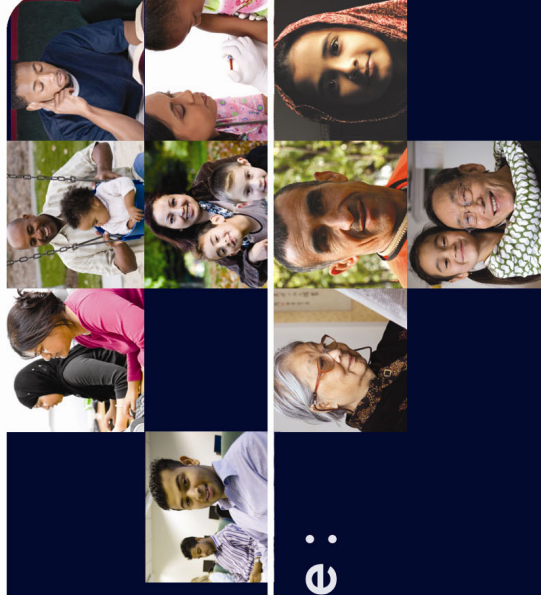


Communities Within: Diversity and Exclusion in Ottawa

Les communautés au sein de notre ville :
la diversité et l'exclusion à Ottawa



An initiative of the Social Planning Council of Ottawa
Un projet du Conseil de planification sociale d'Ottawa



Income, Employment and Education of Ottawa's Visible and Ethnic Minority Communities

A project funded by Canadian Heritage, Immigration and Aboriginal Unit, City of Ottawa
and United Way Ottawa with the Collaboration of Carleton University



Economic Exclusion Has Been Well Documented

- Clear economic exclusion
- Degree of economic exclusion varies by community (see Tables 1 – 3 in appendix)

Summary Of Economic Exclusion of Visible Minority Residents in Ottawa		
	All Visible Minorities	All Others
Median income	\$19,422	\$31,437
Percent of population with income below \$20,000	55	36.5
Unemployment rate	10.8	4.8
Percent of population living below the low income cut-off	29.1	7.8

- Affects access and mobility (glass ceiling) and results in degrees of ghettoization in marginal sectors for some communities
- Integration into the labour market is a primary concern in all case communities – access, under-employment, ghettoization and mobility
- Recognition of foreign acquired credentials is major demand of all case communities – will not focus on that here because several initiatives in the community are addressing this

Labour Market Barriers

Also Well Documented

- Recognition of foreign acquired credentials and experience
- Requirements for Canadian experience
- Language issues:
 - Knowledge of / capacity with official languages (See Table next page)
 - Bilingualism requirements
 - Acquisition of soft communication skills
- Possession of other soft skills may be an issue for scientific / technical practitioners
- Cultural context of hiring including importance of networks
- Biased hiring practices and hidden discrimination
- Delays in naturalization
- Racism, Islamophobia, and Anti-Arab sentiment

Official Language Competency A

Major Concern for Participants

- Most Visible Minority persons in Ottawa have working knowledge of at least one of Canada's official languages, particularly English
- Non-visible minority group has much higher proportion of people with bilingual skills – a definite advantage in Ottawa
- In general, seniors or elderly parents are the least likely among Visible Minority groups to have knowledge of either official language.
- Significant differences between groups and within groups
- The percentage of Lebanese-Canadians who are bilingual is higher than the percentage of Non-Visible Minorities who are bilingual.
- Chinese- and Somali-Canadians tend to be more unilingual

Table 6: Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Knowledge of Official Languages, 2001

Official Language Competency	Chinese	Lebanese	Somali	All Visible Minorities	Non Visible Minorities
English Only	75.8	50.3	70.6	68.1	57.4
French Only	0.4	2.2	3.9	2.6	1.6
French and English	12.2	41.7	17.9	23.1	40.7
Neither French nor English	11.6	5.9	7.6	6.1	0.3

Knowledge of Official Language

Not the Only Issue

- Sector of employment is relevant
- Bilingualism less a factor in private sector
- Oral skills in people-oriented professions an issue (e.g. doctors)
- Shortage of technical language training
- Soft communication skills difficult to obtain – engagement in the community is a common strategy
- Non-official language competency not seen as a competitive advantage

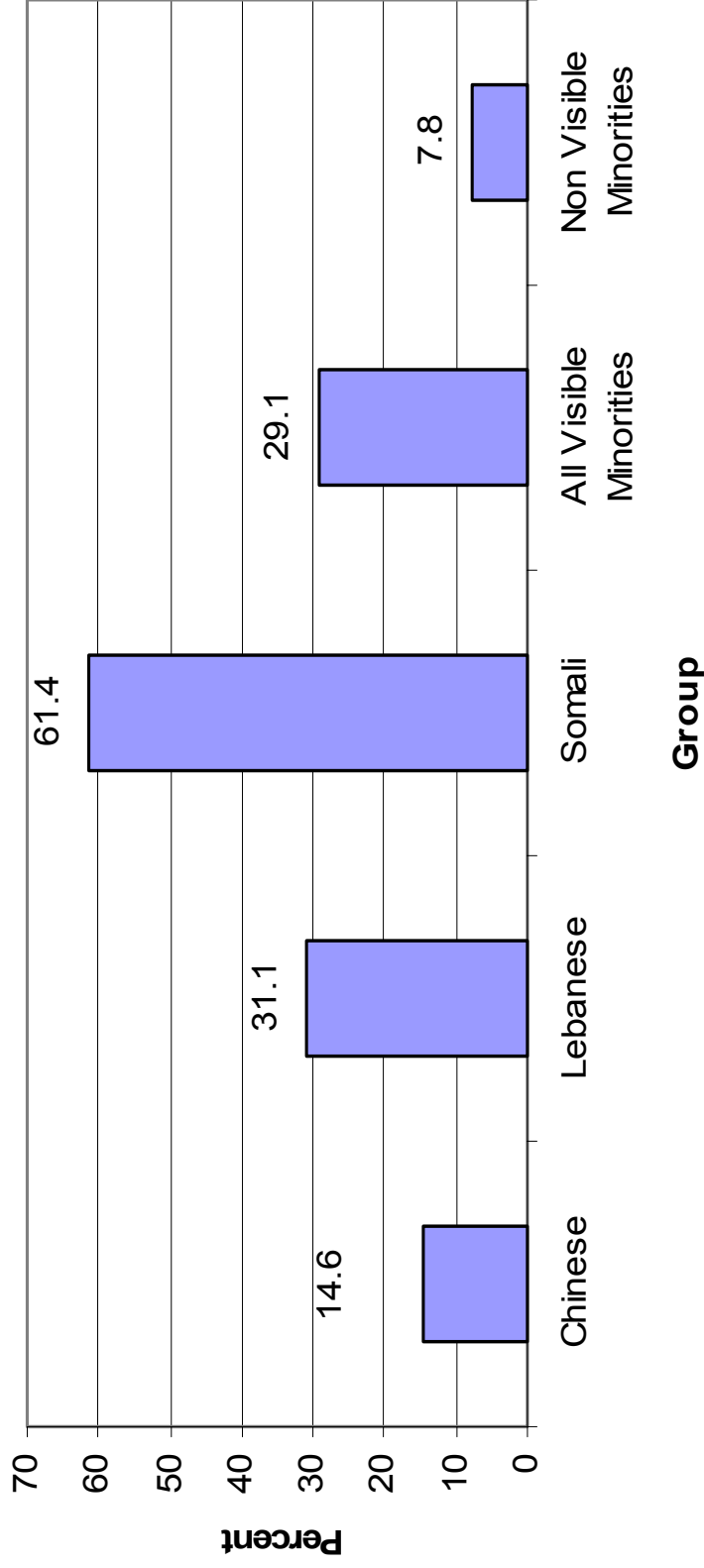
Racialization of Poverty

- Visible Minorities are 4 times more likely than Non-Visible Minorities to live in poverty
- The incidence of low income among Somali Canadians was at least eight times higher than the incidence of low income among Non-Visible Minorities
- The incidence of low income among Lebanese Canadians is slightly higher than the incidence of low income among all visible minorities
- The Chinese community is less likely to be poor than all other Visible Minority groups in Ottawa; however, 14.1% live under the poverty line – less than half the rate for all Visible Minority residents but also nearly double the percentage for the Non-Visible Minorities (7.8%)

Incidence of Low Income by Selected Characteristics

Chart 6: Ottawa Residents by Incidence of Low Income 2000%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census.



Different Contributing Factors

- Although common element is racialization, different factors affect economic marginalization of different communities
 - Labour market exclusion
 - Family structure incl. high % of children and youth (e.g. See Table 4: 62% of Somali community is children)
 - Degree of marginalization in self-employment
 - Low income of some seniors
 - Delays in naturalization
 - History of social and economic exclusion
- Very divisive exclusionary tendency
- Requires multi-faceted approach
 - Labour market interventions
 - Family and seniors incomes
 - Appropriate business supports
 - Social supports for residents

Self-Employment and Business Development

- Self employment can be a response to exclusion from salaried positions – an alternative, income patching of the only option
- Early Chinese community, in particular, excluded in marginal enterprises – still affects the community at many levels
- Some preferred salaried employment as route to economic security
- Others saw self-employment as their best strategy
- (Data below not available for Somali community)

Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Class of Worker, 2001				
Group	Employees	Self-Employed Incorporated	Self-Employed Unincorporated	Unpaid Family Workers
Chinese	92.8	1.9	5.2	0.1
Lebanese	82.1	6.9	10.5	0.5
All Visible Minorities	91.1	2.8	5.8	0.2
Non Visible Minorities	89.6	3.0	7.2	0.1

Risky Ventures

- Reality is many self employed have low incomes
- The self-employed have a higher likelihood of being poor compared to other types of workers, regardless of gender.
 - In Canada one in ten people was self employed in 2001, out of which 47% were part of the working poor population (Fleury & Fortin, 2004)
 - Many self-employed people run non-incorporated, own account businesses without paid employees and are at the low end of the job market
 - Self-employed visible minority immigrants are found in greater proportions in the retail trade, accommodation and food services. (SPC, 2005: 11)

Entrepreneurial Opportunities / Challenges

- Strengths within the community
 - Entrepreneurial experience in many cases
 - Connections to the Diaspora and home countries to facilitate business relations
 - Some access to capital through culturally or religiously based financial instruments
 - Also growth of the population opening up new markets
- Barriers to successful business development
 - Access to credit, related to their recent arrival in the country and persistent low income
 - Access to networks
 - Knowledge of how Canadian systems work
 - Starting a business for the wrong reason - desperation

Diverse Views

- *Need good advice on starting a business. You should do it properly than just jumping into it because of desperation. You need to have a realistic view. (Key informant)*
- *I put myself in a position where I won't be discriminated against systematically by being self-employed (Key informant)*
- *I know a lot of families are self-employed. They turn to self-employment because they don't have much education or you are shut out of the employment. That is why there are so many small businesses in Canada operated by immigrants. That is because you have no choice. No one would like to commit himself to working in the store until 11pm or 12 pm, 20 hours a day. Why you need to treat yourself like a slave to a corporation. You might be abused by customers. You just have no choices. You would like jobs in public sectors and you could leave at 5:00pm to go home with your family. (Key informant)*

Stratification Within Communities

Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Income Level Distribution, 2001						
Income Levels	Chinese	Lebanese	Somali	All Visible Minorities	Non-Visible Minorities	
Without Income	7.3	7.8	18.3	8.9	3.5	
Under \$5,000	14.4	15.9	21.3	16.7	9.6	
\$5,000-\$9,999	8.4	12.3	14.2	10.7	7.9	
\$10,000-\$19,999	18.2	21.7	20.0	18.7	15.5	
\$20,000-\$29,999	12.7	13.7	13.6	13.2	12.6	
\$30,000-\$39,999	8.8	9.2	6.1	9.2	12.7	
\$40,000-\$49,999	6.1	5.2	2.8	6.1	10.7	
\$50,000-\$59,999	18.8	4.3	1.8	4.4	7.9	
\$60,000 and Over	5.3	9.9	2.0	12.1	19.7	

- The Chinese are represented highly in professional fields, including science, medicine, and IT – thus qualified for many ‘in demand’ employment areas in Ottawa and with a large proportion of people earning \$60,000 or more per year (26%) compared to all Visible Minority groups (18%)
- In the Lebanese community the majority of their economic strength lies among the first generations of now-established immigrants; many of the recent waves of immigrants from Lebanon to Ottawa tend to struggle economically during their initial years and beyond in this city

Good News Story

- Significant economic inclusion
- Challenge of low incomes over-shadows fact that there is a level of economic integration, particularly within some communities
- Considering immigrants specifically –
- The incidence of low income was lower for immigrants living in economic families than for Canadian-born Ottawa residents in similar living arrangements.
 - 16 percent of recent immigrants and 25 percent of earlier immigrants received employment incomes of \$60,000 or more, compared to 22 percent of non-immigrants
 - 38 percent of recent immigrant men and 18 percent of recent immigrant women are occupied in professional jobs in the field of natural and applied sciences.
 - Similarly 9 percent of men and 5 percent of women have management positions, ... among those ... one third (215 individuals) has senior management occupations” (Social Planning Council, Immigrants in Ottawa,2004)

Economic Inclusion into What?

- Impact of globalization: local labour market and economy have changed
- Integrating into a labour market that is highly polarized, with growth in marginal employment
- Since immigration will be the source of growth in the labour market pool, and is increasingly visible minority immigration, racialization of poverty will exacerbate.
- Immigrants, including racialized immigrants, will fill the poor jobs as well as the good jobs
- Further, the high percentage of children and youth within the communities will be moving into the same job market
- Need policy framework and supports around the working poor and those in jobs which are not “good” jobs
- Also points to the importance of government as an employer in Ottawa – dominance in the market, exemplar employer, considered a “good” job
- *Research on the Canadian labour market based on the Labour Force Survey shows that although there has not been a decrease in well-paid jobs over the past twenty years, the relative importance of temporary / non-permanent jobs has increased, particularly among new workers, young unattached individuals, female lone parents and recent immigrants. In 1989, 11% of newly hired employees in Canada held temporary jobs. By 2004, that proportion jumped to 21% (Morissette & Johnson, 2005). In 2001, only half of workers in Canada had a single, full-time job that lasted six months or more. (SPC, 2005: 10)*

Voices

- *It is not the reality that everybody can get good job. It is impossible. They need to tell the immigrants about this. According to Chinese mentality, if you lose job, then you lose everything. And men can't have the social status if they are unemployed. This has to be changed. It is just the life, which is going up and down. They need to learn to change their jobs, to find something new. It is not the end of the world. You also have your family. The families need to know the market is always up and down.*
- *Also for those without high levels of education, the foreign-acquired credentials strategy is not for them. If the economy is good, [employers] are looking for people to work. If you are not qualified and you are not good at English, they still hire you. But if the economy is bad, it is the problem. They don't even give you the chance to try because they have better people to choose. From my experience, it really depends on the economy, which decides how they really tolerate.*

Levels of Education

- The Chinese community boasts the highest percentage of university grads, at 48% (compared to 34.5% for all Visible Minority groups and 27.6% of Non-Visible Minority groups)
- Further, about 1 in 5 Lebanese have university degrees, and 22% of the Somali community hold either a university degree or college diploma – a great achievement when one considers that less than 40% of its population is 25 years of age and over

Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Highest Education Level, 2001					
Educational Level	Chinese	Lebanese	Somali	All Visible Minority	Non Visible Minority
Less than high school graduation certificate	21.0	30.7	40.6	22.2	20.2
High school graduation certificate only	6.7	12.8	16.5	9.9	12.7
Some postsecondary education	9.9	15.6	14.5	12.9	12.1
Trades certificate or diploma	3.0	6.3	4.0	5.1	7.4
College certificate or diploma	9.3	13.1	9.3	11.6	17.9
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's degree	3.7	1.8	2.2	3.6	2.1
University degree	46.3	19.6	12.9	34.5	27.6

Educational Concerns

Areas for concern do continue to persist, particularly in the Somali and Lebanese communities in Ottawa:

- The high drop-out rate of Somali youths from high school and the alienation they experience in the educational setting stem from observed patterns within the school system:
 - Low expectations and active discouragements by educators and counselors
 - Coop Misplacements
 - Lack of Information and exploitative misinformation
- About 1/3 of the Lebanese community are without a high school graduation certificate
- Many within the case-study groups and all Visible Minority groups point to the fact that many teens and youths alike have said that seeing adults with university/college education held back by racialized hiring systems makes for a high level of disillusionment over the true value of a post-secondary education and the economic aspirations that commonly come with it

Engagement with the Education System

- Adults in the research project placed a high value on their children's educational success
- Engagement with the school system was a significant point of tension
 - Active discouragements by some educators
 - Tensions with peers, teachers administration and policies particularly in relation to male teenagers
 - Feeling of a disrespect for Islam
 - Lack of representativeness within the school structures (staffing, administration and decision making)
- Community as a whole only marginally engaged in the formal routes of engagement with the school system due to circumstances of the family (meeting basic needs), disillusionment, and processes which are not inclusive
- Some groups within the community have been very active in this area – creating new points of engagement with schools and the school systems
- *The schools for example are still an area where many issues come up. It is important to point out that Somalis have been here for quite sometime. If you don't know the community after sixteen years there is something wrong with that institution. ... there is the idea if we understand the culture we could do better. But I would say the problem is not the culture. We need to look at the current experience the Somalis are having which is a Canadian experience, Canadian reality which is shared by other blacks and other minorities. What has the map of Somalia got to do with a child who is feeling excluded in a classroom in Ottawa? (Female key informant interviewee)*

Enhance supports for individuals and families to increase access to resources and opportunities

- Address the high rates of poverty
 - Better supports for basic needs
 - Poverty reduction strategies, with particular emphasis on family policies, seniors incomes, labour market engagement, supports to the working poor and viable self-employment
 - Is a Provincial priority - Campaign 2000 poverty reduction strategy an excellent framework
- Advise prospective immigrants to have their credentials assessed before they come
- Ensure supports for low income children to fully benefit from the school system (e.g. school fees issue)
- Expand initiatives regarding the recognition of foreign acquired credentials (in lieu of the current lack thereof)
- Ensure financial and in-kind resources to formal and informal groups which offer supports with respect to successful educational outcomes and employment supports
- Offer volunteer opportunities which will address the barrier of employer demands for candidates with 'Canadian experience'
- Have the voluntary sector take a leadership role in increasing employment opportunities for immigrant and Visible Minority community members and encouraging similar strategies in the broader public sector (the municipal government, the education sector, etc.)

Build inclusive environments (Systemic Change)

- Top issue: Labour market exclusion
- Removal of barriers in the labour market including
 - Recognition of foreign acquired credentials and experience
 - Toronto model (implement a system for assessing and recognizing foreign credentials (education, work experience, professional certifications, etc.)
 - Strategy to address racism and Islamophobia in the workplace, with a particular emphasis on safety for women
 - Strategies to increase social capital so Somalis have better access to networks which would facilitate obtaining jobs
 - Improved implementation of employment equity in the Federal government and the municipal government, including building on pilot projects to hire within the police and within OC Transpo. Additional affirmative action programs.
 - Strategy to increase hiring of Somalis and other minorities in the non-profit sector

Build inclusive environments (Systemic Change)

- Support culturally appropriate entrepreneurship supports for recent immigrants starting new businesses, including greater access to capital and technical assistance
- Encourage the formation and sustainability of ethnic business associations
- Change in social assistance policies which mitigate against very low income residents accessing community based asset building strategies / access to capital. Work with the community to enhance opportunities to utilize the Diaspora to enhance business development
- Poverty reduction strategy
- Meaningful collaboration between school system and community to improve education system and outcomes
- *More and more the labour market is going to be dominated by immigrants, so if they are not employed with all their talents then all of that will be wasted, so it is imperative especially for the City of Ottawa to take this challenge. The leadership has to come from the City. They have to do something to keep this talent in the City. I think the other big player is the private sector. I think the private sector especially the banks have to become more risk takers on immigrant people. There is a tremendous resource in immigrant communities and they have great connections to other countries, so the private sector has to really look at the potential of communities. (Key informant)*

Mainstreaming Diversity in an Economic Development Strategy

- Local economic planning needs to strategize on how to enhance local economic activity on the asset of this expertise. Address barriers in the way of assets (e.g. credentials)
 - Business development – risks and opportunities (entrepreneurial, diaspora, new markets)
 - Procurement policies
 - Turn the language barrier into a language opportunity (See Table 6 in Appendix)
 - Different models of asset development, financial instruments, and financial aid
 - Sustainable livelihoods strategy to address reality of the economy
 - Better supports around low income residents
 - Triple bottom line economic strategy at the City – points of engagement for fresh eyes to have input

Appendix: Tables 1 and 2

Table 1: Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Income Level Distribution, 2001

Income Levels	Chinese	Lebanese	Somali	All Visible Minorities	Non-Visible Minorities
Without Income	7.3	7.8	18.3	8.9	3.5
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\$40,000-\$49,999	6.1	5.2	2.8	6.1	10.7
\$50,000-\$59,999	18.8	4.3	1.8	4.4	7.9
\$60,000 and Over	5.3	9.9	2.0	12.1	19.7

Table 2: Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Incidence of Low Income, 2001

Chinese	Lebanese	Somali	All Visible Minorities	Non-Visible Minorities
14.6	31.1	61.4	29.1	7.8

Appendix: Tables 3 and 4

Table 3: Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Labour Market Participation Rates, 2001

Group	Labour Force Participation Rate	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate
Chinese	68.5	62.6	8.6
Lebanese	66.6	61.5	7.7
Somali	50.8	40.0	21.2
All Visible Minorities	67.6	60.0	10.8
Non Visible Minorities	70.7	67.0	4.8

Table 4: Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Family Composition, 2001

Group	Spouses	Common Law	Lone Parents	Children in Census Families	Non-Family Persons
Chinese	48.8	2.3	2.6	33.6	12.7
Lebanese	38.9	1.4	3.6	48.3	7.9
Somali	17.0	1.0	10.2	62.0	9.8
All Visible Minorities	37.7	2.4	5.3	41.2	13.2
Non-Visible Minorities	41.1	7.1	4.2	30.1	17.5

Appendix: Table 5

Table 5: Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Age Groups, 2001

Age Group	Chinese	Lebanese	Somali	All Visible Minorities	Non-Visible Minorities
0-14 years	21.3	28.8	43.5	26.2	17.9
15-24 years	11.5	16.2	20.0	15.9	12.9
25-44 years	40.6	31.3	26.6	35.3	32.2
45-64 years	11.4	17.3	8.2	17.3	25.3
65 years +	6.9	6.4	1.8	5.4	11.6

Table 6: Percentage of Ottawa Residents by Knowledge of Official Languages, 2001

Official Language Competency	Chinese	Lebanese	Somali	All Visible Minorities	Non Visible Minorities
English Only	75.8	50.3	70.6	68.1	57.4
French Only	0.4	2.2	3.9	2.6	1.6
French and English	12.2	41.7	17.9	23.1	40.7
Neither French nor English	11.6	5.9	7.6	6.1	0.3