

Shadow Economies

Economic Survival Strategies of Toronto Immigrant Communities

Shadow Economies tells the story of the working conditions of newcomers across a range of formal and informal employment arrangements in Toronto. How do newcomers survive poor labour market access, adverse working conditions, and the broader conditions that make people vulnerable to exploitation? You can download the full report at www.wellesleyinstitute.com

Working Conditions

More than **38%** of respondents had **experienced bullying or harassment** by supervisors, co-workers or customers while at work within the previous six months (This was defined as aggressive behaviour, physical assault, yelling, threats or sexual harassment)

More than **41%** reported holding a job where provincial employment standards were not followed

55% of respondents felt that raising a concern about health & safety or an employment standard was likely to have a negative impact on their future employment

Economic Survival Strategies

Only **1/3** of households reported being able to fully **cover their household expenses** on income earned through formal employment

Only **3%** of immigrants formerly in professional occupations were still working in their field

46% report earning income from their participation in the informal economy (Factory work, restaurants and stores were some of the main areas outside the regulatory framework of basic employment standards and cash exchange activities)

Health Impacts

83% of respondents identified a **major source of stress** in their life. Of these, **41%** cited their financial situation as the cause

31% of respondents described their health as fair or poor, three times the Canadian average

49% reported feeling depressed within the previous month at least once. Of those who arrived in the past five years, **7%** reported feeling depressed on a daily basis and **17%** reported feeling depressed two to three times a week within the past month

