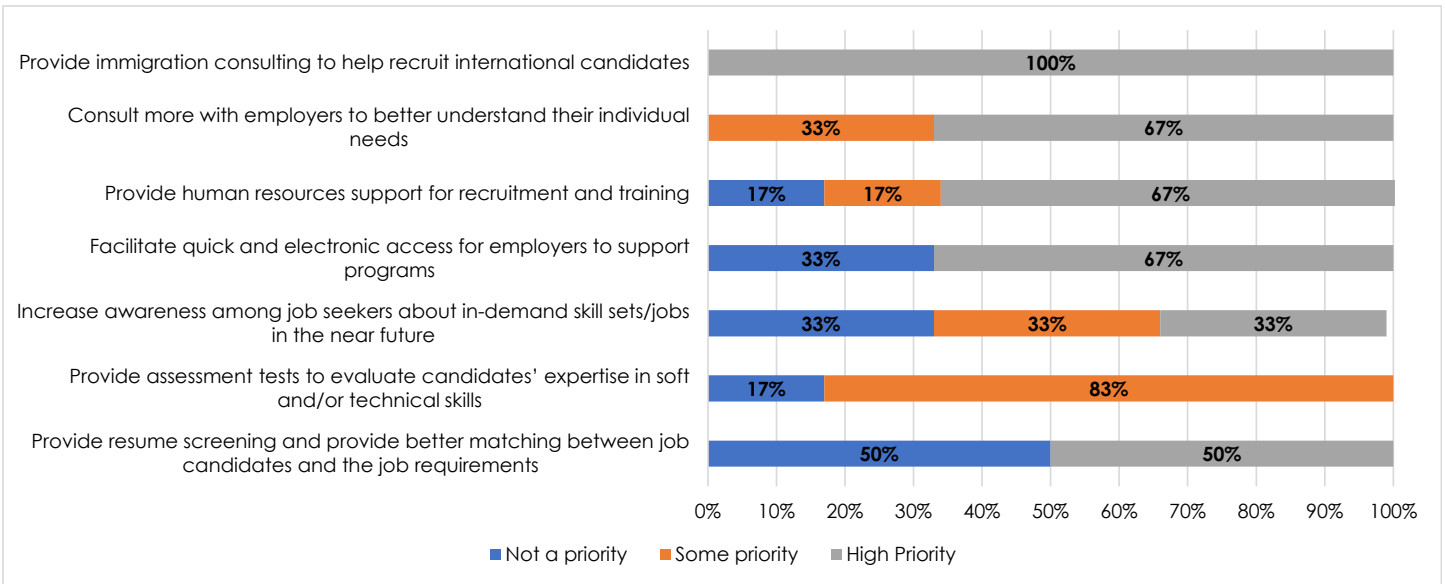
When asked to select the priority level of services that should be emphasized and/or improved by settlement service providers, employment agencies, and other organizations to better help in immigrant employee recruitment and training, all respondents felt immigration consulting to help recruit international candidates to be a "high priority" item.<sup>3</sup> Other services that should be emphasized and/or improved include consulting with employers to better understand their individual needs, providing human resources support for recruitment and training, and facilitating quick and electronic access for employers to support programs. Notably, services that provide resume screening and provide better matching between the job candidate and the job requirements was thought to be a low priority item by 50 per cent of respondents, while the other 50 per cent considers it to be a high priority item.

<sup>3</sup> Note: not all organizations have the capacity and/or mandate to provide these services.



**Figure 17. Priority level of services that should be emphasized and/or improved by settlement service providers, employment agencies, and organizations to better help in immigrant employee recruitment and training, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**

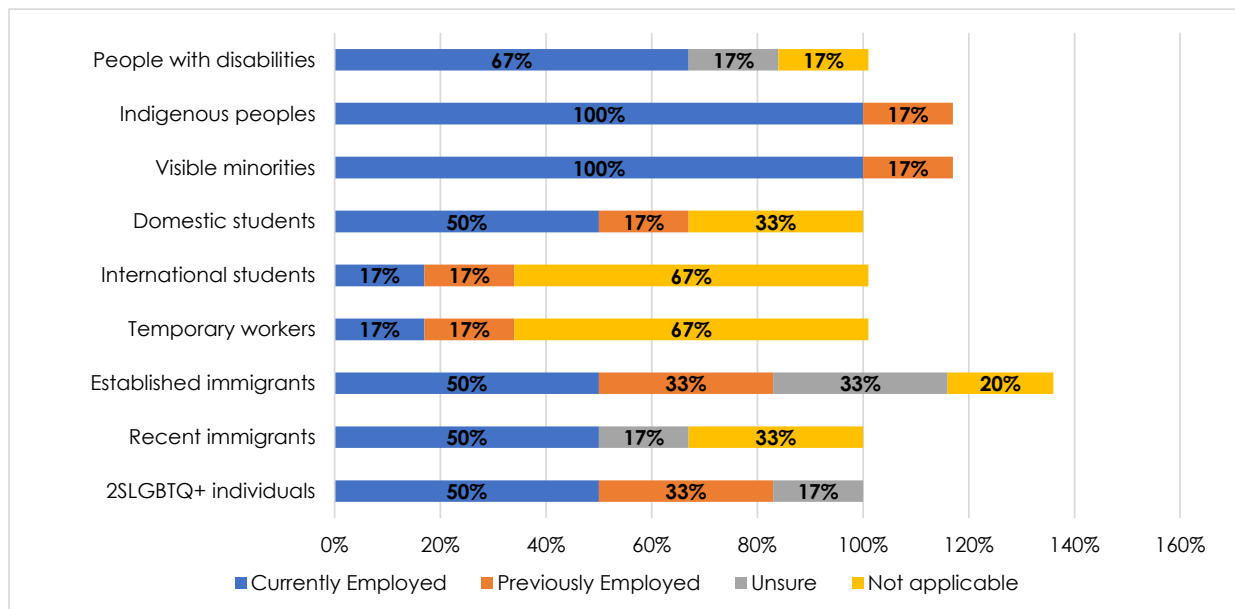
Note: not all organizations have the capacity and/or mandate to provide these services.



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.

All employers who responded to this survey currently employ Indigenous peoples and visible minorities. A large majority of employers (80 per cent) also currently employ people with disabilities. On the other hand, few employers currently employ international students (20 per cent) or temporary residents (20 per cent), although 67 per cent of respondents indicated they have done so in the past.

**Figure 18. Demographics of employees, past and present, within employer organizations, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**



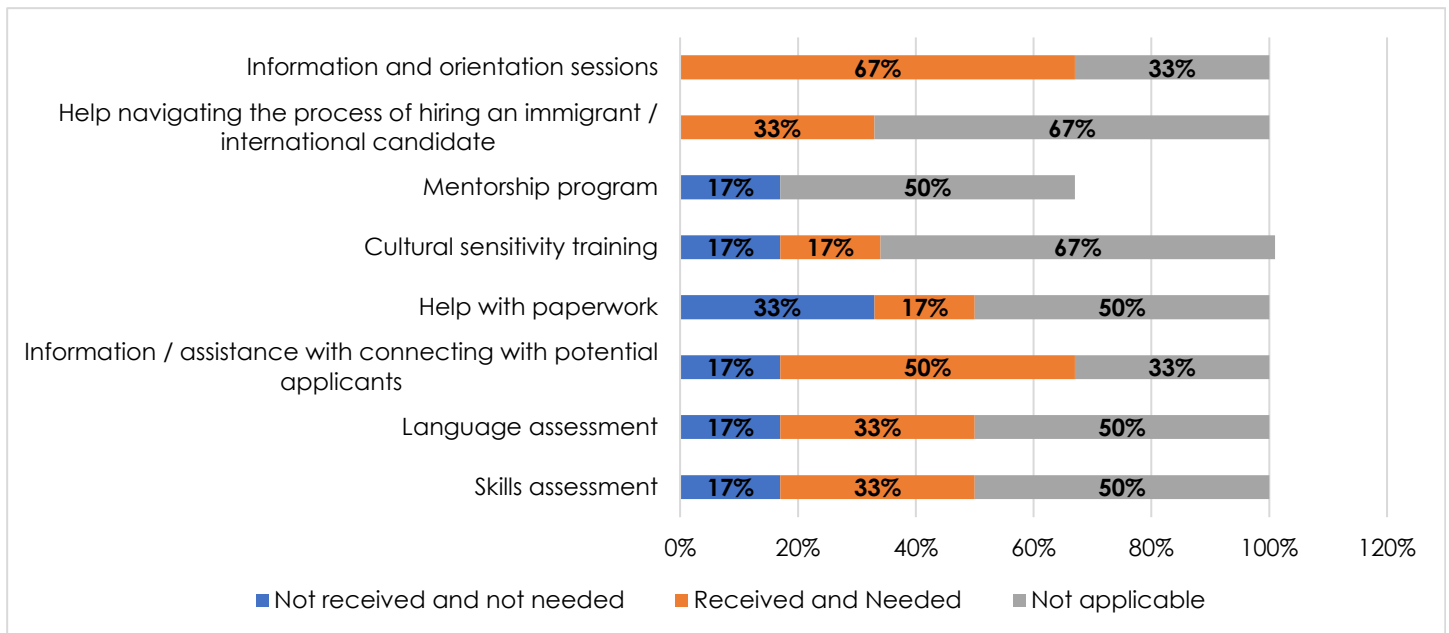
Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.  
 Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

When it comes to the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) program, 80 per cent of employers were either “not at all familiar” or “not so familiar” with the program, although they all expressed an interest in learning more about the program and potentially using it in the future to recruit employees. Moreover, 60 per cent of employers have not used immigration streams to recruit employees, while 40 per cent have used the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (i.e. Francophone Mobility Stream).

In terms of familiarity with the settlement and employment services provided by AFNOO, 60 per cent of employers felt they were “very familiar” with their services, while 40 per cent indicated they were “somewhat familiar”. One employer heard about the services offered by AFNOO via regional tours; two heard about services from a local project coordinator; and two heard about them through other organizations, specifically Rainy River Development and Société Économique de l’Ontario. Additionally, employers noted that their organization is interested in settlement and employment services provided by AFNOO to fill labour market shortages, overcome resource scarcity, and to gain visibility. All employers want to use the settlement services provided by AFNOO to recruit more employees in the future.

Results from the survey found that information and orientation sessions were the most “received and needed” services offered by AFNOO (67 per cent), followed by information/assistance connecting with potential applicants (40 per cent). Notably, a large majority of respondents indicated many services offered by AFNOO were not applicable to them, including help navigating the process of hiring immigrant/international candidates (67 per cent) and cultural sensitivity training (67 per cent). Another 50 per cent of respondents indicated that services relating to help with paperwork, language assessment, and skills assessment, as well as the mentorship program were not applicable to their organization.

**Figure 19. Information and services received from AFNOO when hiring immigrants and/or international candidates, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**

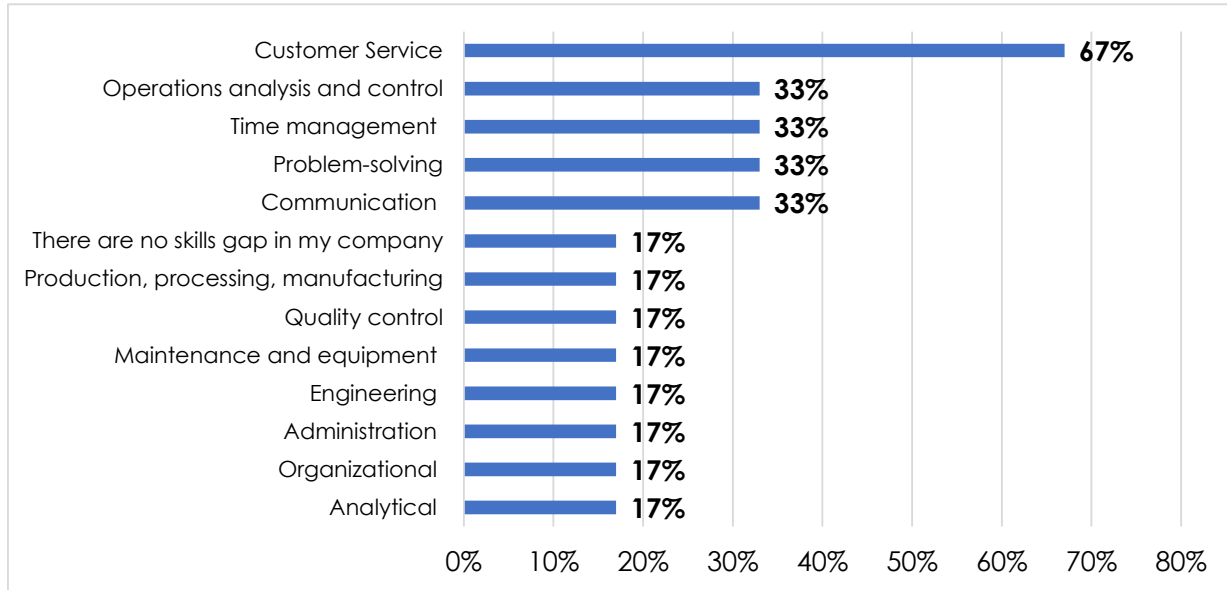


Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.  
Note: Where data does not equal 100 per cent, two employers did not answer the question.

## Recruitment and Skills Gaps

In terms of skills gaps, most employers are looking to fill customer service skill gaps (67 per cent), followed by skills gaps in operations analysis and control (33 per cent), time management (33 per cent), problem-solving (33 per cent), and communication (33 per cent).

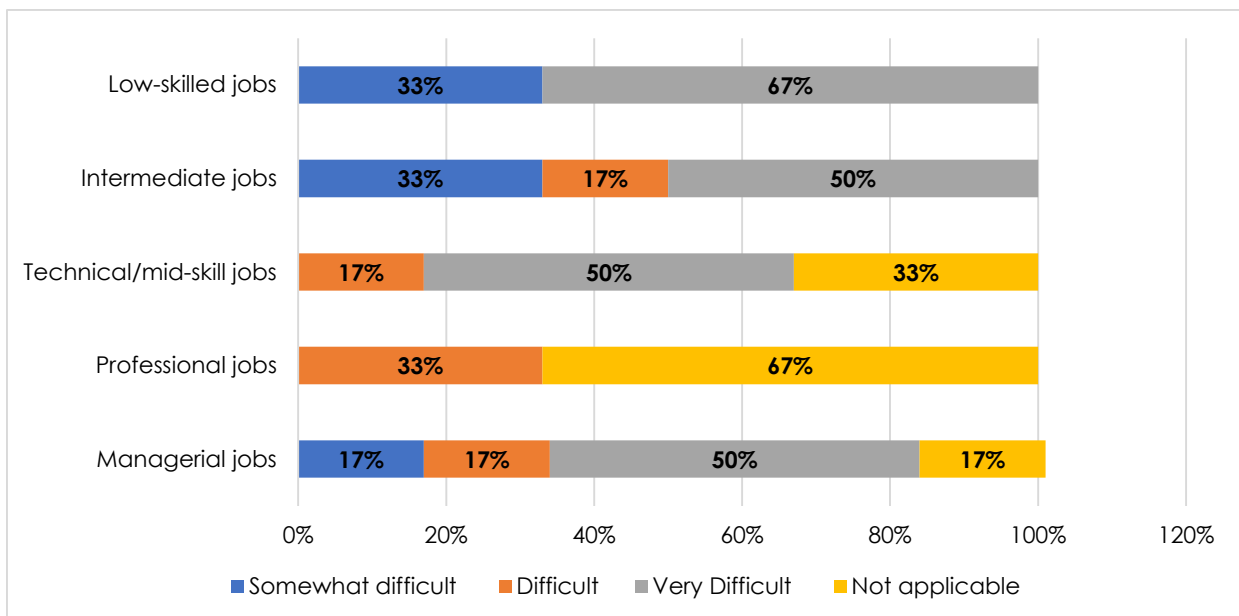
**Figure 20. Skills gaps that employer organizations are looking to fill when recruiting new employees, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022 organizations, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.  
 Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

When asked about jobs that are difficult to fill, 67 per cent of employers felt that low-skilled jobs were "very difficult" to fill. Additionally, 50 per cent of employers also felt intermediate jobs, technical/middle-skill jobs, and managerial jobs were "very difficult" to fill. Another 33 per cent of employers felt intermediate jobs to be only "somewhat difficult" to fill.

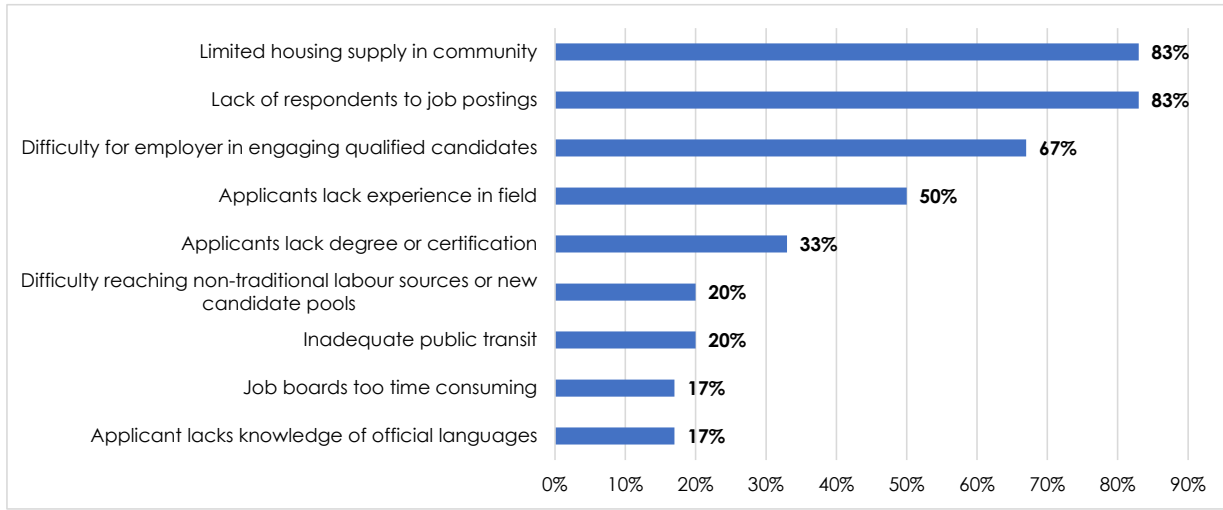
**Figure 21. Level of difficulty in recruiting for specific job categories in the past 12 months, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected most of the employers who responded to this survey. Most commonly, 50 per cent of employers increased hiring personnel. At the same time, 33 per cent laid off personnel, either temporarily or permanently. Another 17 per cent of respondents reduced or stopped hiring personnel, while others indicated that the pandemic did not have an impact on hiring personnel. When it comes to primary barriers to finding and recruiting employees, 83 per cent of employers indicated a limited housing supply in the community and a lack of respondents to job postings as their primary barriers. Other common barriers include difficulty for employers in engaging qualified candidates (67 per cent) and applicants lack experience in their field (50 per cent).

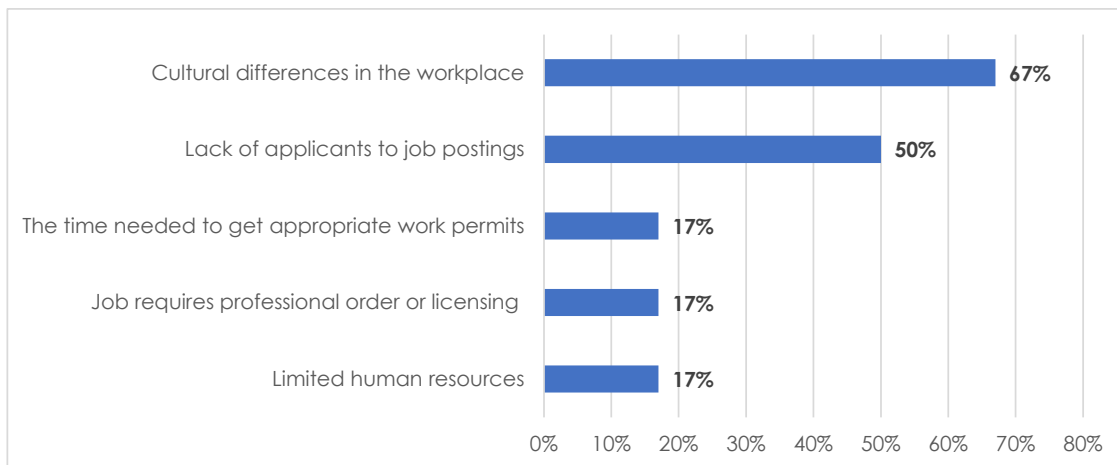
**Figure 22. Primary barriers to finding and recruiting employees, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

The main obstacles for employers when hiring an immigrant and/or international candidate are cultural differences in the workplace (67 per cent) and lack of applicants to job postings (50 per cent). Other obstacles that employers noted include the time required to get appropriate work permits (17 per cent), the job requires professional order or licensing (17 per cent), and limited human resources (17 per cent).

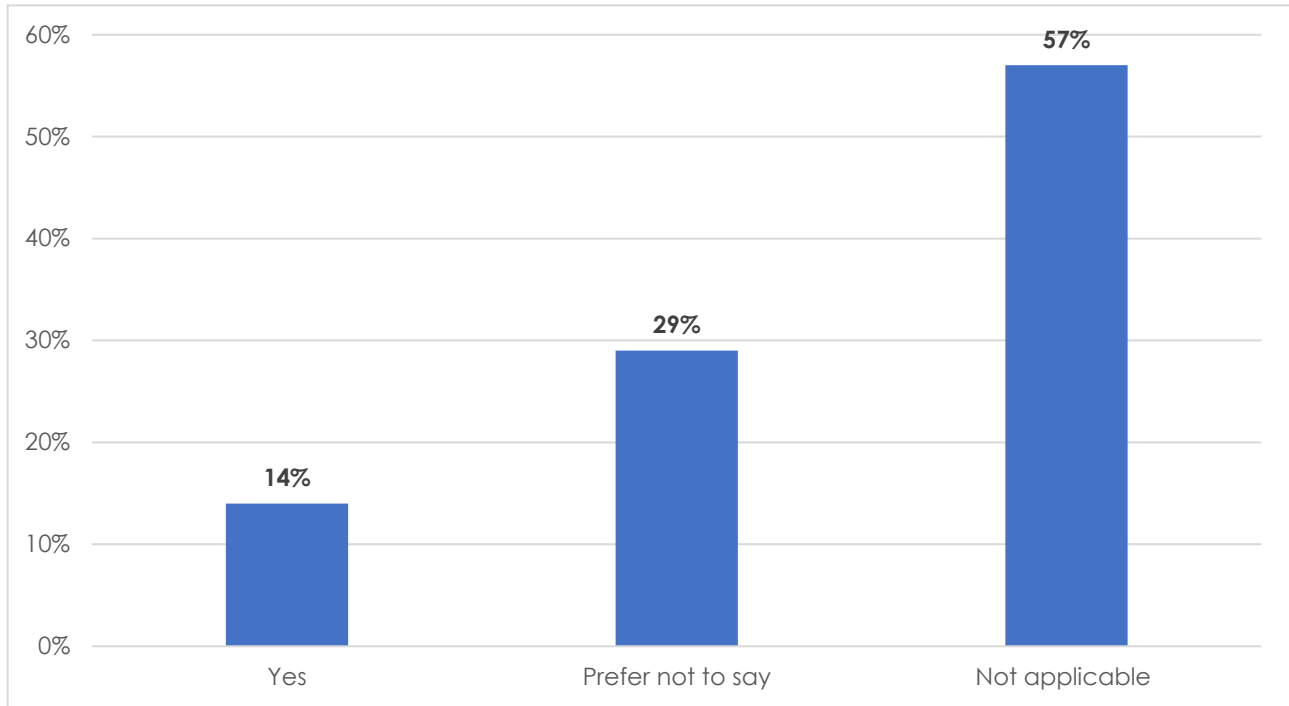
**Figure 23. Main obstacles for employers when hiring an immigrant and/or international candidate, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

When asked about their experience hiring newcomers, 50 per cent of employers noted they have had "mostly positive" experiences, while the other half of employers noted they have had "somewhat positive" experiences, they are neutral, or this question did not apply to them.

**Figure 24. Employers who have had negative experiences when hiring a newcomer or international candidate.**



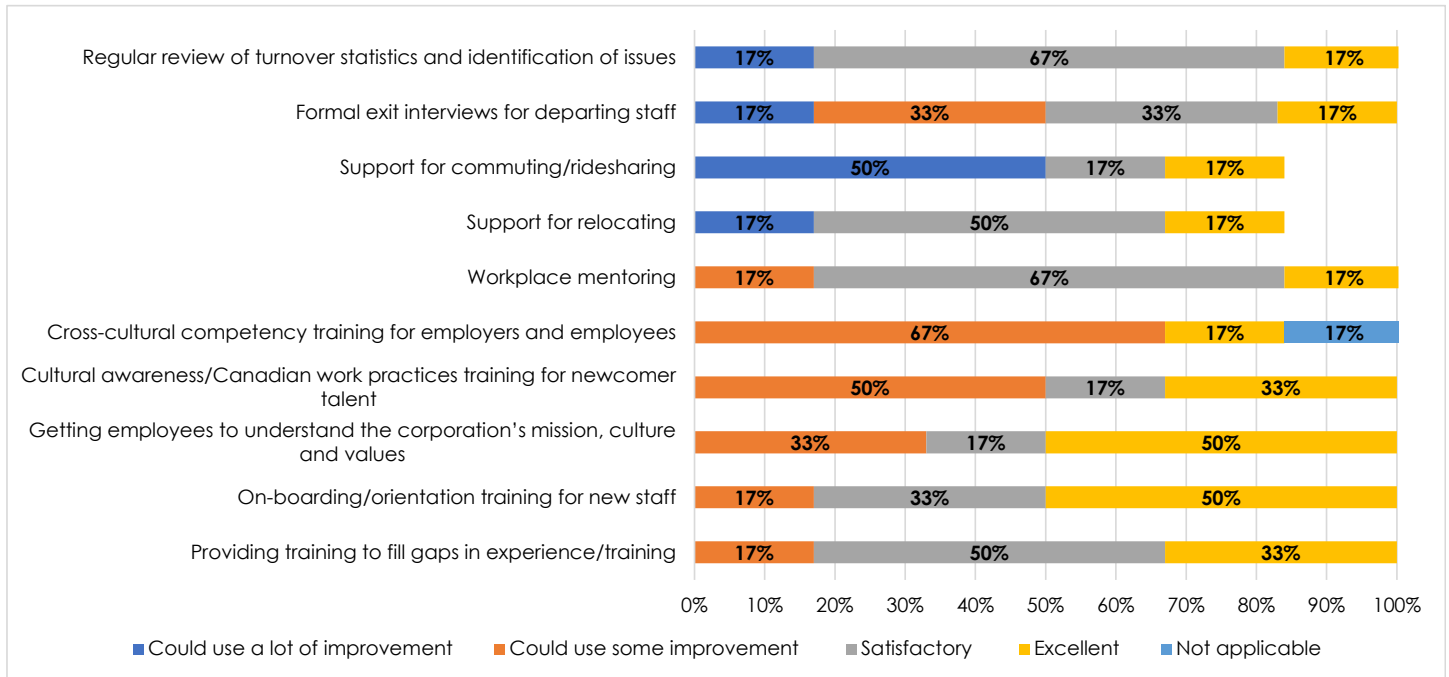
Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.

Moreover, 50 per cent of employers indicated they had not had any negative experiences when hiring a newcomer or international candidate, while 33 per cent of employers preferred not to say. Notably, one employer indicated having a negative experience due to a Labour Market Impact Assessment application they completed being declined. Importantly, however, all employers indicated they "foresee that in the near future newcomers will become an increasingly important source of new hires for our company" (67 per cent) or that "newcomers have already become an increasingly important source of new hires for our company" (33 per cent).

In terms of human resource policies and their implementation, 84 per cent of employers rated policies around "getting employees to understand the corporation's mission, culture, and values", as well as policies that relate to "workplace mentoring" as "satisfactory" or "excellent". Additionally, 83 per cent of employers also rated policies that relate to "onboarding/ orientation training for new staff" and "providing training to fill gaps in experience/training" as "satisfactory" or "excellent". On the contrary, half of employers indicated that policies that offer "support for commuting/ ridesharing" require "a lot of improvement". A relatively low number of employers (17 per cent) felt that policies on "regular review of turnover statistics and identification of issues", "formal exit interviews for departing staff", and "support for relocating" "could use a lot of improvement".



Figure 25. Rated human resources policies and their implementation, Employer Satisfaction Survey 2022



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=6.  
Note: Where the response rate does not equal 100 per cent, one employer refrained from rating that particular human resource policy.

## Employer Survey Summary

In general, AFNOO's employer clients are in the Northwestern region and operate in a variety of sectors including hospitality and resource extraction. All employer clients recognize that newcomers are an increasingly important source of new hires. However, they expressed the need for immigration consulting services to help recruit newcomers. Furthermore, while a large majority of employers felt information and orientation sessions were the most "received and needed" services offered by AFNOO, many employers also indicated that some of AFNOO's services were not applicable to them. Half of employers noted having "most positive" experiences when hiring newcomers.

When it comes to primary barriers to finding and recruiting employees, 83 per cent of employers indicated a limited housing supply in the community.

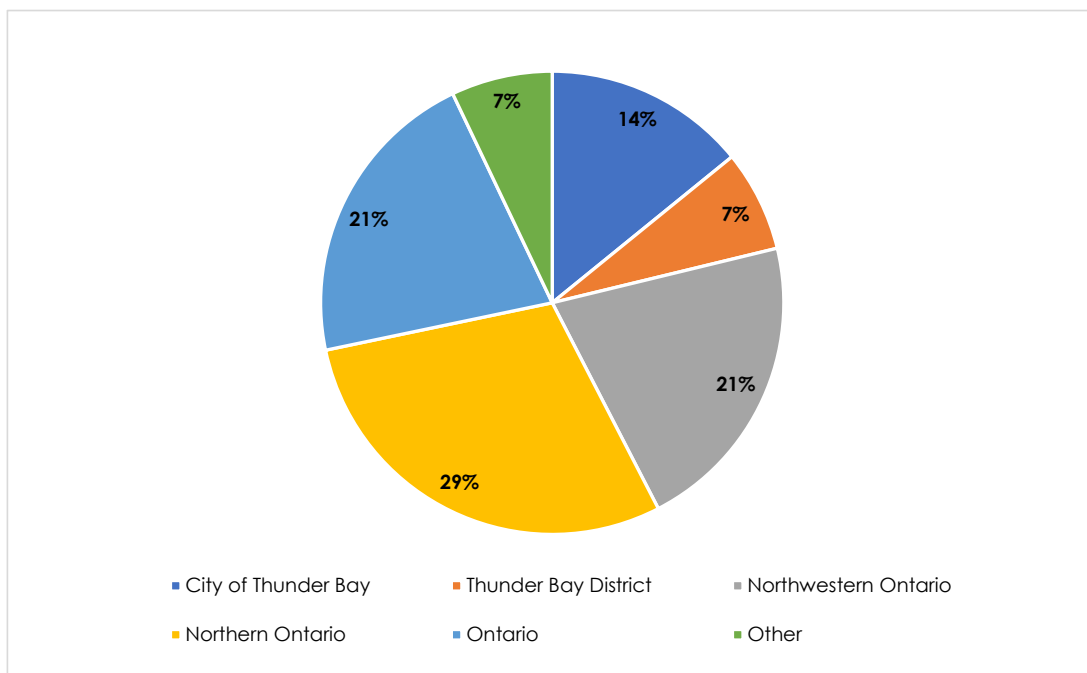
# Partner Satisfaction Survey

Northern Policy Institute distributed the Partner Survey to organizations that have collaborated with AFNOO via client referral, event collaboration, cross promotion of programs and services, and the like. In total, 14 partner organizations completed the 2022 Partner Satisfaction Survey.

## General Demographics

A small majority of partner organizations (57 per cent) have head offices in the City of Thunder Bay, followed by 21 per cent of partners who have head offices in the City of Greater Sudbury or Southern Ontario (i.e. Ottawa and the Region of York). In terms of geographical service area, about one third of partner organizations (29 per cent) provide services throughout Northern Ontario, followed by 21 per cent of partners who provide services to either the Northwestern region or the entire province. Other partners serve either the City of Thunder Bay, the District of Thunder Bay or "other" (i.e. the Region of York).

**Figure 26. Service area of partner organizations, Partner Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=14. Note: graph total is equal to 99 per cent rather than 100 per cent due to numerical rounding.

## Services and Programs

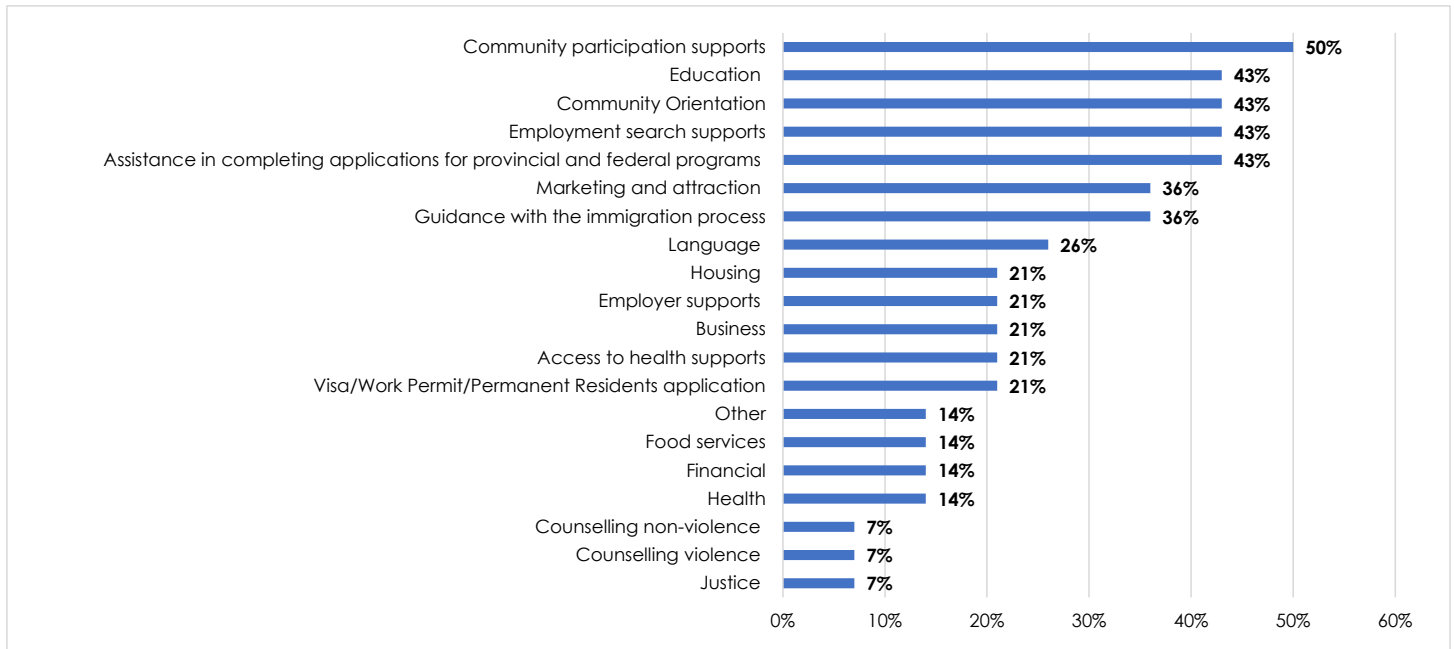
Collectively, partner organizations are mandated to provide services to a wide range of clients including permanent and temporary residents, youth and students, Indigenous peoples, employers, and Francophones. Roughly a third of the partners provide services exclusively to Francophones. The most popular service provided is community participation supports<sup>4</sup> (50 per cent), followed equally by education,<sup>5</sup> community orientation, employment search supports,<sup>6</sup> and assistance in completing applications for provincial and federal programs (43 per cent). In contrast, few partner organizations (seven per cent) provide counselling and justice services.

<sup>4</sup> Education includes services such as language training, discussion circles, schools, and colleges.

<sup>5</sup> Community orientation includes services such as community connections, community tours, and referral to community resources.

<sup>6</sup> Employment supports include assistance in completing applications like Labour Market Impact Assessments, providing cultural competency training for employees, and entrepreneurial support.

**Figure 27. Service types provided to clients, Partner Satisfaction Survey 2022**

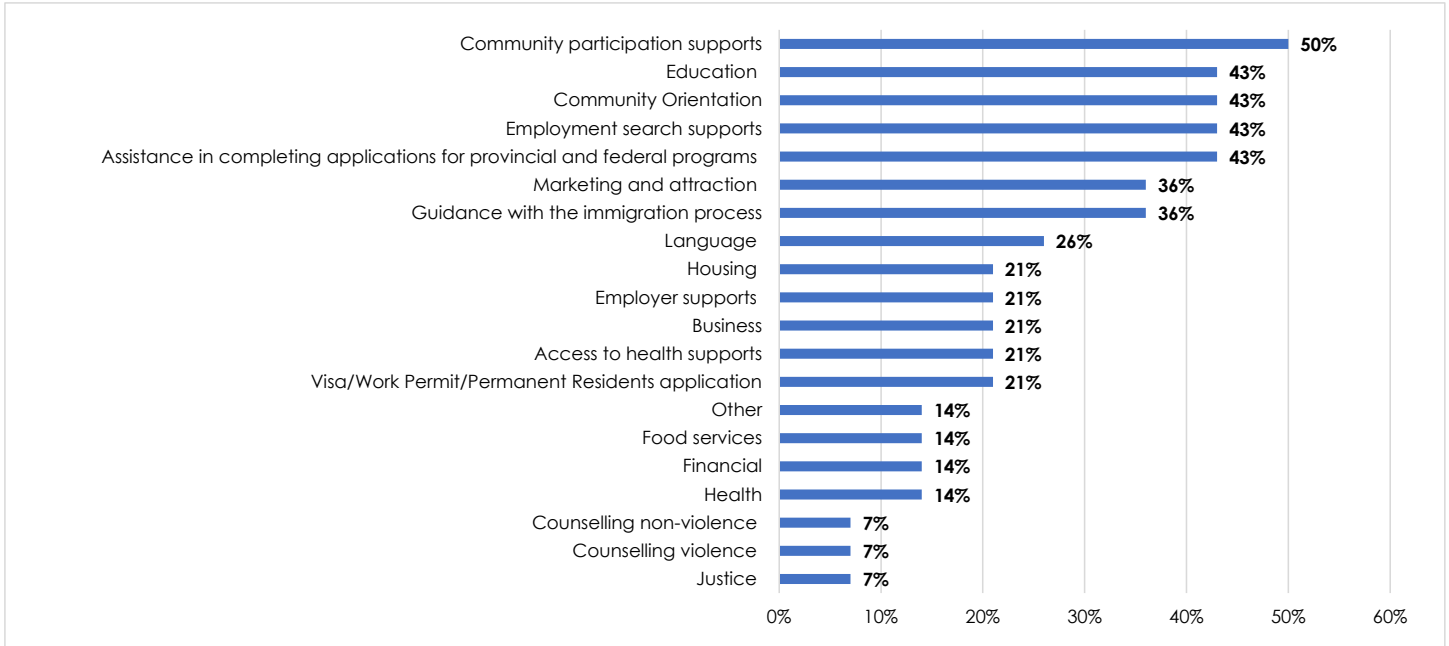


Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Partner Satisfaction Survey. n=14. Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent. Education includes services such as language training, discussion circles, schools, and colleges. Community orientation includes services such as community connections, community tours, and referral to community resources. Employment supports include assistance in completing applications like Labour Market Impact Assessments, providing cultural competency training for employees, and entrepreneurial support.

Notably, 57 per cent of partner organizations provide services exclusively in French, followed by 21 per cent of partners who provide services exclusively in English or provide French/English bilingual services. Additionally, one partner who provides French/English bilingual services noted they also provide services in Arabic as well.

When it comes to programs and services to promote community welcomeness and acceptance of newcomers, 26 per cent of partners indicated they champion events/workshops on where and how to find services, mentorship programs, promoting and/or providing diversity training to employers and their employees, delivering cross-cultural awareness training to local employers, staff employed by organizations serving newcomers, and/or newcomers. A further 21 per cent of employers also promoted community welcomeness and acceptance of newcomers by being involved in introductory events/workshops to a community, inviting newcomers to volunteer in social/cultural events, and participating in public awareness campaigns promoting the value and benefits of immigration.

**Figure 28. Programs and/or services in place to promote community welcomeness and acceptance of newcomers, Partner Satisfaction Survey 2022**



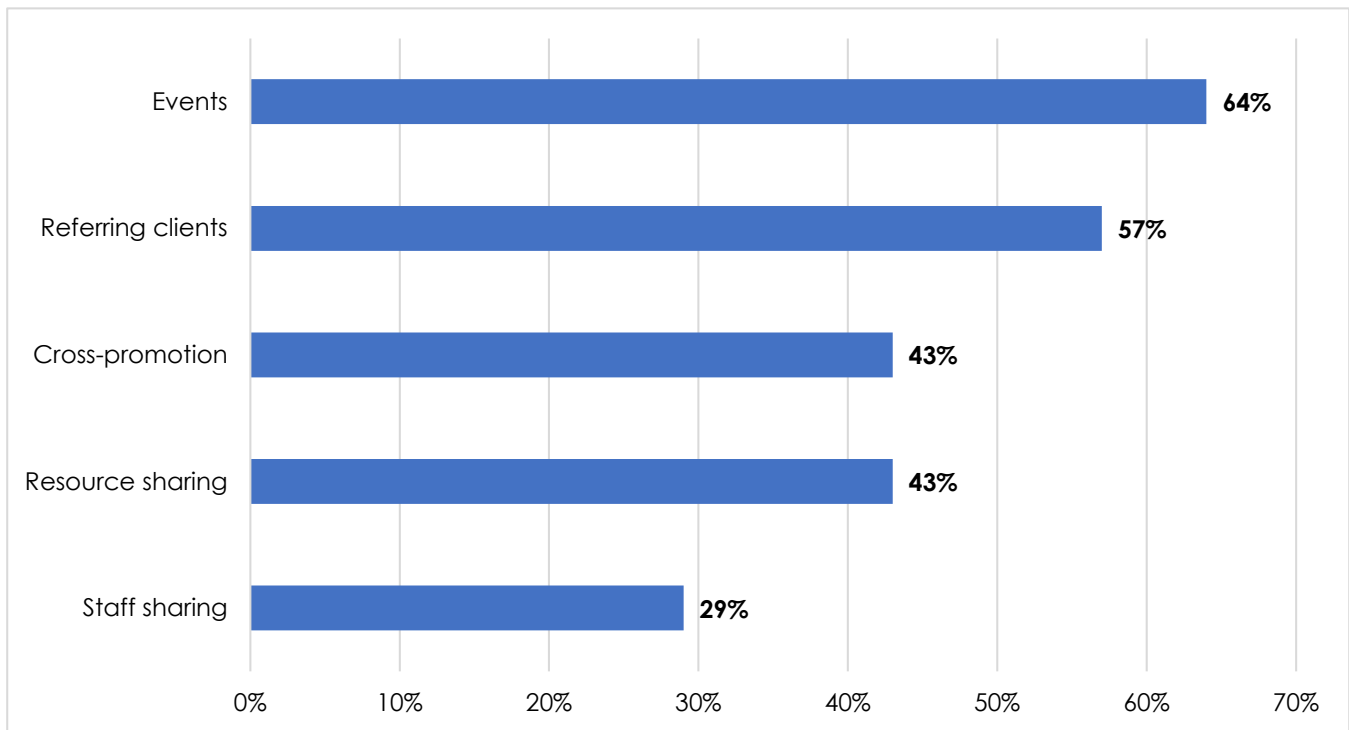
Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=14.  
 Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not total 100 per cent.

When it comes to the COVID-19 pandemic, 57 per cent of partner organizations indicated they were affected by the pandemic, while 21 per cent indicated they were not. Seven per cent indicated they were either unsure or preferred not to say. When asked to expand on how their organizations were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, 88 per cent of partners who indicated were affected by the pandemic noted they were forced to shift to virtual delivery of services and programs, while 12 per cent indicated their services had to be suspended.

## Collaboration with AFNOO

In terms of collaboration with AFNOO, most partner organizations (64 per cent) had collaborated by partnering to host and deliver events, such as information sessions and workshops. Just over half of partner organizations (57 per cent) collaborated via client referral, while fewer number of partners (43 per cent) partnered via cross-promotion of services and resource sharing. Few partners (29 per cent) collaborated via staff sharing.

**Figure 29. Type of collaboration with AFNOO, Partner Satisfaction Survey 2022**



Source: Author's calculations. Data retrieved between September 27 to October 25, 2022. AFNOO Employer Satisfaction Survey. n=14.

Note: Answers for this question were non-exclusive; therefore, data does not add up to 100 per cent.

Of the partners who had collaborated with AFNOO via client referral, 36 per cent gained between 1 and 5 clients, or an unspecified amount, as a result of collaboration. Fifty-seven per cent of partners referred clients to AFNOO, although a majority of partners were not aware of the exact number of clients. One partner from a post-secondary institution indicated it had been three clients over the past semester.

When asked about successes from client referrals, partner organizations collectively noted that clients feel more supported by the community and felt that tracking results in shared folders is beneficial to all. When asked about the challenges of client referrals, partners collectively noted they did not have a high volume of clients that required services offered by AFNOO or clients eventually abandoned services. Moreover, 64 per cent of partners indicated that referrals across partners are happening effectively, while 21 per cent were unsure. The remaining partners did not answer the question. Overall, however, the survey results found that the most significant impact of collaboration with AFNOO has been greater support for Francophone newcomers.

When asked about actual frequency of interaction with AFNOO compared to desired frequency, 64 per cent of partner organizations indicated they interacted with AFNOO their preferred amount, which included daily, weekly, and monthly interactions, or less. Notably, 14 per cent of partners indicated they interacted with AFNOO less than their desired amount; one partner noted they interact with AFNOO one to two times per year when their desired amount of interaction time is every other month. Another partner noted they interact with AFNOO three to five times a year when they would prefer to meet once per month. Two partners did not answer this question.



When asked for both positive and negative outcomes from their partnership with AFNOO, feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Collectively, partner organizations felt their partnership with AFNOO led to an increase in:

- awareness about relevant programs being offered in Northern Ontario
- service coverage and presence in Northern Ontario
- choices of services for newcomers and increase in regional capacity to serve newcomers
- participation at events and activities

No negative outcomes were mentioned.

In terms of activities that would help partner organizations and AFNOO reach their respective targets, partners suggested coordinating regional trips, continuing to partner on events to build more connections, and continuing to communicate regularly with each other. When it comes to potential improvements AFNOO could target to improve partnership, some suggestions include improving staff turnover, more human resources, and more information about what AFNOO can do and cannot do.

## Partner Survey Summary

In general, partner organizations are in either Thunder Bay or Greater Sudbury, with geographical service areas that range from the City of Thunder Bay to the Northwestern region, to the entire province. Collectively, partner organizations serve a wide range of clients, including permanent and temporary residents, youth and students, Indigenous peoples, employers, and Francophones by offering an encompassing list of services. Partner organizations primarily collaborate with AFNOO via event collaboration and client referrals. Partner organizations feel their partnership with AFNOO is overwhelmingly positive, for example, by leading to an increased awareness about relevant programs being offered in Northern Ontario as well as service coverage and presence in Northern Ontario.

# Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the data collected from all three surveys, as well as the Client Intake Forms, this report offers nine recommendations to support AFNOO's mandate.

### **1. Promote the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP).**

Given a small number of individual clients have heard of the RNIP and many employer clients are either "not at all" or "not so familiar" with the program, both could greatly benefit from information sessions and packages that provide details about the RNIP. While information sessions could target clients and employers at large, information packages could target individual clients and employers who express interest in learning more about the program.

### **2. Prioritize services that offer support with immigration and other important documents.**

Many individual clients require information and assistance with immigration and other important documents. Several clients who received these services felt they were the most useful to them. As such, AFNOO ought to prioritize and promote these services to individual clients. In the same sense, all employer clients felt a "high priority" item is immigration consulting to help recruit international candidates. Therefore, it is further recommended that AFNOO consider submitting a funding request to assist in hiring an immigration consultant or having information available to connect employer clients with local immigration consultants.

### **3. Continue to build strong partnerships with organizations in the education sector.**

Given that a majority of individual clients are employed within the education sector and that a relatively large majority of clients are hoping to be employed within the education sector, it would be advantageous for AFNOO to continue to build strong partnerships with organizations in that sector. This includes post-secondary institutions that can disseminate information about AFNOO's services through their own client interactions, as well as with regional school boards and

childcare centres that are potential employers. It is further suggested that AFNOO continues to build strong partnerships within the education sector to deliver English language support services to clients with beginner level English skills.

#### **4. Continue to build strong partnerships with municipalities, local public health authorities, and other community organizations.**

Given that just under half of AFNOO's clients indicated they need information and help with daily living, access to health services, and community involvement and participation in social, cultural, and sports activities, AFNOO must continue to build strong partnerships with municipalities, local public health authorities, and other community partners that provide essential services to newcomers to establish a referral system or gain the knowledge required to advise clients on these services.

#### **5. Engage in a consultation process with employer clients to determine their needs.**

The results of the Employer Satisfaction Survey show a disconnect between employer services offered by AFNOO and services that employers noted as useful and necessary. To better align the services, AFNOO ought to engage in a consultation process with employers to determine their program and service needs. The engagement process could involve one-on-one interviews, group interviews, or information sessions with employers. It is further recommended that AFNOO explore ways to increase their capacity to offer more of the services that employers indicated were most needed, such as information and orientation sessions and services that help connect to the potential applicants.

#### **6. Engage in a consultation process with partners to determine their needs.**

Numerous clients indicated they do not meet with AFNOO as they would desire. To ensure the collaboration between partners is mutually beneficial and to build meaningful relationships, AFNOO should consult with partners to determine their desired frequency of meetings per month or year, and the objectives to be achieved during meetings.

#### **7. Prioritize direct outreach to communities and community members, particularly in rural and remote areas.**

Due to the low and sparse population in Northern Ontario, services tend to be more accessible to clients in larger "service hub" communities despite the same level of need for these services exists in rural and remote communities. To ensure folks living outside of service hub communities also benefit from AFNOO's services, it is recommended that AFNOO prioritizes direct outreach to rural and remote communities and community members. Outreach to community members ought to include information sessions about AFNOO's services as well as outreach to local settlement organizations to form strategic partnerships.

#### **8. Prioritize family-friendly welcoming initiatives.**

Most clients indicated they came to Northern Ontario with their families, including their children. Moreover, clients noted feeling their family will do well in the region is a very important contributing factor to feeling settled in Northern Ontario. Thus, welcome initiatives that are family-oriented ought to be prioritized and promoted by AFNOO and their partners.

#### **9. Host networking events for employers.**

Given that many employers in Northern Ontario employ newcomers, there is an opportunity for AFNOO and its partners to market their services through employers in the region to expand their reach to Francophone newcomers. To facilitate this mutually beneficial relationship, it is recommended that AFNOO and its partners host a series of networking events aimed at employers. The objective should be information sharing about AFNOO's services and building relationships with employers.

To compare, client survey data indicates clients learned about AFNOO's settlement and employment services equally from friends and/or family in Canada (29 per cent), settlement workers (29 per cent), independent research using official information (29 per cent) or their employers (29 per cent). Fewer clients became familiar with AFNOO's services from independent research using other media (14 per cent).

It is further recommended that AFNOO continue with this annual data collection to track client, employer, and partner satisfaction, an important resource to guide their activities. Importantly, by continuing this initiative, year-over-year analysis can be conducted to provide greater insight into opportunities and areas for improvement.

## References

Canadian Human Rights Commission, What is Discrimination? Accessed May 4, 2023, <https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/about-human-rights/what-discrimination>

## Appendix A: Client Survey Questions

### General Information

1. Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)

2. Do you currently reside in Northwestern Ontario?

Yes

No

3. Why do you no longer reside in Northwestern Ontario, and where do you currently reside?

4. Canadian postal code (ex. P1P1P1)

5. Country of origin

### Immigration Program Use

6. Have you heard about the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) program?

Yes

No

Unsure

7. Would you consider applying for permanent residence under the RNIP stream?

Yes, I am going to apply/I have applied

Yes, I am interested but I am not eligible (specify)

No, there is another immigration stream that would work better for me

No, I do not know enough about the program

Not applicable (ex. I already have permanent residence; I am applying for permanent residence under a different stream)

8. How did you learn about the immigration program you used? (select all that apply)

Friends and/or family in country of origin

Friends and/or family in Canada

Settlement workers

Post-secondary institution

Employer

Immigration lawyers and/or consultants

Independent research using official information (Government of Canada, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada)

Independent research using other media (online forums and discussions, online connections with recent immigrants)

Other (please specify)

9. What credentials did you have when applying for the immigration program you used? Ex. years of work experience in/outside of Canada, credential from Canadian/international post-secondary institution, etc.

### Northwestern Ontario Employment Situation and Assistance

10. What is your current employment status?

Employed full time (30 hours, or more, per week)

Employed part time (less than 30 hours per week)

Self-employed

Unemployed and looking for work

Unemployed and not looking for work (ex. Retired)

Unable to work

Not applicable

11. What are the main challenges/obstacles you face(d) in your job search? (choose all that apply)

Lack of professional work experience

Language barrier

Recognition of education credentials

Obtaining a license in Canada/Ontario for a regular profession

- Lack of local experience
  - Access to employment programs
  - Discrimination
  - Limitations caused by transportation options
  - Not applicable
  - Not applicable –no challenges/obstacles experienced
  - Other (please specify)
12. In what industry are you currently employed?
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
  - Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
  - Utilities (gas, hydro, telecommunications, internet)
  - Construction Manufacturing Wholesale trade
  - Retail Trade
  - Transportation and Warehousing
  - Information
  - Finance and Insurance
  - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
  - Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
  - Management of Companies and Enterprises
  - Administrative and Support and Waste management and Remediation Services
  - Educational services
  - Health Care and Social Assistance
  - Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
  - Accommodation and Food Services
  - Other Services (except Public Administration)
  - Public Administration
  - Unsure
  - Prefer not to say
  - Other (please specify)

13. At what skill level is your occupation?
- Management jobs (ex. restaurant managers, mine managers, shore captains) – Level 0
  - Professional jobs that usually call for a degree from a university (ex. doctors, dentists, architects) – Level A
  - Technical jobs and skilled trades that usually call for a college diploma or training as an apprentice (ex. chefs, plumbers, electricians) – Level B
  - Intermediate jobs that usually call for high school and/or job-specific training (ex. transport truck drivers, home support workers, housekeepers) – Level C
  - Labour jobs that usually give on-the-job training (ex. food counter attendants, kitchen helpers) – Level D
  - Unsure
  - Prefer not to say
14. What is your target employment situation?
- a. Employed full time (30 hours, or more, per week)
  - b. Employed part time (less than 30 hours per week)
  - c. Self-employed
  - d. Other - specify
  - e. Unsure
15. When would you like to achieve your target employment situation by?

## Services and Referrals

16. Which of the following information did you receive upon your arrival in Canada?

Information	Received & needed	Received but not needed	Not received but needed	Not received & not needed	Unsure
How to find housing					
How to look for a job					
How to access critical services (e.g. medical, mental health, dental, legal)					
How to get language training					
How to get education or skills training					
How to get foreign education credentials or work experience assessed					
How to receive support for basic needs and services (e.g. food, clothes)					
How to obtain citizenship or a permanent resident card					
How to sponsor other immigrants					
How to access other government services					
How to obtain financial and insurance information					
How to find information on activities/events in the community					
Information session on cultural differences in everyday life and in the workplace					



17. From where or from whom did you receive the information indicated in the previous question?

- Government organization or department (includes: internet sites, volunteers of a funded host program)
- Non-governmental organization (for example settlement services, community worker)
- Relative(s) (includes in-laws)
- Friend(s)
- Neighbour(s)
- Employer(s) or co-worker(s)
- Media (e.g., internet, newspaper, television)
- Immigration consultant and/or lawyer
- School (other than language training school)
- Other (Please specify)

31. What problems or difficulties have you had in accessing support services upon arrival to the community?

- Communication problems (e.g., language barrier)
- Not knowing how to find out about settlement services
- Not understanding the process or system
- Not knowing where to find courses or programs
- Not being eligible for the services you needed/wanted
- The lack of courses/programs are full/waiting list too long
- Time constraints (e.g., family, work or other responsibilities)
- Not being able to find/afford childcare
- Financial constraints (e.g., costs were too high, funding was no longer available, etc.)
- Transportation constraints
- Discrimination
- Other (please specify)

#### AFNOO Service Use

18. How did you learn about AFNOO's settlement and employment services? (select all that apply)

- Friends and/or family in country of origin
- Friends and/or family in Canada
- Settlement workers
- Post-secondary institution
- Employer
- Immigration lawyers and/or consultants
- Independent research using official information (Government of Canada, Immigration and Refugees Canada)
- Independent research using other media (online forums and discussions, online connections with recent immigrants)
- Other (Please specify)

19. When did you access AFNOO settlement services?

- Before arrival
- Less than 3 months after arrival
- 3-6 months after arrival
- 6-9 months after arrival
- 9+ months after arrival

20. If used, how easy was it for you to access the following services and information from AFNOO's settlement services?

	Very difficult	Somewhat difficult	Neither easy nor difficult	Somewhat easy	Very easy	Did not use
Job search assistance						
Help with CV and/or cover letter						
Preparation for job interviews						
Networking activities						
Development of language skills						
Mentorship program						
Labour market information for Northwestern Ontario						
How to obtain citizenship or a permanent resident card						
Information and assistance with important documents (e.g. permanent resident card, Social Insurance Number, health card)						
Navigating the immigration process						
Education (e.g. post-secondary, costs, financial assistance)						
Information and orientation sessions						
Referrals to Francophone organizations in the region						
Community engagement and participation in social, cultural, and sporting activities						
Access to health services						
Support services (daycare, transportation)						
Information and assistance with daily life (post office, housing, financial institutions, ect.)						

21. How would you prefer to receive the information above from AFNOO going forward?

- Virtual group setting
- In-person group setting
- One-on-one virtual meetings
- One-on-one in-person meetings
- Other (please specify)

22. On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the usefulness of the information received from AFNOO's settlement service(s) you used

<b>(1 = not useful at all; 5 = very useful).</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Did not use</b>
Job search assistance						
Help with CV and/or cover letter						
Preparation for job interviews						
Networking activities						
Development of language skills						
Mentorship program						
Labour market information for Northwestern Ontario						
How to obtain citizenship or a permanent resident card						
Information and assistance with important documents (e.g. permanent resident card, Social Insurance Number, health card)						
Navigating the immigration process						
Education (e.g. post-secondary, costs, financial assistance)						
Information and orientation sessions						
Referrals to Francophone organizations in the region						
Community engagement and participation in social, cultural, and sporting activities						
Access to health services						
Support services (daycare, transportation)						
Information and assistance with daily life (post office, housing, financial institutions, etc.)						

23. If you did not use some or all of the settlement services and information indicated above, why?

- Did not need help to settle
- Did not think the services being offered were useful
- Not eligible to receive the services required
- Used pre-arrival services in another country before arriving
- Lack of services in current community
- Confusion about who to go to for help
- Lack of information or awareness about services
- Communication problems (e.g., language barrier)
- Time constraints (e.g., family, work, other responsibilities)
- Not being able to find/afford childcare
- Financial constraints (e.g., costs were too high, funding was no longer available, etc.)
- Transportation constraints
- Discrimination
- Other (please specify)

24. How could settlement services be improved to better support immigrants in the future? (open answer)

**Community Settlement and Welcoming**

25. What were your greatest difficulties you had to deal with following your arrival in Northwestern Ontario? (Select all that apply).

- Finding an adequate job
- Adapting to a new culture or new values
- Learning an official language / Facing language barrier
- Getting credentials or work experience recognized
- Taking / getting access to education or training
- Getting used to the weather
- Finding good quality housing (e.g., good price, good quality, good neighbourhood)

- Accessing critical services (e.g., medical, mental health, dental, legal)
- Getting access to childcare
- Accessing culturally appropriate food
- Accessing religious/cultural services
- Missing social or family support from homeland
- Lack of social interaction or new friends
- Facing discrimination or racism and related trauma (e.g., due to race, religion, sex, language, etc.)
- Coping with financial constraints
- Prefer not to say
- Don't know
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify)

26. Please rate to what extent the following factors would contribute to making you feel settled in Northwestern Ontario:

<b>(1 = not at all; 5 = extremely)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Having enough money to live well					
Having a good job					
Having a good place to live					
Knowledge of your					
Participation in local organizations					
Connection with members					
Feeling welcomed by other members of the community					
Feeling that your family will do well in the region					

27. Are there any additional factors/comments you would like to provide regarding feeling settled in Northwestern Ontario?

28. Do you find your Northwestern Ontario community welcoming? (Welcoming communities provide adequate housing, accessible transit, employment, language, and cultural supports, and other services that are essential to helping immigrants and diverse groups succeed).

- Yes - specify
- No - specify
- Unsure/prefer not to say

29. How satisfied are you with life in Northwestern Ontario?

- Extremely dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Extremely satisfied
- Prefer not to say

30. How likely are you to recommend living in your community to a friend or family member?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely or unlikely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Very unlikely

31. Would you be interested in learning more about reconciliation and the history of Indigenous peoples in Northern Ontario?

### Next Steps

32. Do you have any additional comments about your experience using AFNOO settlement services and what AFNOO can do to better support you moving forward?

## Appendix B: Employer Survey Questions

### GENERAL

1. Where is the primary location of your business/organization?

- Sioux Lookout
- Dryden
- Thunder Bay
- Kenora
- Geraldton
- Longlac
- Rainy River
- Fort Frances
- Other – please specify

2. To the best of your ability, please select the primary sector in which your business/organization operates. As well, if relevant, please select any other sector(s) in which your business/organization operates.

Sectors	Primary Sector	Other Sectors
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting		
Mining, Quarrying or Oil & Gas Extraction		
Utilities		
Construction		
Manufacturing		
Wholesale Trade		
Retail Trade		
Transportation and Warehousing		
Information and Cultural Industries		

Sectors	Primary Sector	Other Sectors
Finance and Insurance		
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing		
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services		
Educational Services		
Healthcare and Social Assistance		
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation		
Accommodation and Food Services		
Public Administration		
Other Services (Except Public Administration)		

### GENERAL

3. Please check the boxes that best approximate the number of each employee type your organization has.

Employee	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40+	Unsure
Full-time						
Part-time						

4. What is the language used most often at your workplace?

- French
- English
- French and English
- Other (please specify)

5. Are French language skills a benefit to your organization?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Not applicable

6. Please select the level of priority of services that should be emphasized and/or improved by settlement service providers, employment agencies, and other organizations to better help in immigrant employee recruitment and training.) Note: not all organizations have the capacity and/or mandate to provide these services.

	<b>High Priority</b>	<b>Not a Priority</b>	<b>Some Priority</b>
Provide resume screening and provide better matching between job candidates and the job requirements			
Provide assessment tests to evaluate candidates' expertise in soft and/or technical skills			
Increase awareness among job seekers about in-demand skill sets/jobs in the near future			
Facilitate quick and electronic access for employers to support programs			
Provide human resources support for recruitment and training (e.g. onboarding support, navigating government programs)			
Consult more with employers to better understand their individual needs			
Provide immigration consulting to help recruit international candidates			
Other (please specify)			



7. Are you aware of any employees, past and present, within your organization which belong to the following demographic group(s): Please check all categories that apply.

	<b>Currently Employed</b>	<b>Previously Employed</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
2SLGBTQ+ individuals				
Recent immigrants (in Canada for less than 5 years)				
Established immigrants (in Canada for more than 5 years)				
Temporary workers				
International students				
Domestic students				
Visible minorities				
Indigenous peoples				
People with disabilities				

8. How familiar is your organization with the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP)?

- Very familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Not so familiar
- Not at all familiar

9. Would you use the RNIP program in the future? Why or why not (ex. YES – we will use it the next time we are hiring, etc. NO - boundaries do not cover my business, occupations targeted under the program do not align with my needs, we are not currently hiring, we do not have the capacity to hire internationally, etc.)??

- Yes – specify

- No – specify

- Unsure / Prefer not to say

**Program Specific Questions**

10. How familiar is your organization with the settlement and employment services provided by AFNOO?

- Very familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Somewhat unfamiliar
- Very unfamiliar
- Unsure

11. How did you hear about the settlement and employment services provided by AFNOO?

- Local advertising
- Regional tours
- Current employee
- Potential candidate looking for employment
- Government of Canada advertising
- Another employer
- Immigration consultant and/or lawyer
- Local project coordinator
- Other – specify
- I haven't heard about the services provided by AFNOO before

12. Why is your organization interested in settlement and employment services provided by AFNOO?  
 [open response]

13. Would you use the settlement and employment services provided by AFNOO to recruit more employees in the future?

- Yes - specify
- No – specify
- Unsure

14. Which of the following information and/or services did you receive from AFNOO when hiring immigrants/international candidates?

Information or services	Received & needed	Received but not needed	Not received but needed	Not received & not needed	
Skills assessment					
Language assessment					
Information / assistance with connecting with potential applicants					
Help with paperwork					

Information or services	Received & needed	Received but not needed	Not received but needed	Not received & not needed	
Cultural sensitivity training					
Mentorship program					
Help navigating the process of hiring an immigrant / international candidate					
Information and orientation sessions					

15. Please rate your satisfaction with the information and/or services you received from AFNOO when hiring immigrants/ international candidates.

Information or services	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Not applicable /did not use
Skills assessment					
Language assessment					
Information / assistance with connecting with potential applicants					
Help with paperwork					
Cultural sensitivity training					
Mentorship program					
Help navigating the process of hiring an immigrant / international candidate					
Information and orientation sessions					

16. Have you used any of the following immigration streams to recruit foreign workers before? If yes, which ones?

- Canadian Experience Class (CEC)
- Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSW)
- Federal Skilled Trades Program (FST)
- Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) – Skilled Worker
- Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) – Skilled Trades
- Temporary Foreign Worker Program (Work Permit – ex. Francophone Mobility Stream)
- Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) Program
- I have not used other immigration streams
- Prefer not to say
- Unsure

17. When recruiting new employees, please identify any skills gaps that your company is looking to fill. **Select all that apply.**

- Communication
- Problem-solving
- Analytical
- Organizational
- Customer service
- Administration
- Math/quantitative
- Time management
- Negotiation
- Financial management
- Engineering
- Maintenance and equipment management
- Operations analysis and control
- Quality control
- Technical design
- Project management
- Production, processing, manufacturing
- Other - please specify:
- There are no skills gap in my company

18. Over the last 12 months, how difficult has it been for you to recruit for the following job categories?

		<b>Difficult</b>	<b>Somewhat difficult</b>	<b>Not at all difficult</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>
Managerial					
Professional (usually requires a university degree)					
Technical/mid-skill (usually requires a college diploma or apprenticeship certificate)					
Intermediate job (usually requires a high school diploma)					
Low-skilled job (only requires some on-the-job training)					

19. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your hiring and/or personnel needs? Select all that apply.

- We have reduced or stopped hiring personnel
- We have (temporarily or permanently) laid off personnel
- We have increased hiring personnel
- No impact on hiring/personnel
- We have closed our business/organization temporarily
- We have closed our business/organization permanently
- Other - specify:
- Prefer not to say

20. What are the primary barriers, for your organization, to finding and recruiting employees? Please check all that apply.

- Applicants lack experience in field
- Applicants lack degree or certification
- Applicants lack knowledge of official language(s)
- Lack of respondents to job postings
- Difficulty for employer in engaging qualified candidates
- Number of applicants negatively affected by COVID-19
- Job boards too time consuming to use
- Building a strong employer brand
- Difficulty reaching non-traditional labour sources or new candidate pools
- Limited housing supply in community
- Other (please specify)
- Unsure
- Not applicable (no difficulties)

20. Please choose the statement that best reflects the role that newcomers to Canada (arrived in the last five years) play in your hiring decisions:

- Newcomers have already become an increasingly important source of new hires for our company
- Newcomers are not a particularly significant source of new hires for our company
- We foresee that in the near future newcomers will become an increasingly important source of new hires for our company
- We expect that we will be relying less on newcomers as a source of new hires for our company
- We do not know or do not track whether the person we are hiring is a newcomer or not

21. What is the main obstacle for your business when hiring an immigrant and/or international candidate? (Select all that apply)

- We have limited human resources
- Job requires professional order or licensing
- The time needed to get appropriate work permits
- Salaries are not adequate
- Lack of applicants to job postings
- Cultural differences in the workplace
- Community is not welcoming

22. What has been your experience in hiring immigrants/international candidates? Has it been positive or negative?

- Mostly positive
- Somewhat positive
- Neutral
- Somewhat negative
- Mostly negative
- Not applicable

23. Have you had any negative experiences when hiring a newcomer or international candidate? If yes, what could be prevented in the future?

- No – I have not had any negative experiences
- Yes – I have had negative experiences (specify)
- Prefer not to say

24. How would you rate your organization's human resources policies and their implementation?

	<i>Excel</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Could use some improvement</i>	<i>Could use a lot of improvement</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Providing training to fill gaps in experience/ training					
On-boarding/orientation training for new staff					
Getting employees to understand the corporation's mission,					
Cultural awareness/ Canadian work practices training for newcomer talent					
Cross-cultural competency training for employers and employees					
Workplace mentoring					
Support for relocating					
Support for commuting/ ridesharing					
Formal exit interviews for departing staff					
Regular review of turnover statistics and identification of issues					

25. Have any of the above human resources policies recently been added to support newcomer integration?  
If yes, which ones?

Yes – specify

Unsure

No

Prefer not to say

26. Please provide any additional comments about your experience with the settlement and employment services provided by AFNOO here.



## Appendix C: Partner Survey Questions

1. Name of organization:

3. Phone number:

2. Contact name:

4. Website:

5. Please select the largest geographical area you provide your services to:

- All of Canada
- All of Ontario
- All of Northern Ontario
- Northwestern Ontario
- Northeastern Ontario
- Kenora District
- Rainy River District
- Thunder Bay District
- City of Thunder Bay
- City of Kenora
- City of Rainy River
- Town of Fort Frances
- City of Geraldton
- City of Dryden
- Other – please specify

6. Where is the head office of your organization located?

7. What group(s) is your organization mandated to provide services to? (ex. Refugees, permanent residents, temporary residents, prospective immigrants not yet in Canada, Employers, Indigenous peoples, youth, Francophones, etc.)

8. Please select all the relevant service types provided:

- Marketing and attraction (ex. recruitment fairs, website development, attraction campaigns)
- Guidance with the immigration process (ex. providing immigration resources but not certified to consult)
- Visa/Work Permit/Permanent Resident applications (ex. immigration consultants, RISIAs, etc.)
- Assistance in completing applications for provincial and federal programs (ex. a Social Insurance Number, a health card and driver's license)
- Justice (ex. police, victims services, legal services)
- Health (ex. health care provider, special needs and mental health professionals)
- Access to health supports (ex. locating a pharmacist, family physician, etc.)
- Counselling violence (ex. sexual assault)
- Counselling non-violence (ex. grief, bereavement)

- Financial (Banking, CRA services)
- Education (ex. language training, discussion circles, schools, colleges)
- Language (translation, interpretation)
- Employment search supports (ex. job search, skills assessment, job matching, professional networking)
- Business (ex. entrepreneurial support and resources)
- Employer supports (assistance in completing applications like Labour Market Impact Assessments, providing cultural competency training for employees, and entrepreneurial support)
- Food services (ex. food bank)
- Housing (ex. helping throughout the process of applying for/finding appropriate housing, navigating and setting up payments)
- Community orientation (ex. community connections, community tours, referral to community resources)
- Community participation supports (access to social and volunteer opportunities, introduction to community events and activities)
- Other – specify

9. In what language(s) do you provide services? Select all that apply.

- English
- French
- Other – please specify

### Services

10. What programs and/or services do you have in place to promote community welcomeness and acceptance of newcomers? Select all that apply.

- Public awareness campaign promoting the value and benefits of immigration (ex. town hall, promoting immigrant success stories on social media)
- Delivering cross-cultural awareness training to local employers, staff employed by organizations serving newcomers, and/or newcomers

- Promoting and/or providing diversity training to employers and their employees
- Invite newcomers to volunteer in social/cultural events
- Mentorship programs
- Introductory events/workshops to a community
- Events/workshops on where and how to find services
- Other – specify
- Not applicable

11. Were any of the programs and/or services your organization offers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic? (Ex. services that had to shift to virtual operations, programs that have been temporarily suspended). If yes, please specify what programs and what has changed.

- Yes – specify
- No
- Unsure
- Prefer not to say

### Working Together

12. In what ways have you collaborated with AFNOO in the past 12 months? Select all that apply.

- Referring clients
- Resource sharing
- Cross-promotion
- Staff sharing
- Events
- Other (please describe):
- Unsure
- Not applicable – have not collaborated with AFNOO

13. Over the last 12 months, on average, how frequently does your organization interact with AFNOO?

- Daily

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every other month
- 3 to 5 times per year
- 1 to 2 times per year
- Other – specify

14. How often would you prefer to interact with AFNOO?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every other month
- 3 to 5 times per year
- 1 to 2 times per year
- Other – specify

15. If you have collaborated with AFNOO to refer clients, has your organization gained any clients as a result of a client referral from AFNOO?

- No
- Yes – Please specify how many
- Unsure

16. Has your organization referred clients to AFNOO?

- No – Please specify
- Yes – Please specify how many
- Unsure

17. What challenges and successes has your organization experienced as a result of referring clients?

18. What impact has collaboration with AFNOO's settlement services had on your ability to service clients?

19. While working together, have referrals across partners been happening effectively?

- Yes
- No – Please specify
- Unsure
- Prefer not to say

20. What have been the outcomes, both positive and negative, from this partnership so far?

21. What type of activities would help our organizations mutually reach our respective targets?

22. As a partner, is there anything that AFNOO's settlement services can improve on? Please explain

23. Are there any additional comments or suggestions regarding your partnership with AFNOO?

# About Northern Policy Institute

*Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent, evidence-driven think tank. We perform research, analyze data, and disseminate ideas. Our mission is to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts our communities, our province, our country, and our world.*

*We believe in partnership, collaboration, communication, and cooperation. Our team seeks to do inclusive research that involves broad engagement and delivers recommendations for specific, measurable action. Our success depends on our partnerships with other entities based in or passionate about Northern Ontario.*

*Our permanent offices are in Thunder Bay and Kirkland Lake. We currently have a satellite office in North Bay. During the summer months we have satellite offices in other regions of Northern Ontario staffed by teams of Experience North placements. These placements are university and college students working in your community on issues important to you and your neighbours.*

## Related Research

**All Roads Lead Home Series**  
Mercedes Labelle

**Taking Aim: French-Speaking Migration Targets**  
Mercedes Labelle

**Why Immigration Matters in Greater Sudbury**  
NPI Staff

**Magnetic North: Attraction, Retention, and Welcoming in Ontario's Northern Regions**  
Mercedes Labelle

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