

October 22, 2018 is Municipal Election Day in Ontario

Almost 30% of Ontario residents were born outside Canada. Immigrants, refugees, migrant workers and international students are critical to Ontario's economic growth, and make Ontario communities strong.

Municipal leaders have an important role to play in building strong communities that welcome everyone, and that build on the full potential of refugees, immigrants and migrants.

Immigrants, refugees and migrants in general are over-represented among those who face disproportionate disadvantage in Ontario communities. Factors such as race, gender, LGBTQ2 identity, disability, religion or faith identity, immigration status and more can present further barriers. Some important concerns are:

- Affordable and appropriate housing (including social housing)
- Affordable public transit and effective and adequate service
- Access to good jobs
- Affordable, regulated childcare
- Community safety
- Access to municipal services

OCASI Member Agencies identified the following questions you can ask candidates for Mayor or Councillor in the 2018 Ontario Municipal Election:

Newcomer Strategy

- Will you support a newcomer strategy for this municipality, and what will that actually mean?
- What will you do to welcome immigrants, refugees, migrant workers and international students to settle and build a new life in our communities?
- How will you ensure they have access to jobs - including municipal jobs and support them to start a business?
- What will you do to include them in local planning for housing, transit, childcare and services?

Welcoming Community

- How will you create a welcoming community for all refugees (including refugee claimants) and immigrants?
- What will you do to ensure they don't experience racial and other discrimination in our communities?

Civic inclusion

- What will you do to ensure refugees and immigrants can participate in civic life, such as supporting municipal voting rights for permanent residents?

Services for all

- How will you remove systemic barriers to service access that refugees and immigrants face?
- How will you make sure the refugees, immigrants and those with precarious immigration status have adequate housing and emergency shelter?
- What will you do to ensure that those with precarious immigration status can access services without limitations and without fear of detention and deportation?
- What will you do to ensure refugees and immigrants can access health and mental health services?

Community safety

- What will you do to ensure refugees and immigrants feel safe in our communities?
- What will you do to address racial profiling?
- How will you ensure those with precarious immigration status can access police without fear?