

# Building Community: Barriers to Employment for

# Visible Minorities in London

SOCWORK 3308F (270 and 271)  
THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF  
CANADIAN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE  
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## What is the Issue?

In 2016, visible minorities made up 20% of London, Ontario's total population, and this number continues to increase each year (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Despite the increasing diversity in our population, the labour force does not currently reflect the evolution of our city. There exist multiple barriers to employment for visible minority populations.

Current barriers to employment for London's visible minority population include (1) loss of social support; (2) work experiences marked by racism; and (3) shortage of training, mentoring, and career development opportunities.

## London Demographics

According to the 2016 census, 78,330 of 494,069 people in London identified as visible minorities. Geographically, only 8 of 43 neighbourhoods (outlined in red) were made up of over 30% of visible minorities (See Figure 1).

Many of these communities are underserved by ethnocultural and educational services relevant to visible minorities.

- yellow stars indicate presence of culturally relevant services
- red stars indicate lack of culturally relevant services.

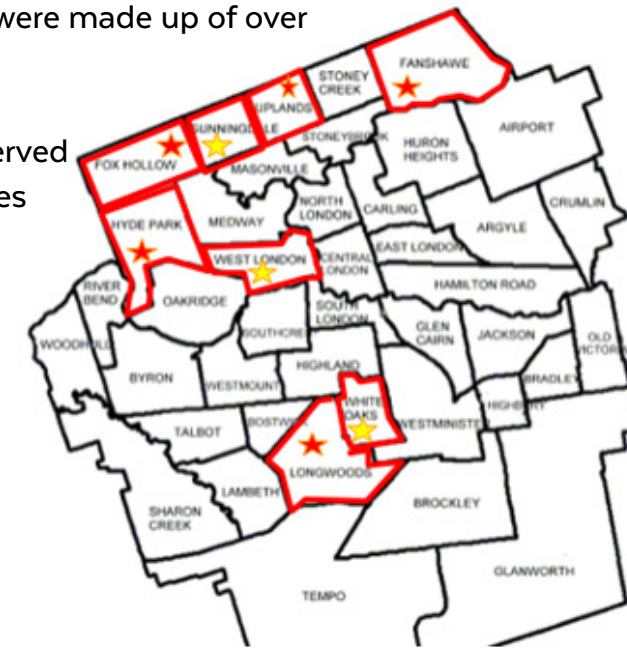


Figure 1

## Visible Minority Population in London, Ontario

Broken down into smaller racial groups, we can see the diversity in London's visible minority population. This demonstrates a growing, vibrant, and diversified community that exists in the city of London.

The visible minority population in London is made up of 78,330 people, which includes:

1. Arab - 13,735
2. South Asian - 12,090
3. Black - 11,945
4. Chinese - 10,750
5. Latin American - 9,395
6. Southeast Asian - 5,030
7. Filipino - 3,730
8. Korean - 3,315
9. West Asian - 3,290
10. Japanese - 700

Source: Statistics Canada (2016)

## Barriers to Visible Minority Employment

1. Access to information available in multiple languages
2. Gaps in employment experience: lack of Canadian experience, deskilling, or employment skills that are nontransferable to other sectors.
3. Internalized oppression as a result of institutionalized racism and discrimination
4. Lack of research specific to London and surrounding rural regions
5. Lack of accessible culturally relevant resources in relation to education

## What Has Been Done?

- London and Middlesex Local Immigrant Partnership - goal is to help newcomers integrate in London
- London's Newcomer and Diversity strategy - community-driven strategy, led by the City of London
- "I am London campaign"- is a social media campaign designed to showcase the diversity of London
- Life as a Refugee - Community Event to unpack myths and conception about refugees

## Background

- Despite its multiculturalism, Canada ranks as one of the most racially discriminating countries around the globe regarding hiring processes.
- There is a considerable wage gap in the between racialized and non-racialized Canadians, which can be partially attributed to unequal access to work opportunities.
- Racialized individuals are underrepresented in leadership positions, leading to lack of identification and relatable role models in education and employment sectors.
- There is a strong association between unemployment and poor health outcomes (increases in depression, anxiety, mixed symptoms of distress, and low self-esteem).

## References

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## Recommendations

### Social Supports

Increase access to culturally relevant social services that can bolster social support and lead to employment opportunities.

#### Broaden Pathways to Accessing Information

- Update the City of London website
- Provide information about ethnocultural services and/or supports
- Make the site multilingually accessible

### Work Experiences

Guide workplaces in creating more critically diverse and inclusion workplaces at large informed by a public community forum.

#### Create a Diversity in the Workplace Toolkit

- Gather experiences of this population through a public community forum and creating awareness to the public around these issues.
- Launch a city-based diversity toolkit defining key terms, structural barriers, highlighting strategies to mitigate such barriers

### Education and Training

A one-stop shop for resources and a mentorship program that can all be conducted digitally for the visible minority population.

#### Create an Accessible and Interactive Mentorship App

- Use mentor & mentee matching to create a community
- Include a feedback section for the City of London on inclusion and equity work
- Add resources section using the existing list in the Help Yourself Through Hard Times booklet, including educational resources, such as ESL location

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