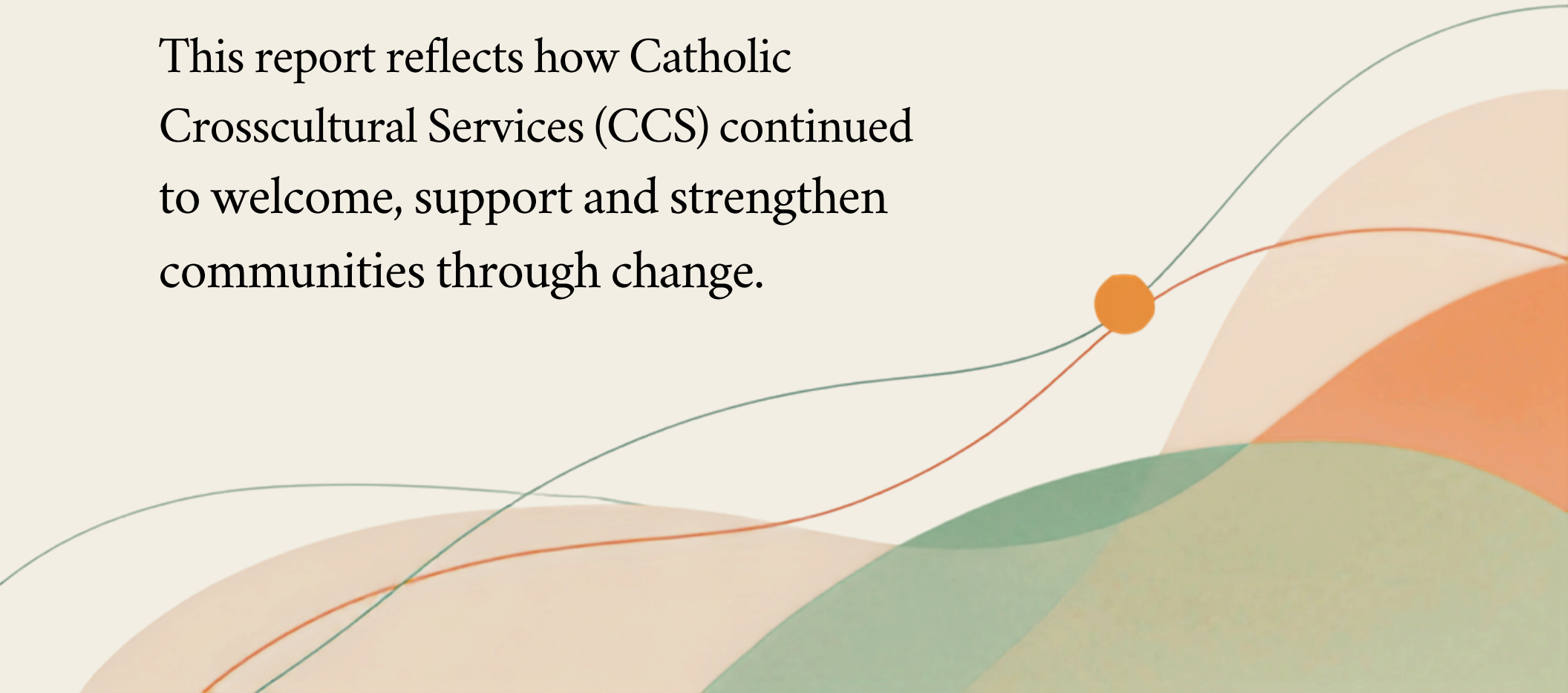


Annual Report 2025



Called to Serve and Serving all.

This report reflects how Catholic Crosscultural Services (CCS) continued to welcome, support and strengthen communities through change.



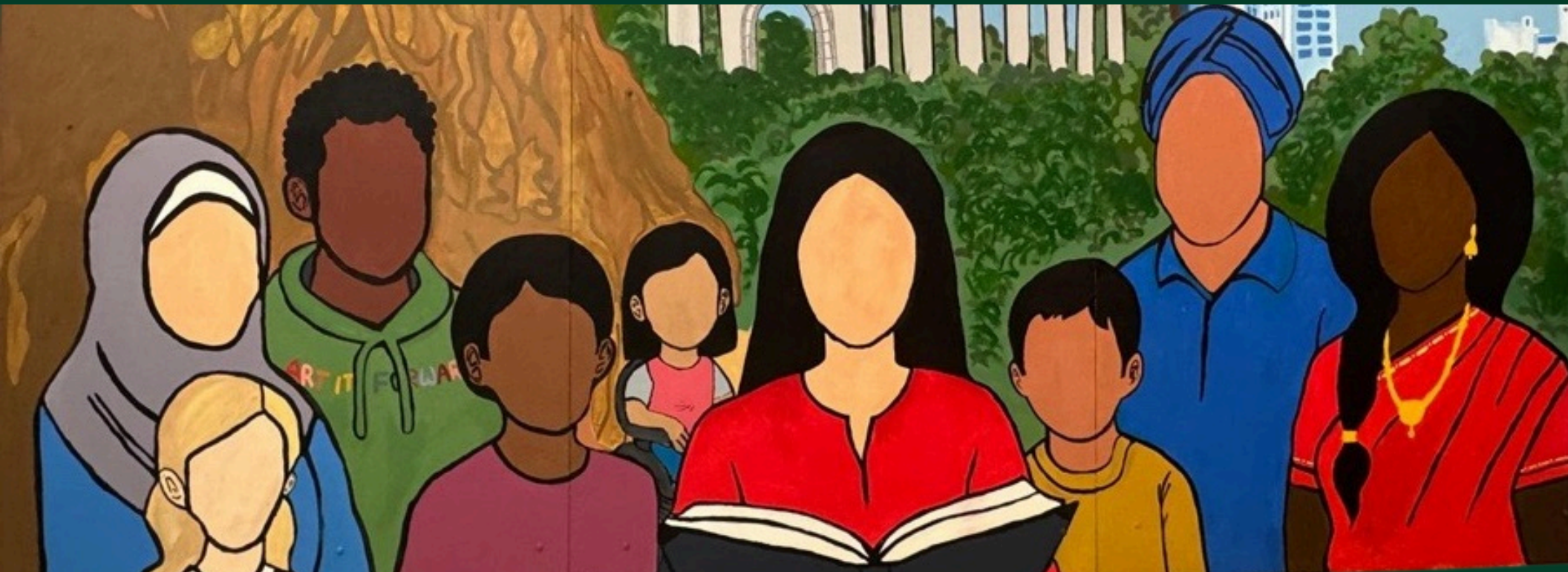


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Resilience is not simply about withstanding change. It is about moving through it with purpose.

A Message to Our Community

This past year tested our organization in ways few could have anticipated. Reductions in funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) forced us to confront hard questions about capacity, priorities and sustainability. Yet if this year has taught us anything, it is that resilience is not simply about withstanding change - it is about moving through it with purpose.

When funding tightened, we did not retreat from our mission. Instead, we became more resourceful. We streamlined operations, sought out new partnerships, expanded our fundraising efforts and made deliberate choices about where our resources could have the greatest impact. Staff and volunteers stepped up, often taking on new responsibilities to ensure that no program participant fell through the cracks. Program operations were reimagined rather than simply reduced, allowing us to preserve the quality and dignity of service that our program participants depend on.

Through it all, our commitment to our program participants never wavered. Newcomers still walked through our doors seeking settlement support, language training, employment guidance and a sense of belonging - and we were there for them, just as we have always been. That continuity, in the face of real financial pressure, is a testament to the strength of our team and the trust of our community.

This year's theme, Resilience Through Change, reflects more than our response to funding challenges. It reflects who we are as an organization: adaptable, community-centered and unwavering in our belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to build a new life with dignity and support.

As we look ahead, we carry this resilience forward. The funding landscape may continue to shift, but our purpose remains constant. We are grateful to our staff, volunteers, donors and partners who have stood with us this year - and we look forward to continuing this vital work together.

Claudio Ruiz
Executive Director



Your leadership and generosity ensure that newcomers continue to find a place of welcome, opportunity and above all, hope.

Steering CCS Through a Year of Change

Catholic Crosscultural Services enters the close of the 2025–26 year with gratitude, resolve and a deep sense of mission. Despite significant federal funding reductions that reshaped the settlement landscape across Canada, our staff, volunteers and partners ensured that newcomers continued to receive service rooted in dignity, compassion and cultural understanding. This year demanded discipline, stewardship and creativity — and CCS rose to meet that moment.

Our core programs remained strong. Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) instructors sustained high-quality language training; Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) team continued to support newcomer students and families in schools; settlement counsellors provided essential guidance during a period of heightened uncertainty; and our mental-health supports offered stability to program participants navigating profound transitions.

Even with constrained resources, CCS protected service continuity and upheld the Catholic commitment to welcoming the stranger. I am especially grateful for the provincial funding received to maintain our Violence Against Women program.

The year ahead will require the same clarity of purpose. Federal immigration policy is shifting and agencies like ours must adapt without losing sight of the people at the heart of our work. CCS will continue strengthening partnerships, advocating for sustainable funding and investing in our staff who make our mission real every day. We remain confident that, together, we can navigate this new environment with integrity and hope.

I say thank you to all of my fellow Board members, all of our staff and our funding community for sustaining CCS through a challenging year.

Sean M. Kennedy
President

Guided by Compassion, Expertise and Commitment to Community.

Mission

CCS helps immigrants, refugees and vulnerable groups through programs that foster their success and promote welcoming communities.

Vision

A Canada where everyone feels at home, thrives and contributes to society.

Values

Dignity:

Because every person has intrinsic worth, we respect everyone's unique experiences, their courage and their autonomy.

Solidarity:

In recognition of our inter-connectedness, we work cooperatively to strengthen our communities and our society.

Inclusion:

We serve everyone with empathy and compassion and without discrimination.

Excellence:

We hold ourselves accountable for learning and evolving so that we continue to deliver exceptional services that make a difference.



OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE ALSO GUIDED BY CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHINGS.

Nominated by the People We Serve, CCS Named a 2025 Toronto Community Champion

This year, the City of Toronto named CCS a 2025 Toronto Community Champion. It is an award that recognizes grassroots organizations for the resilience, inclusiveness and service they bring to their communities. CCS was nominated by the people we serve, based on their own direct experience. To honour recipients, the City of Toronto partnered with the Toronto Blue Jays, where CCS staff, volunteers and board members celebrated together.

"I got the right information. I got the right person attending to me. I feel comfortable every time I go there. You won't go there and come back the same. You will come back happy."



VIOLA
Program Participant



Every number on this page is an act of resilience: starting English classes, rebuilding after facing violence, making new friends or landing a first job. CCS walked alongside people across the Greater Toronto Area, many different journeys that all became part of one community.

45,583

Program Participants
Served



1,029

Workshops Delivered

25,554

SETTLEMENT

6,941

YOUTH SUPPORT

1,430

EMPLOYMENT

1,722

LANGUAGE

1,306

WOMEN'S SUPPORT
SERVICES

6,526

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP
TRAINING

2,104

SENIOR SUPPORT

17,177.5

VOLUNTEER
HOURS

MADE POSSIBLE BY:



238 Employees



280 Volunteers



30 Giving Donors

A Year of Learning, Support and Connection

At CCS, we help newcomers across Toronto and Peel understand local services, build everyday skills and connect with their communities. Here are some of the ways people came together, learned new skills and found support this year.

NEW MOTHERS FIND SUPPORT

Twenty newcomer mothers, many of them caring for children with special needs, learned ways to manage stress and connect with peers.



FAMILIES GATHER FOR A DAY OF CONNECTION

More than 150 newcomer families came together at our annual “Shout it Out” community event. Families with children who have special needs took part in workshops, art therapy, henna and live music.

NEWCOMER WOMEN TURN SKILLS INTO OPPORTUNITY

Eleven newcomer women joined an eight-week Cricut program. They learned how to create designs, make products and prepare items to sell. They later sold their work at a vendor market.

MEN BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

With Catholic Family Services Peel Dufferin, CCS offered “Choice to Change,” the only program of its kind in the CCS network. Men learned about healthy relationships, fatherhood, stress and caring for themselves and their families. They also met other men, received counselling when needed and connected with settlement support.

A Diagnosis, a Difficult Choice and a Reunion

When her son was diagnosed with autism and ADHD, one newcomer mother faced a decision no parent should have to make. Therapy waitlists in Canada were long, too long for a child who needed care right away. So she sent her son back to her home country, where he could get the therapy he needed, while she stayed behind to build a life for both of them in Canada.

She didn't wait alone. She connected with a CCS settlement worker and joined parenting workshops through Family in Settlement Together (FIS), where she learned more about her son's needs and found other parents who understood what she was going through. She started volunteering with us and was hired at Pace Wellness Centre, doing the kind of work she'd wanted to do.

A year after they said goodbye, she brought her son home.

"Today, I am working in my field, supporting others and I am grateful that I was able to reunite with my son and continue building our future in Canada."

A FIS Program Participant



Meeting Families at the School Door

SWIS walks alongside newcomer families from the school door until the school, the city and the country feel like their own.



NO FAMILY LEFT BEHIND

No matter which Scarborough school a family walks into, a dedicated SWIS Care Team is there for them, covering every grade from kindergarten to grade 12.



A CITY STOPS FEELING FOREIGN

A city stops being foreign the moment you can find your way through it. This year, 30 youth saw their own heritage reflected at the Aga Khan Museum and explored downtown Toronto. By spring, eight of them had painted a mural, still on display at the CCS Main Office.



YOUTH LEADING YOUTH

Newcomer youth don't just get support from SWIS. They lead it. 38 trained as leaders and mentored 131 new students, giving 2,853 volunteer hours this year, more than any other CCS program.

A Teaching Career, a Fresh Start and a Job of Her Own

Sanjeda Sharmin was a qualified teacher in Bangladesh. When she arrived in Canada with three children entering grades 4, 5 and 11, none of that experience counted for anything here. She had to start over, from nothing, while helping her children start over too.

She connected with SWIS at her children's school and started from where she was: volunteering alongside her children in the Summer Enrichment Program, learning how a Canadian classroom actually worked. She went on to complete the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Digital Literacy Program and enrol at Centennial College, while SWIS supported her with résumé help, interview practice and job coaching.

In 2026, she got her first paid job in Canada. She was finally gaining real Canadian work experience and earning her own income again.

What began as a search for school support became her second chance at the career she'd already built once.



More Newcomers, More Language Classes, Real Progress

Newcomers across Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton come to CCS to learn English. They build confidence and make new connections along the way. Classes are free, open from Literacy to Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 6 and offered in person and online to fit around work and family life. Through the Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) program, children aged 6 months to 6 years learn and grow with a certified Early Childhood Educator while their parent focuses on learning English.

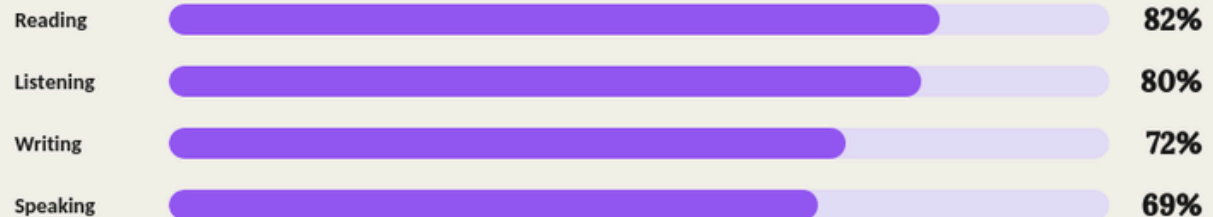
"I enjoy the dynamic classes and the teaching methods that help me understand and remember English."

English Class Participant

More newcomers than ever wanted to learn English this year, many starting from the basics. CCS grew alongside them, opening a third literacy class at the Networking Hub in Scarborough and two more through our Peel locations, in person and online.

78%

of Peel learners tracked this year improved in at least one language skill area.



Interviews, Jobs and a Business of Her Own

A first interview. A first paycheque. A business of her own. This year, newcomers across Toronto and Peel got ready for the Canadian job market and built careers of their own, with coaching, workshops and online classes tailored to what each person needed.

A HIRING EVENT THAT LED TO 12 JOBS

75 registered



42 screened & interviewed



12 hired

Ran in collaboration with Sigma Staffing Group, WorkSi Consulting Group and Arrow Workforce.



“After finishing the program, I got a job at Mango, which was a big step for me.”

Mohadesa, Youth Career Empowerment Program (YCEP) Participant

A NEW WAY TO LEARN, ONLINE: CCS E-LEARN

This year, CCS launched CCS eLearn, its first online learning platform, offering free language training at elearn.ccscan.ca.



Food Handling



Childminding



Healthcare



Transportation & Supply Chain

Abir came to CCS through the Employment Access Program (EAP) for Women, looking for a job. She left with something bigger: **through the EAP Self-Employment Program, she built her own cookie business. DoubleTree has since reached out, interested in buying her cookies.**

95 Refugees, Matched with Sponsors Coast to Coast

Across Canada, everyday people stepped up to sponsor refugees this year. RSTP gave them the training, tools and support to do it with confidence, through online sessions, in-person workshops and hands-on guidance.

95

refugees matched with sponsors ready to welcome them.

302

training sessions delivered nationally.

284

people attended a 3-day hybrid conference, 147 in person and 137 online.

785

Canadians trained to sponsor Sudanese refugees, in English and Arabic.

"I am so happy to inform you that my family received approval! My mom is so happy I can't put it in words! Thank you so much for all your help and support, my mom sends you her prayers."

RSTP Supported Sponsor



Seniors Don't Just Get Support, They Lead

At the Settlement Resources Networking Hub, seniors 55 and older find more than a place to belong. Through the Golden Agers Club (GAC), they build friendships, try new things, stay active together and give back to the community.



Golden Agers Club participants fill their calendar with fitness classes, wellness sessions, workshops and social outings. For them, ageing well means staying connected, not slowing down.

"After retirement, I struggled to find purpose. Joining the Golden Agers Club changed that. I found friendship, confidence and a renewed sense of belonging. Leading the Men's Group has given me the opportunity to encourage other senior men to discover that retirement is not the end but a new beginning."

Golden Agers Club Volunteer Leader



Participants don't just attend, they lead. Through a partnership with Help a Girl Out, Golden Agers Club seniors used their sewing skills to make reusable menstrual pads for women and girls in need, turning craft into care for a cause.

From English Classes to Volunteer of the Year

Inna came to Canada from Ukraine after fleeing the war and started attending English classes at CCS, where she quickly became known for showing up every day and helping her classmates. When Ukrainian newcomers became ineligible for the program last April, she didn't stop coming. CCS staff had gone into the classrooms to share another way to keep learning: volunteering. Inna signed up on the spot. Resilience, for her, looked like turning a program ending into 277.5 hours at the front desk from April to October, answering phones, greeting visitors and building a new kind of belonging at CCS.

That dedication made her CCS's
Volunteer of the Year.



"It's really a happy time for me. I have many, many new friends and really good people who give me a lot of support in my life."



Resilient Together, Through Partnerships Across our Community.

No one builds resilience alone. This year, CCS worked alongside schools, employers, media and community organizations, each bringing their own strengths to help newcomers and vulnerable communities feel at home. These are just a few of the many organizations that collaborated with CCS this year. Thank you for standing with our community.

Toronto District School Board (TDSB): Partnered with SWIS to open a second SWIS Hub at R.H. King Academy, helping even more newcomer families and youth navigate their first days in a new school.

Help a Girl Out: Hosted hands-on sewing workshops where Golden Agers Club seniors made reusable menstrual pads for women and girls in need.

YWCA JUMP Scarborough: Provided employment readiness training, including cashier training, customer service and remote sales, for newcomer youth.

Catholic Family Services Peel Dufferin (CFSPD): Partnered on Choice to Change, an early-prevention program for men, which saw strong participation.

National Institute of Supply Chain Leaders (NISCL): Delivered occupation-specific language training for newcomers in transportation and supply chain.

North York Community House, Toronto South West Local Immigration Partnership & Toronto Newcomer Office: Worked together to connect settlement and Indigenous organizations through an Indigenous-Newcomer Collaboration Day.

Coopération intégration Canada (CICAN): Collaborated with CICAN, a Francophone organization based in Ottawa, so Francophone refugee sponsors could get training and support from people who share their language and background.

RBC, Metrolinx, Mobilinx, Adecco & Paladin Security: Joined us as employers at our Employment Resources and Information Fair.

Many Voices, One Community

Newcomers, sponsors and volunteers walked very different paths to CCS this year. Here, in their own words, is what that meant to them.

“The class is very helpful and interactive. I like that we practice speaking and learning new vocabulary.”

Language Program Participant

“The CCS eLearn system helped me a lot. Everything was explained clearly and in an organized way.”

CCS eLearn Participant

“I passed the citizenship test on my first attempt with a perfect score and now I have my Canadian passport in hand.”

Peel Settlement Participant

“Thank you so much for being there when I was not well or stable. My family and I are forever grateful...I absolutely gained a little faith in humanity.”

Women's Support Services Program Participant



Building a More Inclusive Community

Belonging looked different depending on who you ask this year. Across settlement, language, youth and specialized programs, CCS made space for people to be seen, heard and represented, in ways big and small.



SAFE TO BE YOURSELF

Support built for LGBTQ+ newcomers

CCS offers one-on-one support to help LGBTQ+ newcomers settle in with confidence, connecting them to housing, employment and healthcare, along with a community that understands them.

UNDERSTANDING THE LAND WE'RE ON

Indigenous history and culture, for newcomers building a life here

This programming deepens understanding of Indigenous history, culture and the ongoing work of truth and reconciliation.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION BY THE NUMBERS

689

newcomers took part in Indigenous history and culture programming

73

Diversity and Inclusion sessions delivered on Canadian culture, values and anti-discrimination

543

program participants reached through those sessions

INCLUSION SHOWS UP THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT, NOT JUST HERE

SWIS's Aga Khan Museum visit and youth-painted mural
[SEE PAGE 11](#)

Flexible in-person and online language classes
[SEE PAGE 13](#)

Choice to Change, an early-prevention program for men
[SEE PAGE 18](#)

The Indigenous-Newcomer Collaboration Day
[SEE PAGE 18](#)

The Partners Behind Every Story of Change

Federal (88.7%)

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)

Provincial (4.7%)

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)

Pay Equity Revenue

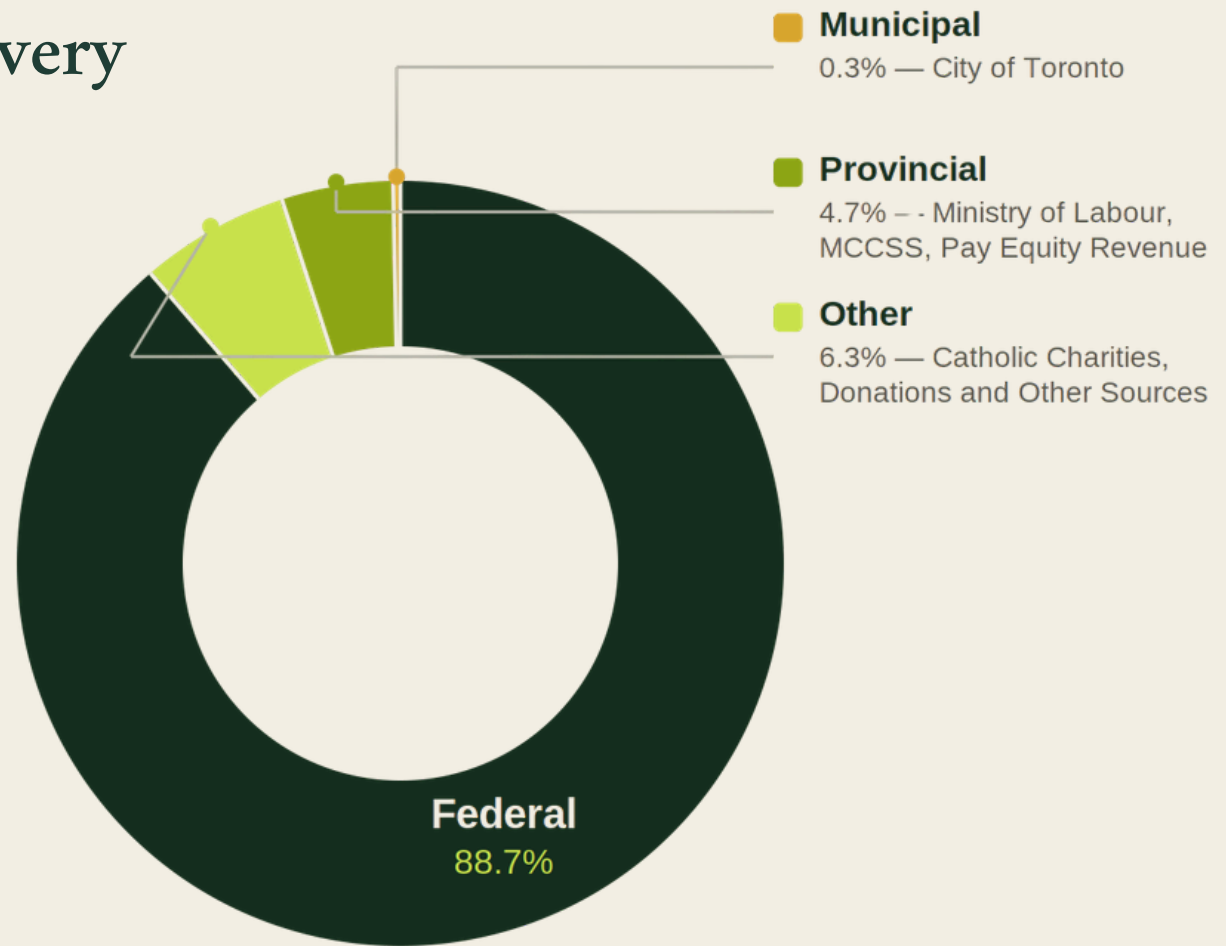
Municipal (0.3%)

City of Toronto

Other (6.3%)

Catholic Charities

Donations & Other



Total: \$18,895,610

To our funding partners: thank you for your generosity and trust. Your support helps people across our community access the services they need and build resilient, thriving futures.

Launching the First Year of our new Chapter, Guided by a Bold Five-Year Strategic Plan.

In 2025, CCS engaged program participants, staff, partners, funders and board members to shape this five-year plan focused on strengthening core services, system leadership, fostering staff wellbeing and addressing long-term sustainability.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Expand the depth and breadth of services delivered by CCS to help immigrants, refugees and the communities we serve reach their full potential.

OUR LEADERSHIP ROLE

Help shape service planning and policies to promote the well-being of immigrants, refugees and the communities we serve.

AN ORGANIZATION FOR THE FUTURE

Foster a modern and sustainable organization where staff and volunteers have access to the technology and tools they need to do their best.

WORKPLACE CULTURE

Promote a culture of participation and belonging where everyone is inspired to contribute, grow, learn and lead.



Contact Information & Locations



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@CommunicationsCCS



@CCSNewcomers

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Mississauga Locations

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1477 Mississauga Valley Boulevard
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Brampton Office

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Scarborough Locations

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2206 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 124
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416.759.8800

3227 Eglinton Avenue East, Unit 135
Scarborough, Ontario M1J 3M5
416.266.7200

Cedarbrae Mall, Basement Level 3495
Lawrence Ave E, Toronto, Ontario M1H 1B2
416.757.7106

Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP)

55 Town Centre Court, Suite 401
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