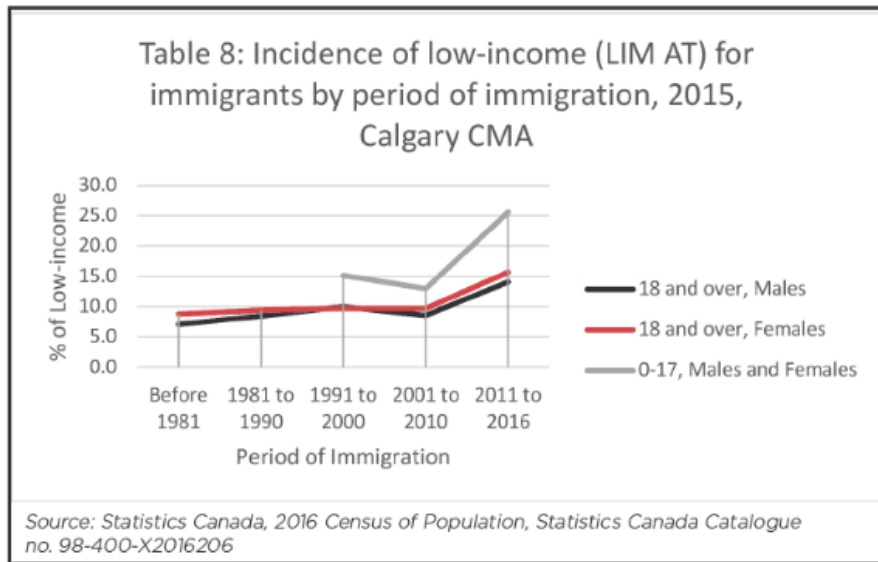


POVERTY AFFECTS NEWCOMERS TO CALGARY

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Calgary welcomed 93,255 immigrants in the period of 2011 to 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2016a). With the total number of immigrants, including non-permanent residents within Calgary totaling 431,870, Calgary has the fourth largest immigrant population in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016a). The more recent a person has immigrated to Canada, the more likely they are to be living in low income. For those who immigrated to Calgary since 2011, there are 16,125 people (or 17.3%) living in poverty. In comparison, 7.6% of Calgarians within the non-immigrant population are living in poverty (Statistics Canada, 2016a). Calgary is not alone, as the same trend of high rates of low income within the immigrant community are prevalent across the province. On a community level, unique challenges persist for newcomers. There are countless systemic barriers and obstacles that impede both their economic and social success. Essential to Canada's future, immigration can benefit all citizens, yet deep poverty is inhibiting social inclusion and economic integration and contribution.

As per the table above, amongst newcomers under the age of 17, 25.6% are living in low income, compared to 10.6% of the non-immigrant population (Statistics Canada, 2016a). This is an alarming statistic as children and youth are greatly affected throughout their lifespan by living in poverty, including potential impacts on mental health, learning capacity, and future employment opportunities. Further disenfranchising immigrant youth is the lack of community resources that provide culturally-appropriate supports for social, economic

and mental wellbeing. There are high rates of low-income amongst lone-parent, female-headed households in Calgary, and this is consistent within immigrant communities. Throughout 2017, female immigrants in Alberta experienced an unemployment rate of 9.2%, higher than that of non-immigrant females at 7.3% (Alberta Government, 2018).

Relatedly, the median wage of female visible minorities in Calgary is \$30,348, whereas for non-visible minorities the median wage is \$42,171 (Statistics Canada, 2016b). The prevalence of first generation low income earners within the Black (19.1%), Arab (32.0%), and Korean (21.8%) communities remains significantly higher than that of first generation non-visible minorities (8.9%) (Statistics Canada, 2016c). With Calgary becoming home to more newcomers, barriers in child care, unequal employment opportunities, housing, language proficiency, social isolation and racism all contribute to the economic discrepancies seen throughout the immigrant community. These factors continue to perpetuate the incidence of low income amongst immigrant communities, further augmenting the realities of racialized poverty throughout the city.

Considerations for a response:

- Build strong supports throughout the community that provide social and cultural support throughout the lifespan, regardless of period of immigration.
- Acknowledge how racism can have a deep impact on the hiring practices of businesses and agencies throughout the city. Lower the employment gap between visible and non-visible minorities.
- As more immigrants enter the workplace, invest in adequate training and supports for skills-building and professional development.
- Connect families with the necessary services and supports.

Sources:

Alberta Government. (2018). 2017 Alberta Labour Force Profiles: Immigrants in the Labour Force (pp. 1-15). Edmonton, AB. Source: <https://work.alberta.ca/documents/labour-profile-immigrants.pdf>

Statistics Canada, 2016a Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016277

Statistics Canada, 2016b Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016277

Statistics Canada, 2016c Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 98-400-X2016211